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Follow-up by the Committee of Ministers to the work of the Parliamentary Assembly

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1999 (2012)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has examined Recommendation 1999 (2012) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on “Follow-up by the Committee of Ministers to the work of the Parliamentary Assembly”. It shares the Parliamentary Assembly’s commitment to a constructive co-operation between the two statutory organs, which is essential for the coherence, effectiveness and visibility of the work of the Council of Europe. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the progress achieved in recent years and appreciates the Parliamentary Assembly’s proposals to this end. It reaffirms its commitment to continue to reinforce synergies between the two organs and expresses its openness to further co-operation and exchanges, whilst avoiding the bureaucratisation of such exchanges. One of the areas where co-operation and synergies could be developed further could concern the activities and the work of intergovernmental committees, without prejudice to their respective roles and responsibilities, and within the available budgetary resources. The Committee of Ministers believes that the contribution of the Parliamentary Assembly could be very useful.

2. The Committee of Ministers agrees with the gist of the Assembly’s recommendations and has already undertaken a number of measures for their implementation. In particular, as regards new draft legal instruments (paragraph 4.1.1. of the recommendation), it would inform the Assembly that the Committee of Ministers undertakes to allow the Parliamentary Assembly a reasonable timeframe (3 months) to give its opinion on new draft treaties without undue haste and to inform the Assembly of the follow-up given to its opinion. As regards paragraph 4.1.2. of the recommendation, it also welcomes the suggestion to involve the relevant national delegation to the Assembly on the setting of the future chairmanship’s priorities, through appropriate informal consultations. To this end, the Committee of Ministers recalls that the British and Albanian Chairmanships of the Committee of Ministers have already established such a practice, and it is confident that future chairmanships will do the same. Furthermore, as regards paragraphs 4.2. and 4.3. of the recommendation, the Committee of Ministers adopted guidelines earlier this year for the reform of its own working methods.² These guidelines foresee replying to Assembly recommendations and written questions from Assembly members within three months whenever possible, and that the replies be as concise and result-oriented as possible. As regards paragraph 4.4. of the recommendation, the Committee of Ministers strongly encourages its chairs of rapporteurs groups, working parties and thematic co-ordinators to develop working relationships with their Assembly counterparts, with the aim of achieving a closer understanding of each other’s views and thus enhancing the effectiveness of the Council of Europe. Finally, as regards paragraph 4.5. of the recommendation, the Committee of Ministers also agrees with the need to make full use of the Joint Committee, with due regard to the prerogatives of each organ.

1. 2012 - Fourth part-session

2. Cf. document CM(2011)96 final, approved by the Deputies at their 1134th meeting (15-16 February 2012).

