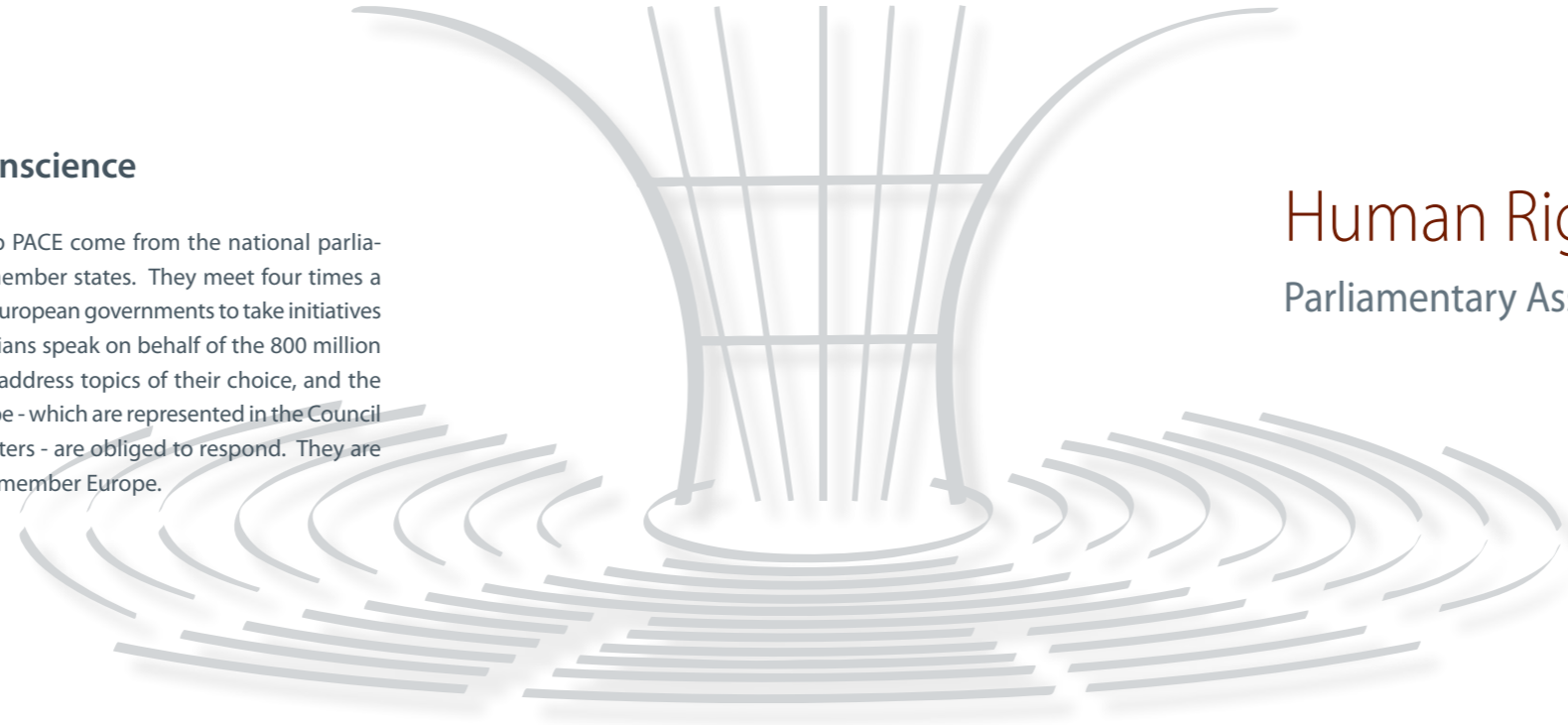


PHMS 16/01/12

PACE :

Europe's democratic conscience

The 636 parliamentarians making up PACE come from the national parliaments of the 47 Council of Europe member states. They meet four times a year to discuss current affairs and ask European governments to take initiatives and report back. These parliamentarians speak on behalf of the 800 million Europeans who elected them. They address topics of their choice, and the governments of the countries of Europe - which are represented in the Council of Europe by the Committee of Ministers - are obliged to respond. They are the democratic conscience of the 47-member Europe.



Human Rights Prize

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

THE HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE

The Council of Europe has made a crucial contribution to ensure that democracy, human rights and the rule of law form an integral part of the everyday lives of European citizens. It remains the main guarantor of the safeguarding of these values. Its Parliamentary Assembly has been the expression of the collective conscience of Europe: it monitors the human rights situation in its member states, it reacts to violations and it detects trends that require political action and the setting of reference standards.

International action however is only the tip of the iceberg, as human rights in Europe could not advance without the personal involvement and the dedicated and selfless work of NGOs and human rights defenders. They often risk their own safety, and sometimes even their lives, when they champion highly sensitive issues which need to come to light in order to make our societies more just and democratic.

It is this courage and dedication, this outstanding civil society action, that the Parliamentary Assembly has been rewarding, since 2007, through its human rights prize. At the same time, the Parliamentary Assembly constantly urges greater action, both at European level and in individual member states, in order to ensure that the work of the civil society engaged in defending human rights is better protected and promoted.

"We all need better human rights, but collective gains come thanks to huge personal dedication and sometimes at the price of personal sacrifice. This work of the civil society needs to be better known and acknowledged and this is what the Prize stands for."



Jean-Claude Mignon,
President of PACE

NOMINATION AND DESIGNATION

➤ The Prize

The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Human Rights Prize shall be awarded every two years by the Assembly in order to reward outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights in Europe.

➤ Nature

The Prize shall consist of a sum of ten thousand euros, which may be subject to periodic adjustment by the Bureau, a plaque and a diploma commending the Prizewinner's outstanding contribution to the cause of human rights.

➤ Eligibility

Individual members of civil society or non-governmental organisations or institutions who are active in the defence of human rights in Europe may be eligible for consideration.



➤ Nominations

Nominations for the Prize must reach the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly by 30 September of the year preceding the award of the Prize. They shall be signed by at least five sponsors, other than the nominee.

Nominations shall provide details of the nominee's action(s) in the defence of human rights and specify the reasons why the nominee's action(s) can be considered to be outstanding. All relevant supporting documents shall be provided.

Nominations shall be submitted in one of the two official languages of the Parliamentary Assembly (English or French) on the special form which can be downloaded from the website:

<http://assembly.coe.int/Committee/JUR/HumanRightsPrize>



➤ Selection Panel

A selection panel comprising the President of the Assembly, the Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee and four independent persons with recognised moral standing in the field of human rights shall examine the nominations and make a recommendation to the Bureau as to the Prizewinner for the year in question.

The four independent experts referred to in the preceding paragraph shall not be current members of the Assembly. They shall be appointed by the Bureau for a five-year period, renewable once. In order to ensure a reasonable rotation and continuity, the term of two of the experts shall be limited to three years on the occasion of the first appointment made by the Bureau. The names of the experts concerned shall be drawn by lot by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly. The selection panel shall be chaired by the President of the Assembly.



In the event that the selection panel considers that none of the nominations put forward is sufficiently outstanding, it shall inform the Bureau accordingly.

➤ Decision on the Prizewinner

The decision on the Prizewinner shall be taken by the Bureau by an absolute majority of the votes cast.

The Bureau's decision on the Prizewinner shall be subject to the endorsement of the Parliamentary Assembly by means of the Bureau's progress report.

➤ Award Ceremony

The Prize shall be awarded at a ceremony which shall take place in principle during the part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly following the Assembly's endorsement of the Prizewinner.

The Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly shall approve the arrangements for the ceremony.