

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Progress report — Main activities
(1 August — 31 December 2020)

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During the second quarter of 2020, our **first priority** was to ensure that the Assembly continues and expands its activities, as well as completes its workplan for 2020. To achieve this, I proposed an approach which combined institutional innovation and strategic focus. Thus, the Assembly's Enlarged Standing Committee, which was open for participation to all members of the Assembly, adopted two sets of reports dealing respectively with the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the human rights aspects of the use of artificial intelligence. Upholding equality and promoting the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence was one of the key transversal priorities of our activities.

Our **second priority** was to make sure that the Assembly could continue to carry out its functions, work and activities in 2021, despite the continued difficulties and negative consequences of the pandemic. This was the aim of "Operation PACE Reboot". Our objective was to create a possibility within our Rules for holding, in exceptional cases, "hybrid" or fully remote meetings of the Assembly. At the same time, we aimed at allowing the Assembly to fulfil its conventional and statutory obligations of electing judges to the European Court of Human Rights and highest officials of the Council of Europe through a complementary electoral procedure.

Our **third priority** during this period was to continue making the case for environment as a human right, promoting the idea of drafting an additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights granting substantive protection to the right to live in a healthy, safe and clean environment. In promoting this idea, PACE President worked closely with all the members and relevant committees of the Assembly, the Presidencies of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and other relevant entities within the organisation. In parallel, the President engaged in discussions at the highest political level with partners in other regional and international organisations, preparing the ground for a comprehensive Assembly debate on environment as a human right, with the participation of World leading personalities.

Our **fourth priority** was to continue reinforcing intra-institutional relations with the Council of Europe through the triologue dynamic. Thus, we addressed, in a co-ordinated and complementary fashion, political issues such as the situation in Belarus following the 9 August 2020 presidential election.

Our **fifth priority** was to continue strengthening the links with national parliaments and international partners. Thus, a number of national hearings, with the participation of Assembly representatives and Council of Europe experts, were organised in the framework of the "virtual Route 47". At the same time, PACE President addressed several partner international assemblies and carried out several working visits to member States as well as to the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

In **2021**, the Assembly will build upon the ongoing dynamic by supporting the German Presidency in promoting the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as by advocating for a principled approach to environment as a human right and supporting the drafting of a legally binding instrument governing the human rights aspects of the use of artificial intelligence. The Assembly shall continue to champion equality and promote the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence as the most advanced and comprehensive legally binding treaty to end violence against women and girls.

Rik Daems
President of the Parliamentary Assembly

Completing the Assembly's 2020 workplan: thematic focus on Covid-19 and artificial intelligence

During the first quarter of 2020, the activities of the Assembly were marked by the effects of the unprecedented Covid-19 public health emergency which resulted in lockdowns in most of the Council of Europe member States. As mentioned in my previous report, thanks to an innovative and creative approach to organising the work of the Assembly, the use of new communication technologies to organise online meetings and events, combined with the commitment and hard work of Assembly members and of its Secretariat, the Assembly continued to be fully operational.

During the second quarter of 2020, our **first priority** was to ensure that the Assembly continues and expands its activities to complete its workplan for 2020 and successfully deliver on expected results.

To achieve this, PACE President led efforts that resulted in an approach which combined **institutional innovation** and **strategic focus**.

As regards institutional aspects, in the light of the evolution of the Covid-19 situation over summer, it became clear that sanitary conditions could not allow holding a physical part-session of the Assembly in October 2020. Therefore, PACE President, in close consultation and coordination with the governing structures of the Assembly, advised replacing this part-session by a series of remote meetings of the **Standing Committee** whose meetings would be open to all members of the Assembly (the so-called “enlarged” Standing Committee). The aim was to allow as many members as possible to participate in the debates, voicing a wide range of opinions across the political spectrum. Thus, **5 enlarged meetings of the Standing Committee were organised**, respectively on 15 September, 12-13 October, 22-23 October, 20 November, and 4 December 2020.

As regards the substantive priorities of the Assembly's work, PACE President suggested sharpening the focus of the Assembly activities on the basis of a **thematic approach**, by grouping reports dealing with two major issues, respectively, the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and artificial intelligence. This approach allowed to better co-ordinate the work of our Committees and to seek synergies with the Greek and German Presidencies of the Committee of Ministers.

Regarding **the consequences of Covid-19 pandemic**, the Assembly adopted five reports, as follows:

- ▶ Lessons for the future from an effective and rights-based response to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- ▶ Democracies facing the Covid-19 pandemic;
- ▶ The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights and the rule of law;
- ▶ Humanitarian consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic for migrants and refugees;
- ▶ Upholding human rights in times of crisis and pandemics: gender, equality and non-discrimination.

