

**Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments
by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)**

Declaration on Turkey

adopted by the Monitoring Committee on 22 January 2013

Strasbourg, 22.01.2013 – The Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), meeting in Strasbourg on 22 January 2013, following the preliminary conclusions of Josette Durrieu (France, SOC), rapporteur for post-monitoring dialogue with Turkey, adopted the following declaration:

“The committee welcomes the resumption of talks by the Turkish authorities with a view to finding a political solution to the Kurdish issue. It encourages all those concerned to finalise this process and thus put an end to the violence which has so far cost 45 000 lives. The committee is pleased to see that the main political groupings in the country support this move and underlines that a political solution to the Kurdish issue should also ensure that the solution is enshrined in the future Constitution.

The committee is following the progress of the judiciary reforms that have been undertaken. Bringing Turkish legislation into line with the European Convention of Human Rights will contribute to protecting the individual freedoms of all. In this respect, the committee remains concerned by problems in the administration of justice, which constitute infringements of fundamental rights (fair trial, freedom of information and expression, freedom to demonstrate, etc) and affect all key political and civil players – elected representatives, the press, academics, students, journalists, military officers and, of course, the Kurds. The committee also urges the Turkish authorities to find a legal solution to the detention on remand of eight members of parliament elected in June 2011, which obviously hampers the exercise of their political mandates.

The committee hopes for a favourable outcome to the present situation. In this context, it is following very closely the work of the conciliation committee, which should lead to the drafting of a civilian-oriented Constitution. The committee invites the Turkish authorities to draw on the Venice Commission’s expertise in order to ensure that the institutional balances and the guarantee of constitutional freedoms comply with the Council of Europe’s standards. As the 2014 presidential election and the 2015 parliamentary elections draw nearer, 2013 will be a decisive year for finding concrete solutions”.