**STATEMENT**

**by the Council of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization regarding the inadmissibility of foreign interference**

**in the electoral processes of the Organization’s Member States**

The elections held in the Member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization demonstrate the maturity and sustainability of their electoral systems. The free, open and competitive nature of the elections corresponds to the national legislation and the generally recognized universal and regional international commitments in this area.

At the same time, we are against any attempts of direct or indirect foreign interference aiming to cast doubt on their democratic nature. It is unacceptable to make biased assessments of the ongoing processes and to make wide use of social media, video hosting sites and other means of mass communication for systematic dissemination of false information aimed at dividing and polarizing society and provoking the electorate into radical actions.

It is important to suppress any attempts of outside interference in the national electoral processes of the Organization’s Member States. No state or representative has the right to interfere in electoral processes, still less to try to impose any requirements for their implementation on the Organization’s Member States, including by providing illegal support to opposition forces through various non-governmental organizations.

Foreign-controlled information resources, social media and video hosting site carrying out political censorship of online content without a court decision or a decision of other authorized bodies, pose a great threat.

We consider such undemocratic practices to be a direct threat to the sovereignty and national security of the Organization’s Member States.

The Council of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization strongly condemns any interference in the national affairs of the states.

The Council of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization believes that gross violations of fundamental democratic rights and freedoms in global information networks by the owners of foreign information resources require a balanced and objective assessment by international, including parliamentary, organizations.