The Resolutions and Recommendations adopted were taken into account in the drafting of the Athens Declaration proposed by the Greek Presidency. Addressing the **130th Session of the Committee of Ministers**, PACE President welcomed the Athens Declaration as a political response to the very difficult situation surrounding Covid-19, outlining the red lines not to be crossed when it comes to upholding democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Subsequently, the extended Standing Committee taking place on 20 November 2020, held a current affairs

debate and unanimously adopted an Assembly **Declaration** endorsing the Athens declaration by the Greek Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

The Standing Committee's Declaration defined the Assembly's work plan for follow-up on the situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, including the preparation of **five additional** reports as follows:

- ▶ The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education and culture;
- ▶ Impact of Covid-19 on children's rights;
- ▶ Towards a Covid-19 vaccine: ethical, legal and practical considerations;
- ▶ Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic;
- ▶ Protecting the pillars of democracy during health crises.

As far as **artificial intelligence** is concerned, seven reports were adopted, addressing various aspects and implications of the use of artificial intelligence for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as follows:

- ▶ The need for democratic governance of artificial intelligence;
- ▶ Preventing discrimination caused by the use of artificial intelligence;
- ▶ The role of artificial intelligence in policing and criminal justice systems;
- ▶ Medical, legal and ethical challenges posed by the use of AI;
- ▶ Artificial intelligence and labour markets;
- ▶ Legal aspects of 'autonomous' vehicles;
- ▶ The brain-computer interface: new rights or new threats to fundamental freedoms.

The Assembly's Resolutions and Recommendations fed into the priorities of the German Presidency and into the work of the intergovernmental sector.

On 15 December 2020, PACE President presented the main conclusions of the Assembly's work at the plenary meeting of the **Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI)**. Addressing the CAHAI, PACE President commended the intergovernmental experts for preparing a comprehensive feasibility study about legal regulations governing the use of artificial intelligence. Pointing out that self-regulation and ethical principles were not sufficient and appropriate for addressing the human rights implications of artificial intelligence, PACE President strongly advocated in favour of the drafting of a binding legal instrument in this field. The Assembly will continue to follow and support the work of the CAHAI in 2021.

Finally, it is important to mention that gender mainstreaming as a transversal and cross-cutting issue remains in focus of the work and activities of the Assembly. The Assembly has prepared several important reports and issued useful recommendations with regard to promoting **equality and combating violence against women**. The Covid-19 pandemic further exacerbated inequalities and disproportionately affected women. The Assembly took the position that the dramatic increase in violence against women during lockdowns is a dangerous set back which must be urgently addressed. In this context, the Assembly continued to actively support the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) and took a firm stand against attacks and deliberate misrepresentations of the Convention which seek to hinder its effective implementation and block the process of further signatures and ratifications. The Assembly continues to advocate for the importance and added value of the Convention and its contribution to eradicate violence against women and domestic violence and to promote gender equality. The Assembly has warned that questioning the objectives of the Convention is not compatible with the values of human dignity and fundamental rights as laid out in the standards of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Istanbul Convention.

Preparing for the future: “Operation PACE Reboot”

Our **second priority** was to make sure that the Assembly could continue to carry out its functions, work and activities in 2021, despite the continued difficulties and negative consequences of the pandemic. This was the aim of “Operation PACE Reboot”.

The main objective of “Operation PACE Reboot” was to **adapt the Assembly Rules to the new situation**, by creating a possibility for holding, in **exceptional cases**, “hybrid” or fully remote meetings of the Assembly. At the same time, we decided to introduce a complementary electoral procedure for the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights and highest officials of the Council of Europe, which could be activated in exceptional situations where the Assembly is not able to meet in a full physical format. Thus, the Assembly would be able to continue fulfilling its **statutory and conventional obligations**.

The Bureau of the Assembly asked its Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs to prepare the necessary amendments. The report was unanimously approved by the enlarged Standing Committee on 20 November 2020. The adoption of changes to the Rules allowed the Bureau of the Assembly, meeting on 9 December 2020, to convene, the first part of the 2021 plenary session of the Assembly in a “hybrid” format allowing for both physical and remote presence of members.

