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ANTI-DEMOCRATIC MARKERS IN LEGISLATION OF LATVIA

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Dear Assembly,

In recent times, the critics of the European Union project increasingly mention that such kind of basic European value as democracy nowadays is only for export.

Analyzing and evaluating social institutions of any state that claims to join the EU the corresponding agencies are evaluating the democracy level in the state structure and the candidate country's regulatory environment's maturity. However, after the joining the EU the control of regulatory environment discontinues. Today we can observe creation of laws that violate essential principles and values of the European project, especially in Eastern Europe.

The most illustrative examples of transformation of the laws in antidemocratic trend are shown in Hungary. But in Baltic States, in Latvia in particular, the same tendency is progressively appearing too.

For instance, representatives of Russian-language ethno-linguistic minority, that is about 40% of population of Latvia, initiated the constitutional referendum proposing for the Russian language the status of the second official language. After the referendum the authorities of the Republic of Latvia amend the Referendum Law with raising a number of required signatures for referendum organizing, so that dramatically restrict opportunities to initiate that kind of direct democracy.

Recently adopted preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia is disputable. In its new version reasonable and universal expression "the nation of Latvia" that designate all the living in the state people, political nation, was transformed into the "Latvian nation" and has strong connection with ethnical ideas, that could be dangerous and destructive.

A number of laws restricting the use of national minority's languages, the rights to interpret some historical events etc. were adopted in recent times. The Latvian's non-citizens problem is still unsolved. According to the last census of population in 2011, 295 thousand people that is 14% of all population of Latvia, are non-citizens and some of their social and political rights are still restricted.

On the 8th of November, 2002, the Special Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe evaluating elections to the 8th Saeima that took part in October, 2002, mentioned "the long-term democratic deficit" due to the non-participation of the non-citizens. Recent laws show this "deficit's" increase.

I appeal to the OSCE authorities, to all of the parliaments and governments of the OSCE member states, to all kind of unindifferent non-governmental organizations with a request to raise an issue about requirement of legislation changes' permanent monitoring, as well as an issue about

necessity of “democratic deficit” prophylaxis and prevention mechanism creation, especially in EU countries.

The European Union principles should be not only declarative, but also have to be fulfilled by all of the member states de-facto.