



**The General Committee on Cultural Affairs of CEI Parliamentary Dimension , meeting in Bolzano/Bozen on 27 April 2012:**

- 1) Considering that in 1994 the CEI sponsored the "CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights", a political and legally non-binding agreement that set out the essential principles of the protection of minorities;
- 2) Acknowledging that the initiative has been signed to date by 13 CEI member states, namely: Albania, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia;
- 3) Considering that 2012 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;
- 4) In view of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, adopted in Strasbourg on 5 November 1992, and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 1995;
- 5) In view of the Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Interstate Relations of the OSCE of 2008;
- 6) Considering that the rights of persons belonging to minorities are among the fundamental values on which the European Union is based, as specified in article 2 of the Treaty on European Union following the coming into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, and that according to the Presidency conclusions of the European Council of 22-23 June 1993 (the Copenhagen criteria), "the respect for and protection of minorities" is of particular importance in light of the accession of new states to the EU;

**INVITES THE UKRAINIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION OF THE CEI**

to mention in the final document to be issued at the end of the Parliamentary Committee meeting of 25 of May 2012 in Kiev, the results of today's meeting, and emphasise the importance of:

- **calling on national Parliaments the need for promoting laws which could offer equal rights to each citizen of the respective country, whether they belong to the majority or to minorities;**
- **inviting national Parliaments to enforce art. 5 of the "CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights"**
- **drawing the attention of the governments of CEI member states to the need to revitalise the "CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights", reviewing and updating it when necessary, and including this topic in the CEI Plan of Action for the period 2013-2015;**
- **urging the parliaments of CEI member states to consider the advantages of promoting bilateral study visits among interested countries so that they may explore other nations' experiences in dealing with issues of regional autonomy and the protection of minorities, and share best practices;**
- **calling on governments to consider that the protection of minorities is a fundamental instrument for peace among peoples.**