In parallel, PACE President and the Secretary General of the Assembly, held several **consultations with the French authorities**, to ensure that all necessary measures, including onsite testing during the Assembly week, were put in place and that sanitary protocols and physical distancing requirements would be duly respected. PACE President also addressed a **letter to the Speakers of Parliaments of all Council of Europe member States** looking for their support and encouraging them to create the necessary conditions for the members of the Assembly to participate in the January 2021 part-session, irrespective of whether they travel to Strasbourg, or connect remotely through videoconference.

It is important to point out that the holding of hybrid or remote meetings of the Assembly and its bodies is and should remain an **exceptional measure**. As soon as the Covid-19 situation improves and sanitary and travel restrictions are lifted, the Assembly shall resume its normal functioning in the format of physical meetings. Networking and personal contacts between parliamentarians from the 47 member States, special guests, observer states and partners for democracy are essential not only for the good functioning of the Assembly but also for the effective functioning of parliamentary co-operation and diplomacy.

Addressing the new generation of human rights: making the case for environment as a human right

Our **third priority** was to continue making the case for environment as a human right, promoting the idea of drafting an **additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights** granting substantive protection to the right to live in a healthy, safe and clean environment. In this regard, Assembly work continued to build upon the results of the Georgian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, which chose environment and human rights as one of its key priorities.

The **Conference “Human Rights for the Planet”** organised at the European Court on Human Rights provided an opportunity to present the priorities of the President in this regard and the Assembly’s plans for work in this area. Acknowledging the role and contribution of the European Court of Human Rights which has addressed environment indirectly through its case law, PACE President argued that an approach based solely on case-law was not sustainable in the long run. The President made the case for the need for a **paradigm shift** looking at environment as a question of principle and not simply as a policy issue.

Furthermore, PACE President raised the issue of environment as a human right during high level meetings including with António Guterres, **United Nations Secretary-General**, Angel Gurría, **Secretary-General of the OECD** and **His Holiness Pope Francis**. Assembly interlocutors shared the view that environment should be given substantive human rights protection and supported the Council of Europe’s ambition to become the key regional human rights organisation to uphold this principle. They also agreed on the need and importance of exploring synergies that could be developed further regarding climate change and the provision of support to member States in “greening” their economies and promoting sustainable development.

In the spirit of a thematic approach, the work of the Assembly’s general committees will be focused on the environmental agenda, so as to produce, for one of our forthcoming part-sessions in 2021, a set of reports addressing the various aspects of environment and human rights and, eventually, come up with concrete recommendations on legally binding and non-binding instruments, as well as policy measures to be taken by governments and parliaments.

Thus, the following **reports** are currently being prepared:

- ▶ The climate crisis and the rule of law;
- ▶ Anchoring the right to healthy environment: need for enhanced action by the Council of Europe;
- ▶ Addressing issues of criminal and civil liability in the context of climate change;
- ▶ More participatory democracy to tackle climate change;
- ▶ Addressing inequalities in access to environmental rights;
- ▶ Climate and migration;
- ▶ Research policies and environment protection;
- ▶ Inaction on climate change – a violation of children’s rights;
- ▶ Impact of armed conflicts on transboundary environmental damage.

We shall aim at grouping these in a comprehensive debate during the forthcoming part-sessions, with the participation of World leading personalities and other relevant society actors.

Intra-institutional relations within the Council of Europe: enhancing the “trialogue” dynamic

Our **fourth priority** during this period, was to continue and strengthen **trialogue consultations** as a useful tool for co-ordinating the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General, especially in response to major political challenges.

The **situation in Belarus** following the 9 August 2020 presidential election was one of these challenges. Speaking on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly in reaction to mass protests and the disproportionate use of force by the law enforcement and the military against peaceful protesters, PACE President called on the authorities to **put an immediate halt to violence**, to release all those detained and to promptly conduct a transparent, comprehensive and impartial investigation into all cases of police violence and brutality. Furthermore, PACE President expressed strong concerns about the fact that, due to reported irregularities in the voting process and a flawed electoral system, the election was far from free and fair and did not meet the international standards for democratic elections and Belarus’s commitments under international human rights instruments.

Following consultations in the trialogue format, the PACE President, the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General issued **two joint statements** calling upon Belarus to live up to its international commitments by respecting fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly, as well as urgently initiating a **broad-based and inclusive national dialogue**, fully involving civil society, to ensure a peaceful way out of the current crisis and opening the door for necessary reforms benefiting all Belarusian citizens. Furthermore, the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy held, on 8 September 2020, a hearing with the participation of the PACE President, the former Belarusian presidential candidate Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, and a representative of the Parliament of Belarus.

