

Press Release

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PACE President calls for guidelines on democratic oversight of security services

Strasbourg, 23.01.2006 – Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) President René van der Linden, in his opening speech to the winter part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly, today demanded full cooperation with Mr Marty's enquiry into alleged secret detentions.

"Fighting terrorism is of the highest priority. It is a common fight, in our common interest. But all of our partners must respect the international rule of law," he said. "I encourage all members of this Assembly to take further action at home to discover the truth of this affair."

Whilst the fact of a determined and high-profile European investigation would itself act as a deterrent to such practices occurring in future, Mr van der Linden stressed the need for concrete measures.

"Democratic scrutiny must be strengthened," he suggested, "to ensure that governments do not break the rules."

In his press conference, the President stated that guidelines were needed to ensure effective democratic oversight of security services. He reminded member States that their security services were equally bound to respect Council of Europe human rights standards. He also urged them to investigate alleged criminal offences committed on foreign military bases, as was being done, for example, in Germany and the United Kingdom.

In 2005, the Assembly made strong recommendations on the issue of democratic oversight of the security services. Member States, through the Committee of Ministers, are now expected to give a reply.

[Link to the opening speech of René van der Linden](#)

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: Bruno Haller.

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).