Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 787 (1982)[1]

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion in Eastern Europe and the CSCE Madrid Review Conference

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Noting that the situation in Poland and in Afghanistan and the continued violation of human rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have prevented the adoption of a concluding document of the Madrid meeting of the CSCE process ;

2. Concerned that Basket 1, Principle 7 (respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief) of the Helsinki Final Act continues to be subject to violations to a greater or lesser degree in the Soviet Union and other European Communist-governed countries ;

3. Aware that such violations are contrary to the guarantees of these freedoms that are contained in the constitutions of these countries and in the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, signed and/or supported by these countries ;

4. Appreciating that the reconvened meeting (phase V) at Madrid in November 1982 provides a further opportunity to consider measures within the Helsinki process that will provide for the utmost toleration of freedom of religion ;

5. Recalling that, as members of national parliaments, most members of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly receive representations drawing attention to individuals and groups in the Soviet Union and other European countries with Communist regimes who are subject to discrimination, persecution, arrest and imprisonment for attempting to exercise freedom of expression, conscience and religion and urging intervention on their behalf ;

6. Taking into account the fact that several countries are seeking a détente and disarmament conference within the Helsinki process,

7. Calls on the governments of Council of Europe member states participating at Madrid to submit proposals for :

7.1. the convening of a human rights conference, and a détente and disarmament conference within the Helsinki process ;

7.2. the establishment of a special commission, representative of participating states of the review conference, empowered to investigate fully and to report on any evidence submitted to it by the government or by any individual citizen, or group of citizens of any participating state, of discrimination and persecution for religious belief, and to publish its findings, such reports to be submitted to the United Nations Commission of Human Rights ;

1. Assembly debate on 7 October 1982 (20th Sitting) (see Doc. 4970, report of the Committee on Relations with European Non-member Countries). Text adopted by the Assembly on 7 October 1982 (20th Sitting).

7.3. the release and rehabilitation of all prisoners who have been imprisoned for appealing to the provisions of the Final Act since 1975 ;

7.4. an amnesty for all prisoners condemned on grounds of belief and conscience ;

7.5. the lifting of all restrictions on the practical expression of freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief ;

8. Urges these governments to seek a host country for the next Helsinki Review Conference that behaves in accordance with the provisions of the Final Act, especially Principle 7, Basket I : freedom of thought, conscience and religion.