Currently, the Assembly is working on the preparation of **three reports** addressing the various aspects of the situation in Belarus and supporting the search for a national solution to the major political crisis the country is experiencing as follows:

- ▶ Urgent need for electoral reform in Belarus;
- ▶ Human rights violations in Belarus require an international investigation;
- ▶ Call for an inclusive national political process in Belarus.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that the Assembly’s enlarged Standing Committee held, on 15 September 2020, a current affairs debate on the situation in Belarus and adopted a **Declaration calling for a democratic, broad-based and inclusive political process in Belarus**. Subsequently, the situation in Belarus and the Council of Europe’s response was discussed within the **Joint Committee**.

The situation in Belarus will continue to be among the priorities of the Assembly activities in 2021 and in focus of intra-institutional cooperation in the framework of the trialogue. Co-operation and co-ordination within the trialogue framework will seek to explore avenues for dialogue with all political actors in Belarus and promote Council of Europe standards, expertise and good practices to ensure that Pan-European standards of democracy, human rights and the rule of law guide domestic reforms, including the constitutional and electoral reforms, which should be implemented in an inclusive, open and transparent political process.

During 2021, the Assembly will continue working within the trialogue logic, seeking a better co-ordination between the statutory bodies and the Secretary General regarding political issues as well as the strategic priorities of the Council of Europe.

Relations with national parliaments and international partners: “virtual Route 47”

Our **fifth priority** was to continue developing relations with national parliaments and international partners. During this period, national parliaments continued to organise **hearings on the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic**, focusing on issues where the Council of Europe could bring valuable expertise. PACE President intervened by videoconference in several of these meetings.

The **Spanish Senate** organised a hearing on the impact of the pandemic on the social rights of persons with disabilities, with the participation of Mr Raul Canosa Usera, member of the European Committee on Social Rights for Spain. In the **Belgian Senate**, the Assembly contributed to a hearing organised by the Committee on Institutional Affairs on the response of Council of Europe member States to the consequences on the Covid-19 pandemic, with the participation of Mr Piero Fassino, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, and a senior official from the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe. At the **Albanian parliament**, PACE President and the Assembly's General Rapporteur on violence against women, Ms Zita Gurmai, contributed to a hearing on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on women.

The Assembly continued to develop further the co-operation with international parliamentary assemblies. PACE President participated in the remote **5th World Conference of Presidents of Parliaments** (19 August 2020) organised by the Inter-parliamentary Union, highlighting the Assembly's work on addressing the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and flagging the role of national parliaments in addressing global strategic challenges such as climate change and environment as a human right. Addressing the Council of the **Inter-parliamentary Assembly of member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States** (IPA-CIS, 27 November 2020), PACE President shared with the Speakers of Parliaments of CIS member States the Assembly reports on the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and appealed for support for the development of a binding legal instrument granting substantive protection to the right to live in a healthy, safe and clean environment. PACE President also addressed a video message to the plenary session of the **Benelux parliament**, which held a thematic debate on lessons learnt from the pandemic (11 December 2020).

PACE President further developed and strengthened contacts with our partners at the United Nations, in particular during his **working visit to the United Nations** Headquarters in New York, where he met the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination, and the President of the United Nations General Assembly. Discussions focused on issues of common interest such as environment as a human right, addressing the consequences and impact of Covid-19, upholding human rights, advancing gender equality and eradicating violence against women.

PACE President's visits to Italy, the Vatican, Greece, Russian Federation, Portugal and the UN Headquarters in New York, provided an opportunity to hold high level meetings and promote the work of PACE, garner support for its priority areas of work and activities, strengthen cooperation with national parliaments and other regional and international partners to increase the impact of our work, and explore possibilities for cooperation with the relevant parliamentary structures in the United States (the Congress and the Senate).

The way forward: 2021 thematic priorities

The year 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges in many respects, not least due to the prolonged duration and the significant dramatic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on our lives, our societies, our democratic institutions and fundamental freedoms.

If there was one lesson we should learn from the pandemic, we should, without hesitation, highlight the importance of fundamental freedoms and multilateral co-operation.

We should never take for granted the fundamental freedoms that form the cornerstone of our societies. They can be upheld and strengthened only through dialogue and co-operation, based on mutual respect and adherence to the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

“Interests divide, but values unite” was the thrust of PACE President’s political message upon his election, in January 2020. Today, this message is as never before relevant and appropriate to guide our work and actions in the course of 2021. **Upholding the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law is the shared interest of the 47 member States** of the Council of Europe and beyond.

Therefore, during 2021, **the Assembly should continue to address the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic** on our democratic institutions and fundamental rights as well as to promote an equal, inclusive, multilateral and right-based approach to vaccination.

