Press Release

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PACE President to visit Russia with 2008 presidential election and the ratification of Protocols 6 and 14 on the agenda

Strasbourg, 18.12.2007 - René van der Linden, President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), will make an official visit to Russia from 19 to 22 December 2007.

In Moscow, he will notably meet with the Speaker of Russia's Federation Council, Sergey Mironov, the Speaker of the State Duma, Boris Gryzlov, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev (to be confirmed), and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sergeï Lavrov. He will also have talks with the leaders of the political groups in the State Duma, as well as with representatives of the opposition not represented in the Parliament.

The talks will focus on the recent parliamentary elections in Russia and the presidential election in March 2008, ratification by Russia of Protocols Nos. 6 and 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights, progress with reforms concerning political pluralism and media freedom, and the need to foster co-operation between PACE and Duma and to strengthen the Council of Europe as a pan European organisation and avoid creating dividing lines.

A press conference will take place on Friday 21 December at 12.30 a.m. in the Interfax News Agency premises (Pervaya Tverskaya-Yamskaya str. 2).

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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).