

Press Release

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PACE President responds to Estonian Speaker: 'please read my views'

Strasbourg, 03.10.2007 – René van der Linden, President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), yesterday wrote to the Speaker of the Estonian Parliament Ene Ergma, inviting her to verify his official, public position on citizenship and other Estonian issues after she publicly accused him of "misleading statements" during his recent visit to the country.

In his letter, the President expressed his disappointment that the Speaker "chose to rely on second-hand reports of what I am alleged to have said during my visit, rather than on what I said during our meeting, and my position as set out in the statement I made at the end of my visit to Estonia".

"I invite you to read my statement – which has been on the Assembly's website for the last twelve days – in order to obtain a more accurate understanding of my views," the President wrote.

He continued: "As I said in my previous letter to you, I appreciated the frank and positive discussions we enjoyed during our meeting and am therefore surprised to learn only via the media of the strong views you have subsequently expressed. To the best of my recollection, you never expressed such views to me during our meeting."

He said it was regrettable that he did not have an opportunity to reply to her letter – which he received only yesterday – before it was made public. "I find it improper for such a public accusation to be made before giving me any right of reply."

[Statement made by René van der Linden following his visit to Estonia](#)

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).