

**Mr Piero Fassino,  
Chairperson of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and  
Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe**

Dear Chairperson,

According to the Resolution 2189 (2017), the Parliamentary Assembly has committed itself to closely follow the developments in Ukraine related to the protection and promotion of regional and minority languages.

Since the adoption of this PACE resolution at least two other laws have been passed by Ukraine: the first one in 2019 on guaranteeing the functioning of Ukrainian language as a state language and most recently, a new law on the protection of national minorities, adopted by the Verkhovna Rada in December 2022 and expected to enter into force in term of six months. Unfortunately, both laws have been adopted without properly consulting the representatives of national minorities, as strongly recommended by the Venice Commission.

As for the law on the protection of national minorities from December 2022, the provisions related to education in minority languages is making reference to the Law on education from 2017 whose provisions on education in minority languages have been criticized by the Venice Commission in its Opinion 902/2017. Moreover, this new law, *inter alia*, has no provisions concerning the use of minority languages in the judicial courts and it is unclear how the legal provisions on the use of minority languages in administration in the areas where the persons belonging to national minorities are living could be put in practice. Likewise, the freedom of religion or worship for national minorities is not provided by in a distinct article being assimilated merely to freedom of expression. Furthermore, the freedom of religion is currently subject to serious violations as concerns different religious cults belonging to national minorities from Ukraine. In other words, amid the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine that was firmly condemned, the education in regional and minority languages and the overall regime of national minorities are not improving at all, as promised by the Ukrainian leaders, but is worsening day by day making the persons belonging to national minorities easy targets for a harsh assimilation. It is frustrating to see that the solidarity for Ukraine shown by neighbouring countries whose kin minorities are living there have been answered with less rights for these persons belonging to national minorities.

For all these reasons, we would like to propose to the Committee, Mr Chairperson, to ask the opinion of the Venice Commission on the Ukrainian law on national minorities.

Please accept, dear Chairperson, the assurance of our highest consideration.

**Zsolt NEMETH**  
(Hungary, EPP/CD)

**Zita GURMAI**  
(Hungary, SOC)

**Titus CORLĂȚEAN**  
(Romania, SOC)