

Press Release

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PACE President calls on the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to keep a close track on the debate on the reintroduction of the death penalty in Latvia

Strasbourg, 25.09.2008 – “Under no circumstances can the reintroduction of the death penalty ever be on the Council of Europe or European Union agenda again”, said the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Lluís Maria de Puig, today, in reply to the call for an EU debate on the subject by the Chair of the Latvian Parliament’s Human Rights Commission.

“Latvia joined the Council of Europe in 1995 and it ratified Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights in 1999, thus formally abolishing the death penalty. To reintroduce the penalty would jeopardise the very membership of the organisation of any state which opted for such a step”, warned the President.

“I am concerned about the statements on the death penalty that the Latvian Ministers of Justice and the Interior and the Chair of the Human Rights Commission of the Latvian Parliament are reported to have made recently. Their words run counter to the values that they are supposed to champion in the positions they occupy. No murder or crime, however abhorrent, can justify the death penalty and we expect the representatives of our member states to do their utmost to promote our common values. I will be asking the PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to keep a close track on the situation” concluded Mr de Puig.

[Recommendation 1760 \(2006\)](#): Position of the Parliamentary Assembly as regards the Council of Europe member and observer states which have not abolished the death penalty

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

President: Lluís Maria de Puig (Spain, SOC) ; Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political Groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group); EDG (European Democratic Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).