

# Press Release

## Parliamentary Assembly – Communication Unit

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### 47 member States

Albania  
Andorra  
Armenia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Belgium  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Italy  
Latvia  
Liechtenstein  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Moldova  
Monaco  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
"The former Yugoslav  
Republic of  
Macedonia"  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom

## PACE winter session: 'Faked pandemics, a threat to health'

Strasbourg, 12.01.2010 – "Faked pandemics: a threat to health" will be one of the major themes of the next plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), to be held in Strasbourg from 25 to 29 January. The PACE Social Affairs Committee has proposed the holding of an urgent debate on this subject. If the Assembly agrees when it adopts its agenda on the opening day, the debate is likely to be held on the morning of Thursday 28 January.

The committee will be holding a public hearing on the same subject on Tuesday 26 January at 8.30 am, attended by representatives of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the European pharmaceutical industry and experts on the subject.

Other highlights of the session will be the debates on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, the situation in the Middle East and action against trafficking in human beings.

With Lluís Maria de Puig coming to the end of his term of office, the Assembly is also due to elect a new President. The only candidate to date is Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG).

Prominent personalities due to address the Assembly include George A. Papandreou, Prime Minister of Greece, Franco Frattini, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, Micheline Calmy-Rey, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of the "47", and Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The other topics on the agenda include, in particular, respect for media freedom, judicial corruption, the detention of asylum seekers and irregular migrants, and the functioning of democratic institutions in Albania and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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### Draft agenda

*The final agenda is decided by the Assembly on the opening day of the session.*

#### **Monday 25 January 2010 (opening at 11.30am)**

- Opening of the first part of the 2010 Ordinary Session
- Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Assembly
- Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and the Standing Committee
- Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly presented by Micheline Calmy-Rey, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers
- Communication from Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

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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).

## Tuesday 26 January

- [Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of Italy](#)
- [The situation in the Middle East](#), and statements by invited personalities (tbc)
- Address by George A. Papandreou, Prime Minister of Greece
- Address by Franco Frattini, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy
- [The functioning of democratic institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
- [Action against trafficking in human beings: promoting the Council of Europe convention](#)
- [Lobbying in a democratic society \(European code of conduct on lobbying\)](#)

## Wednesday 27 January

- Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of Italy (possible second round)
- [Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity](#)
- [Judicial corruption](#)
- [Freedom of religion and other human rights for non-Muslim minorities in Turkey and for the Muslim minority in Thrace \(Eastern Greece\)](#)
- [Respect for media freedom](#), and statement by Miklós Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- [Thresholds and other features of electoral systems which have an impact on representativity of national parliaments in Council of Europe member states](#)
- [Increasing women's representation in politics through the electoral system](#)

## Thursday 28 January

- Possible urgent debate on 'Faked pandemics, a threat to health'
- [Rethinking creative rights for the Internet age](#)
- [The detention of asylum seekers and irregular migrants in Europe](#)
- [Solving property issues of refugees and displaced persons](#), and statement by Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, Former High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina
- [The functioning of democratic institutions in Albania](#)

## Friday 29 January

- [Fifteen years since the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action](#)
- [Biodiversity and climate change](#)
- [Draft Protocol amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters](#)
- [Euro-Mediterranean region: call for a Council of Europe strategy](#)

## **Practical information**

### **Press conferences:**

Lluís Maria de Puig, PACE outgoing President, will give a press conference on Monday 25 January at 10.30 am. The new-elected President will give a press conference the same day at 12.15 am.

A press conference in connection with the hearing on faked pandemics will take place on Tuesday 26 January at 10 am. Other press conferences will be announced on the spot.

Press conferences can be viewed live at <http://tv.coe.int/internet/press.html>. Recordings of some press conferences may also be available.

**Further details:** see the Assembly's website, <http://assembly.coe.int>. Additional information may also be found on the [Council of Europe web portal](#).

**For TV planning Units:** videos in broadcast quality summing up PACE highlights can be downloaded for free at <http://dl.coe.int> no later than two hours after the event.

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