



Parlamentul României Senat

Bucharest, June 21, 2020

Courtesy translation

OPINION of the SENATE of ROMANIA

on the Joint Proposal for a Recommendation of the Council to the European Council on the adoption of a decision identifying the strategic objectives of the Union to be pursued through the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 - JOIN (2020) 6 final

The Romanian Senate examined the Joint Proposal for a Recommendation of the Council to the European Council on the adoption of a decision identifying the strategic objectives of the Union to be pursued through the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 - JOIN (2020) 6 final, according to the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon (Protocol no. 1).

Taking into account the report of May 28, 2020 of the Committee for European Affairs, **the Plenum of the Senate**, during its session of June 12, 2020

1. Notes that:
 - a) the dimension of human rights, in addition to the traditional side, has recently included modern connotations related to digitalization or climate change and their effect on the environment;
 - b) the Union's external action shall pursue the objectives set out in Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union with regard to democracy, the rule of law, universality and the indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
 - c) The EU Action Plan is unique in that it is the only instrument of its kind aimed at promoting a value-based agenda on the world stage;
 - d) the adoption of the document at the level of the European Council inclusively envisages providing a greater visibility of the Action Plan as a key instrument of the European Union in its external action for the promotion and defence of human rights;
2. Appreciates and supports:
 - a) the set of European values that the Union reaffirms in the dialogue with partner states, offering greater freedom to EU heads of delegation, embassies and consulates in the territory to propose strategies both to stimulate and to sanction democratic rights side-slips in the partner states;

- b) that the human rights dimension thus acquires much greater values in EU foreign policy and in negotiations between the Member States of the European Union;
3. Regrets that there are attempts by some states to reject the progress made in promoting and defending human rights;
 4. Recommends that the Joint Proposal stipulates the idea of strict respect for human rights in the management plans of various crisis situations and the avoidance of double standard / double measure and public discrimination in order to not undermine faith in European values; [for example: Education Law 3419-D - which was voted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine at the same time as the entry into force of the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine (September 2017), which stipulated a drastic restriction on the right to mother tongue education for Romanian ethnics in Ukraine. The event aroused a deep preoccupation and concern in Romania, in the context of a weak reaction from the European Union forums to the violation of fundamental human rights and the preservation of national identity]. Fulfilling the conditionalities and political criteria for EU membership in respect for fundamental human rights and preserving the national identity of minorities are non-negotiable issues, but are to be fully respected.

p. President of the Senate
Robert-Marius CAZANCIUC

