

# Press Release

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### Situation in Transnistria: PACE President calls for "rapprochement and dialogue"

Strasbourg, 27.06.2006 – Referring to the situation in Transnistria during his [speech](#) before a plenary session of the Moldovan Parliament, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly President René van der Linden today stressed that the Council of Europe was the ideal forum for mediation and reconciliation.

"I encourage you to use the Assembly's potential for parliamentary diplomacy, to work towards rapprochement and to engage in dialogue. I know that your delegation has already shown its willingness to address the issue of Transnistria in this context, and I am confident that a format acceptable to all sides will soon be found," the President said. He also called for progress with regard to respect for national minorities, linguistic rights and local institutions, something that would "encourage the population of Transnistria to want to rejoin the rest of the country". "The weakening of local and regional authorities is never a recipe for stability," he said.

René van der Linden welcomed the Parliament's "historic decision" to completely abolish the death penalty and said that domestic and foreign policies in the last fifteen years "have irrevocably taken the country in a new and rewarding direction". He welcomed the significant progresses made in Moldova where "common European values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law are fully respected" and said that these values were "the preconditions for stability, security and prosperity".

However, he underlined that the functioning of democratic institutions is still in need of important reforms. Regarding the judicial and legal system, the President said that "it is high time, after so many amendments, that laws on political parties be brought into line with European standards". Mr van der Linden stressed the need "to ensure that the Bar Association is independent and free from political influence", as well as to effectively implement court decisions and properly train judges and prosecutors, something that would "notably" help in the fight against corruption. "International investors will not be attracted to Moldova if they fear that administrative, political and judicial decisions may be distorted by corruption," he said.

Finally, the President mentioned Moldova's bad trafficking record, "not only in drugs and weapons, but also in human beings, a most despicable form of crime". The ratification of the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in human beings in May was an important step, "but it must be followed by full and effective implementation", he said. He also invited Moldova "to participate fully in the Assembly's campaign against domestic violence", which will be launched next November, and gave a reminder that the Council of Europe offers free expertise to ensure that countries are in conformity with European standards.

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 315 members from the national parliaments of the 46 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).