

Press Release

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We cannot accept closed borders between Council of Europe member States, PACE President declared in Yerevan

Strasbourg, 05.07.2007 - During his meetings in Yerevan, PACE President René van der Linden stressed that utmost priority must be given to improving relations among the countries of the region as a way to necessary reconciliation and to building a new future for young generations.

He called for compromise to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which may be painful but necessary to ensure the development of the region. "Open borders are a pre-condition for prosperity. We cannot accept closed borders between Council of Europe member states," he said.

He called on the Armenian authorities to use the forthcoming presidential elections to consolidate the democratic progress achieved during the recent parliamentary elections.

"The Council of Europe and its Assembly are ready to contribute to this process with their expertise and instruments," he added.

Mr van der Linden mentioned in particular in this connection the need to ensure that media, especially TV and radio, are truly independent and the need to continue the judicial reform.

Finally, he called on all political forces represented in the Parliament, both from the majority and the opposition, to observe the democratic rules of political life and work in mutual respect for the future of their country.

The President will continue his visit in [Georgia and Azerbaijan](#).

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 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).