

Press Release

Parliamentary Assembly – Communication Unit

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PACE delegation visits Belarus to sound out prospects for developing constructive dialogue

Strasbourg, 12.02.2009 – A three-member delegation from the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) will visit Minsk from 16 to 19 February 2009 to sound out the Belarusian authorities on the prospects for developing a constructive dialogue with the Council of Europe and its Assembly in the fields of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The delegation is made up of Göran Lindblad (Sweden, EPP/CD), Chair of PACE's Political Affairs Committee, Sinikka Hurskainen (Finland, SOC), Chair of the Sub-Committee on Belarus, and Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE), the Assembly's Rapporteur on the situation in Belarus.

They are due to meet the heads of the two Chambers of the National Assembly of Belarus as well as high-ranking officials of the Presidential Administration and the Foreign, Justice, Information and Education Ministers. They will also hold discussions with representatives of the opposition and civil society.

Meetings are also planned with the Prosecutor General and the Presidents of the Constitutional and Supreme Courts, as well as representatives of the international community.

The delegation will also visit the premises of the future Council of Europe InfoPoint at the Belarusian State University.

The delegation is due to give a press conference at 6 p.m. on Wednesday 18 February at the National Press Center (Room 402, Ochyabrskaya str. 5, Minsk). Journalists wishing to attend should contact the Press Center.

[Draft programme \(PDF\)](#)

[Statement by the rapporteur, 28 November 2008](#)

[Statement by the rapporteur, 15 October 2008](#)

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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 Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).