

# EBRD and the Council of Europe

*This document describes the function of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and its relation to the EBRD. It was written in order to help citizens, communities and NGOs better understand and use the links between these two institutions.*

## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE EBRD AND COE

An agreement of Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the EBRD was signed on 14, April, 1992 ([www.bankwatch.org/issues/ebrd/pip/ebrd-ce-agreement.doc](http://www.bankwatch.org/issues/ebrd/pip/ebrd-ce-agreement.doc)). Since this signing, the Parliamentary Assembly has been exercising its "parliamentary supervisory function" over the EBRD. This is done via Annual Report about the EBRD - this report is usually discussed in May/June and also includes the resolution. The EBRD President makes a presentation in front of the Parliamentary Assembly Annually. The EBRD related matters are covered by the

Committee on Economic Affairs and Development.

The Council of Europe does not have any decision making power over the EBRD, but nevertheless the resolutions do have political impact. Also, the contacts with the members of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development can help raise awareness in the national parliaments about the problems related to the EBRD.

Often the Council of Europe, the European Council and the Council of the European Union are confused with each other.

The Council of Europe is an international organisation where a European state can become a member, provided that it accepts the principle of the rule of law and guarantees human rights and fundamental freedoms to everyone under its jurisdiction.

The Council of Europe aims:

- to protect human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law;
- to promote awareness and encourage the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity;
- to seek solutions to problems facing European society (discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance, environmental protection, human cloning, Aids, drugs, organised crime, etc.);
- to help consolidate democratic stability in Europe by backing political, legislative and constitutional reform.

The European Council brings together the Heads of State or Government of the fifteen Member States of the European Union and the President of the European Commission. The Council of the European Union consists of the Ministers of the fifteen EU member States.

### Council of Europe supports NGOs demand of EBRD

In June, 2001 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution about the EBRD that calls for the release of EBRD project related documents in local languages as well as the establishment of an appeal mechanism. The resolution in fact supported demands that was raised by NGOs from Eastern Europe. More than 190 NGOs during the "Stop Language Apartheid" Campaign demanded to change the EBRD Public Information Policy and release project related documents (especially Environmental Impact Assessments) in the local languages.

Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1254 (2001) stated that: "...the Assembly encourages the Bank to modify its information policy so as to issue wherever possible project related information in the national language or languages of the countries concerned, facilitate public access to information regarding projects, and consider the establishment of a body to hear appeals and grievances from the public."

## PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The Council of Europe has two statutory organs, a Committee of Ministers (the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, meeting usually at the level of their deputies) and a Parliamentary Assembly. The Parliamentary Assembly is the parliamentary organ of the Council of Europe, consisting of a number of individual representatives from each member State, with a President elected each year, chosen from the representatives, for a maximum period of three sessions.

Whilst in the Committee of Ministers each member state has one vote, in the Parliamentary Assembly the number of representatives and consequently of votes is determined by the size of the country. The biggest number is eighteen, the smallest two. As there are an equal number of representatives and substitutes, the total number of members of the Assembly is therefore 582, plus 15 special guests and 15 Observers.

They are appointed to the Parliamentary Assembly in a manner which is left up to each member state as long as they are elected within their national or federal Parliament, or appointed from amongst the members of that parliament. The balance of political parties within each national delegation must ensure a fair representation of the political parties or groups in their national parliaments.

The Parliamentary Assembly does work according rules of procedure, which can be found at: [stars.coe.int/RulesofProcedure/Rulesindex.htm](http://stars.coe.int/RulesofProcedure/Rulesindex.htm)

For all documents by Parliament Assembly go to: [stars.coe.fr/Asp/edocmenu.asp](http://stars.coe.fr/Asp/edocmenu.asp)

For adopted papers (Resolutions etc.) you can go to: [stars.coe.fr/Asp/eatmenu.asp](http://stars.coe.fr/Asp/eatmenu.asp)

### Political groups

In order to develop a non-national European outlook, the formation of political groups in the Parliamentary Assembly has been promoted, and from 1964 onwards they have been granted certain rights within the Rules of Procedure. At present the Assembly counts five political groups: the Socialist Group (SOC); the Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD); the European Democratic Group (EDG); the Liberal, Democratic and Reformers Group (LDR) and the

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL). Political Groups have to commit themselves to respect the promotion of the values of the Council of Europe, notably political pluralism, human rights and the rule of law.

You can find more at [stars.coe.fr/index\\_e.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/index_e.htm)

## COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT

The committee put a special emphasis on 'good governance', intra-regional co-operation and issues related to energy and labour markets. These matters are also taken up in the Committee's annual debate on the activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

This debate is based on the report that is prepared by the Rapporteur together with the Secretary of the Parliamentary Assembly's Committee (names of people working at secretariat can be found on www together with the list of the members of the Committee). The draft report is approved by the Committee on Economic Affairs meeting (usually in May); once the Committee adopts it, it then goes to the Plenary (usually in June) to be adopted at the same time that the EBRD president addresses the body.

A list of members, as well as other committees can be obtained via [stars.coe.fr/Synopsis\\_Composition.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/Synopsis_Composition.htm)

There is also an agreement with OECD that has a similar purpose as the EBRD.

More about the Committee. [stars.coe.fr/Committee/2000/E/role\\_E.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/Committee/2000/E/role_E.htm)

## SOME OF THE KEY DOCUMENTS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ABOUT THE EBRD

*Resolution 1254 (2001).* European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the state of transition in central and eastern Europe [stars.coe.int/ta/ta01/ERES1254.HTM](http://stars.coe.int/ta/ta01/ERES1254.HTM)

*Report Doc. 9116.* A report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development on EBRD [stars.coe.int/doc/doc01/EDOC9116.htm](http://stars.coe.int/doc/doc01/EDOC9116.htm)

*Resolution 1246 (2001).* Fifteen years after Chernobyl: financing a lasting solution [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta01/eres1246.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta01/eres1246.htm)

*Resolution 1218 (2000).* European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the progress of transition [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta00/ERES1218.HTM](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta00/ERES1218.HTM)

*Report Doc. 8758 - 7 June 2000,* European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the progress of transition: Report of Committee on Economic Affairs and Development [stars.coe.fr/doc/doc00/EDOC8758.HTM](http://stars.coe.fr/doc/doc00/EDOC8758.HTM)

*Resolution 1192 (1999).* Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and transition in central and eastern Europe [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta99/eres1192.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta99/eres1192.htm)

*Resolution 1162 (98).* Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1997 [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta98/ERES1162.HTM](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta98/ERES1162.HTM)

*Resolution 1129 (97)* Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta97/ERES1129.HTM](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta97/ERES1129.HTM)

*Resolution 1094 (1996).* Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1995 [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta96/eres1094.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta96/eres1094.htm)

*Resolution 1064 (95).* Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1994 [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta95/ERES1064.HTM](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta95/ERES1064.HTM)

*Resolution 1040 (1994).* The activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta94/eres1040.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta94/eres1040.htm)

*Resolution 1002 (1993).* The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - Achievements, activities and priorities [stars.coe.fr/ta/ta93/eres1002.htm](http://stars.coe.fr/ta/ta93/eres1002.htm)

## DOCUMENTS ABOUT OTHER MDBS.

Resolution 1128 (97) Activities of the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund)

Resolution 1057 (95) Activities of the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund)

### July 2001

The CEE Bankwatch Network is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) with member organizations from countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The basic aims of the network are to monitor activities of the International Financial Institutions in the region, and to promote constructive alternatives to their policies and projects. The CEE Bankwatch Network was formally set up in 1995, and has become one of the strongest networks of environmental NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe.

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