

Press Release

Parliamentary Assembly – Communication Unit

Ref: 515a09

Tel. +33 (0)3 88 41 31 93

Fax +33 (0)3 90 21 41 34

Internet: <http://assembly.coe.int>

e-mail: pace.com@coe.int



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Iran: PACE urges the authorities to refrain from violence and calls for an investigation into election irregularities

Strasbourg, 25.06.2009 - At the end of the urgent debate on the situation in Iran, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) today urged the Iranian authorities to refrain from using force and violence against peaceful demonstrators and to release the hundreds of demonstrators arrested since 13 June as well as the politicians, members of their families and journalists detained.

According to the Assembly, these arrests show that the government intends to suppress the opposition and avoid any form of political dialogue, "as it has succeeded in doing for 30 years now".

The parliamentarians also called on the authorities to allow an "independent and credible" investigation into alleged irregularities in the election process. The 646 complaints of misconduct lodged with the Council of Guardians "raise justified concerns" as regards the fairness of the electoral process as established by Iranian law, they said.

The text adopted, based on the report by Göran Lindblad (Sweden, EPP/CD), stresses that the only way to find a peaceful and sustainable solution is through democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. It therefore calls on European states to intensify contacts with the Iranian authorities and establish "an enhanced political dialogue".

For its part, the Assembly states that it is ready to engage in such dialogue with the Iranian Parliament and democratic forces and civil society in the country.

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).