

Press Release

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Signing of a cooperation agreement between PACE and EP

Strasbourg, 28.11.2007 - European Parliament (EP) President Hans-Gert Pöttering and Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) President René van der Linden signed today in Brussels an agreement to improve cooperation between the two Institutions and increase complementary initiatives and synergies.

President Pöttering declared: "This agreement will mark another important step forward in relations between the EP and the PACE. The two institutions will intensify contacts on political issues and on questions of mutual interest and will increase coordination with a view of undertaking joint actions and avoiding duplication. This approach is very much in the interest of European citizens"

President van der Linden said: "There is only one Europe – that of all the citizens living on our continent. They need to feel its benefits materialise in their everyday life. It is therefore essential that their elected representatives at national level, represented in the Parliamentary Assembly and those in the European Parliament – cooperate and act together. The agreement between PACE and EP is a milestone in our relations and an expression of the political will for further cooperation".

Following the signature of the agreement, coordination will be assured through joint meetings and hearings, invitations for members and rapporteurs of corresponding committees and regular contacts between rapporteurs.

The two institutions also agreed on the necessity to reflect the achievements of both bodies in each other's documents and actions. Finally, both Assemblies proposed to reinforce the already "excellent" cooperation in joint electoral observation missions.

The signature took place on Wednesday 28 November in the office of the President of the European Parliament in Brussels.

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).