

# Press Release

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### **PACE calls for parliamentary investigations into the unresolved murders of journalists and announces a specific monitoring mechanism**

Strasbourg, 25.01.2007 – While underlining the importance of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights for the protection of media freedom throughout Europe, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) today called for additional measures for effectively protecting the lives and freedom of expression of journalists.

Following the proposals by the rapporteur (Andrew McIntosh, United Kingdom, SOC), the Assembly called on all parliaments concerned "to conduct parliamentary investigations into the unresolved murders of journalists as well as attacks and death threats against them, in order to shed light on individual cases and develop as a matter of urgency effective policies for the greater safety of journalists".

The Assembly called on the Russian Parliament to closely monitor the progress of the criminal investigation into the murder of Anna Politkovskaya and to hold the authorities accountable for any failure to investigate or prosecute. It also asked the Turkish Parliament to abolish Article 301 of the penal code on the "denigration of Turkishness". As regards the murder of Ukrainian journalist Georgiy Gongadze, the Assembly expressed concern at the lack of progress in the investigation.

The Assembly resolved "to establish a specific monitoring mechanism for identifying and analysing attacks on the lives and freedom of expression of journalists in Europe as well as the progress made by national law enforcement authorities and national parliaments in their investigations of these attacks". To that end, it invited Reporters without Borders, the International Press Institute, the International Federation of Journalists and other organisations to report such attacks to the Assembly.

While recalling that a number of attacks on journalists may have happened in Europe without drawing public attention, the Assembly paid tribute "to all journalists and media that further democracy and the rule of law" by their work.

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 315 members from the national parliaments of the 46 member states.

President: René van der Linden (Netherlands, EPP/CD); Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political Groups: SOC (Socialist Group); EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); EDG (European Democratic Group); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).