

# Press Release

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## **PACE President pays tribute to Jean-Claude Juncker, « a great European and a genuine friend of the Council of Europe »**

Strasbourg, 24.11.2007 – Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly President (PACE) President René van der Linden, today awarded Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, with a medal and a diploma, the highest distinction of the President of the Assembly, intended to pay tribute to “a great European and a genuine friend of the Council of Europe, deeply committed to its values and principles”.

During a ceremony in Maastricht, René van der Linden underlined Mr Juncker's outstanding contribution to European integration and cooperation and his visionary report on “[Council of Europe – European Union: a sole ambition for the European continent](#)”, presented to the PACE in April 2006, in which he made a series of proposals for strengthening the partnership between the two European organisations – including a proposal that the EU could become a member of the Council of Europe by 2010.

“On behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly I should like to thank you for all you have done to strengthen European parliamentarism, be it at the level of the supranational European Parliament or of the other main European inter-parliamentary Assemblies”, PACE President said. “We as Parliamentary Assembly are particularly grateful to you for having chosen us as forum for several major political speeches and for the public presentation of your outstanding report”, he said.

“Because of your clear support for the Assembly you deserve our greatest esteem and recognition. A token for this great appreciation are this high award to you together with our sincere wishes for further successful action at national and European level”, Mr van der Linden concluded.

It is only the second time Mr van der Linden awards this high Presidential distinction. In June 2007, PACE President presented the award to Human Rights Watch for “outstanding action in lifting the veil of secrecy covering the practice of extraordinary renditions and the use of secret detention”.

### [Speech by PACE President](#)

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).