

# Press Release

## Parliamentary Assembly Communication Unit

Ref: 158a07

Tel: +33 3 88 41 31 93

Fax :+33 3 90 21 41 34

pace.com@coe.int

internet: www.coe.int/press



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### **By demolishing Nicosia's 'Berlin Wall' President Papadopoulos is helping to rebuild trust and confidence, says PACE President**

Strasbourg, 09.03.2007 – "I am delighted to learn that President Papadopoulos has now taken the courageous and praiseworthy step of demolishing the wall across the Ledra Street crossing of the Green Line. Cyprus need no longer suffer the ignominy of having Europe's last divided capital," PACE President René van der Linden said today.

"During my recent official visit to Cyprus, I raised this issue as a matter of priority with both President Papadopoulos and Mr Talat, leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, as well as in my subsequent letters to them both," the President continued. "I now strongly encourage Mr Talat – who had expressed to me his own genuine desire to see Ledra Street reopened – to honour this gesture and respond constructively and in good faith, by ensuring that Turkish Cypriot soldiers will not be visible to those using the Ledra Street crossing."

"The reopening of the Ledra Street crossing, apart from its symbolic value, will also be of great practical value to the inhabitants of Nicosia. During my visit, I was handed a letter by Ledra Street residents and shopkeepers from both sides of the divide and from both communities, calling for the opening of the crossing as a matter of urgency. I am pleased above all for them that their hopes now seem close to fulfilment."

"Today may mark a historic step; but even the smallest steps, if taken in a positive spirit of trust and mutual confidence, can play an important role in promoting dialogue and reconciliation," he concluded. "This process will be vital if there is to be lasting solution to the Cyprus problem."

[Press release following Mr van der Linden's official visit to Cyprus](#)

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).