

'Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?' – PACE draft report to be presented in Brussels

Strasbourg, 26.03.2012 – Tineke Strik (Netherlands, SOC), rapporteur for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on "Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?" will present her draft report at a press conference in Brussels on Thursday 29th March 2012.

The report is the result of a nine-month inquiry, launched at the request of 34 Assembly members, following a March 2011 incident in which it is alleged that 63 people attempting to flee the conflict in Libya died at sea after their appeals for rescue were ignored, including by armed forces operating in the area.

Ahead of her presentation, Ms Strik commented: "Since the beginning of 2011 at least 1,500 people are known to have perished in the Mediterranean trying to reach European soil – despite this being one of the busiest and best-monitored seas in the world. My inquiry has focused on one particularly tragic incident, in which 63 people died, to try to establish who bears responsibility for their deaths. I have been deeply shocked by what I have learned."

As part of her inquiry, Tineke Strik spoke at length with survivors, search and rescue authorities from Italy and Malta, as well as NATO and EU officials, and put detailed written questions to a number of governments, including those with vessels with aircraft-carrying facilities in the area at the time. She also obtained a reconstruction of the voyage using the science of forensic oceanography.

The same day, prior to the press conference, Ms Strik will present her report to PACE's Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, meeting in closed session. If approved by the committee, the report will go forward for plenary debate by the 318-member Parliamentary Assembly, probably on Tuesday 24 April during its spring session in Strasbourg.

[Motion: the request for an inquiry](#)
[PACE President's statement, May 2011](#)
[Web file and timeline: Europe's boat people](#)
[Video recording of press conference](#) (when available)

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Notes for editors

Press conference

The press conference will take place at 2 p.m. on Thursday 29th March at the Council of Europe office in Brussels (Avenue des Nerviens 85 / Nervierslaan 85, B-1040 Brussels). The rapporteur will be joined by representatives of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and Human Rights Watch. A video recording of the press conference will be made available at the link above, and on the PACE website, as soon as possible after it ends.

Copies of the report

If approved by the committee, the full text of the report will be posted on the Assembly's website at around 2 p.m. Central European Time.

Contacts

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The Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.
President: Jean-Claude Mignon (EPP/CD) - Secretary General of the Assembly: Wojciech Sawicki.
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).