Council of Europe: Russia excluded from the Organisation. Strasbourg sends message of solidarity with Russian people

As of today, the Russian Federation is no longer a member of the Council of Europe. This was decided by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe at an extraordinary meeting that took place today. In a joint statement last night, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chair of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, Luigi Di Maio, the President of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, Tiny Kox, and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pej?inovi? Buri?, said that "the Parliamentary Assembly unanimously considered that the Russian Federation should no longer be a member State of the Organisation". This is an obvious consequence of the Russian Federation's "unprovoked and unjustified" attack on Ukraine, which has already been strongly condemned. In line with the Statute of the Council of Europe, the Russian Federation was therefore excluded from the Institution. On 25 February, the day after the attack, Russia had already been suspended from its "rights of representation" in the Committee of Ministers and in the Parliamentary Assembly. As the Parliamentary Assembly was voting, however, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov handed over a letter to Pej?inovi? Buri? notifying the Council of Europe of the decision to withdraw Russia's representatives from the institution - a required action in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Statutes. According to the Council of Europe, which expresses its solidarity with the Russian people, "through their actions in Ukraine the Russian authorities deprive the Russian people of the benefit of the most advanced human rights protection system in the world, including the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights and our vast convention system".

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