

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

Resolution ResCMN(2003)2 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Armenia

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 January 2003
at the 824th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter "the Framework Convention"), and sitting in the presence of a non-member state Party¹ ;

Having regard to Resolution (97) 10 of 17 September 1997, setting out rules adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the monitoring arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention, and particularly rule 39² of Resolution (97) 10 ;

Having regard to the voting rule adopted with Resolution (97) 10³ ;

Bearing in mind the instrument of ratification submitted by Armenia on 20 July 1998 ;

Recalling that the Armenian Government submitted its state report in respect of the first monitoring cycle under the Framework Convention on 11 June 2001 ;

Whereas the Advisory Committee accepted the invitation of the Government of Armenia to send a delegation to gather further information in Armenia, this visit taking place from 10 to 14 December 2001 ;

Whereas the opinion of the Advisory Committee on implementation of the Framework Convention by Armenia was adopted on 16 May 2002, and then transmitted to the Permanent Representative of Armenia and communicated to the permanent representatives of all member states and to the Representative of a non-member state Party as document CM(2002)90 ;

Whereas the Government of Armenia submitted its written comments on the opinion of the Advisory Committee, these written comments having been communicated to the delegations of all member states and a non-member state Party as an addendum to document CM(2002)90, dated 16 October 2002 ;

Having examined the opinion of the Advisory Committee and the written comments of the Government of Armenia;

Having also taken note of comments by other governments ;

¹ The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

² According to Rule 39 of Resolution (97) 10, "the Committee of Ministers shall invite a representative from each non-member Party to attend the meetings of the Committee of Ministers whenever it exercises its functions under the Framework Convention, without the right to participate in the adoption of decisions".

³ In the context of adopting Resolution (97) 10 on 17 September 1997, the Committee of Ministers also adopted the following rule: "Decisions pursuant to Articles 24.1 and 25.2 of the Framework Convention shall be considered to be adopted if two-thirds of the representatives of the Contracting parties casting a vote, including a majority of the representatives of the Contracting parties entitled to sit on the Committee of Ministers, vote in favour".

1. Adopts the following conclusions concerning implementation of the Framework Convention by Armenia :
 - A general spirit of intercultural understanding, respect and comprehension prevails in Armenia today, and the Armenian authorities are clearly committed to implement the Framework Convention.
 - Shortcomings still exist in such fields as education, access to media, use of minority languages in the public sphere and participation in public affairs.
 - Concerning legislation, it is essential to establish an appropriate legal framework for the protection of national minorities, pursuing the initiatives already taken in this respect. In institutional terms, the setting -up of a specialised government structure should facilitate a better co-ordination between the authorities concerned and the development of a genuine public policy in this area.
 - Concerning practice, further efforts are needed to enable persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture , and preserve their identity. It is essential that the initiatives recently taken in this area be implemented as soon as possible, in order, *inter alia*, to enable the establishment of a cultural centre for national minorities.
 - Further legislative and practical efforts are needed to broaden the possibilities of access to and presence in the media by persons belonging to national minorities. The amount of broadcasting time allocated to minority languages in the public audiovisual services, particularly on television, should be increased. The state should also provide greater support for the establishment of private media, both electronic and print, by persons belonging to national minorities.
 - Certain problems have been noted in the field of education, particularly concerning teaching of or in minority languages. The authorities should show greater commitment in order to enable persons belonging to national minorities to enjoy equal access to education and to promote awareness of the culture, history, languages and traditions of both the minorities and the majority. Increased attention is needed with respect to the Assyrians and the Yezidis.
 - Improvements are necessary with regard to the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the taking of decisions concerning them. The authorities should broaden the forms of consultation with these persons and implement without delay the planned institutional measures in this connection.
2. Recommends that Armenia take appropriate account of the conclusions set out in section 1 above, together with the various comments in the opinion of the Advisory Committee.
3. Invites the Government of Armenia, in accordance with Resolution (97) 10, to:
 - a. continue the dialogue in progress with the Advisory Committee;
 - b. keep the Advisory Committee regularly informed of measures taken in response to the conclusions and recommendations set out in sections 1 and 2 above.