At the same time, the Assembly should intensify efforts to address **strategic political priorities**.

One of these should be to strengthen the Pan-European character of the system of the European Convention on Human Rights, by **supporting the accession of the European Union to the European Convention**. We should therefore work in full co-ordination with the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, which has set EU accession to ECHR as one of its priorities.

Equally, we should **address the emerging new generation of rights**, such as artificial intelligence and environment. Building upon our conventions which set unique and ground-breaking legal standards as well as the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, we should continue to provide political **support to the drafting of a legally-binding instrument governing the human rights aspects of the use of artificial intelligence**. At the same time, we should continue making the case for **substantive legal guarantees to environment as a human right in the form of an Additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights**.

Finally, we must continue to **champion equality and non-discrimination**, in particular by combating manifestations of hate and sexism especially in the political sphere, as well as by preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The **Istanbul Convention** which is increasingly being challenged at domestic and international level **must be strongly supported and upheld**.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF STATEMENTS

August – December 2020

21/12/2020 | An end-of-year message from Rik Daems: stay healthy, stay safe, and let's work together to tackle the challenges of 21

14/12/2020 | Heads of UN and PACE: building a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment must become 'a binding principle'

09/12/2020 | Two priorities for Human Rights Day: a healthy democracy and a healthy environment

01/12/2020 | PACE President to take part in the North-South Prize of the Council of Europe Award Ceremony in Lisbon

26/11/2020 | PACE President and Speaker of the Moroccan House of Representatives satisfied with relations between the two bodies

25/11/2020 | A practical step parliaments can take to help stamp out violence against women

23/11/2020 | PACE President hails Assembly's backing for Athens Declaration on how democracies face pandemics

20/11/2020 | PACE President deplores attacks on the head of the PACE delegation which observed Georgian elections

04/11/2020 | Life will be different when the crisis is over, but the values and freedoms we share should stay the same

03/11/2020 | PACE President condemns terrorist attack in Vienna

06/10/2020 | A legal right to a healthy environment would push governments and parliaments to "go green"

13/10/2020 | Belarus: Council of Europe leaders make joint statement

09/10/2020 | The death penalty is an inhuman and degrading punishment and its prohibition is a fundamental principle of the Council of Europe

14/09/2020 | PACE President on Democracy Day: 'We must reach out to citizens and restore trust in democracy'

27/08/2020 | Belarus: joint statement by the Committee of Ministers President, PACE President and Secretary General

18/08/2020 | Belarus: PACE President encourages an all-inclusive national political process and democratic reforms

10/08/2020 | Presidential election in Belarus: PACE President applauds the courage and determination of Belarus people, especially women, and calls on authorities to respect human rights and rule of law standards

APPENDIX II

PRESS REVIEW

PACE President Rik Daems – Selected media coverage listing (August to December 2020)

1. Μήνυμα Daems: Μείνετε ασφαλείς και έτοιμοι να αντιμετωπίσετε νέες προκλήσεις
[21/12/2020], Reporter.gr
2. Recht op gezond en leefbaar milieu wordt mensenrecht
[11/12/2020], Agentschap Belga
3. Le président de l'APCE salue le rôle de S.M. le Roi Mohammed VI dans le monde arabe et Son implication dans la lutte contre les changements climatiques
[27/11/2020], Le Matin
4. APCE : Chaque jour, 137 femmes en moyenne dans le monde sont tuées par un partenaire ou un membre de la famille
[26/11/2020], Ukraine Nouvelles
5. Committed to combating violence against women, Council of Europe announces co-operation between its Parliamentary Assembly and European Parliament
[26/11/2020], Agence Europe
6. Council of Europe reaffirms its commitment to protection of children against sexual abuse and warns about images produced by children themselves
[20/11/2020], Agence Europe
7. La Convention européenne des droits de l'homme a 70 ans
[04/11/2020], Ukrinform
8. Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe calls for international convention to regulate artificial intelligence
[23/10/2020], Agence Europe
9. Parliamentary Assembly adopts a new working method in order to carry more weight in decision-making process
[22/10/2020], Agence Europe
10. Human rights must not be collateral victim of COVID-19, warns Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
[15/10/2020], Agence Europe
11. Council of Europe leaders condemn continued violence against protesters in Belarus
[14/10/2020], Belapan
12. Rik Daems, le Président belge qui ne lâche pas Strasbourg
[14/10/2020], DNA
13. Rik Daems: Η θανατική ποινή είναι απάνθρωπη και εξευτελιστική τιμωρία!
[09/10/2020], Reporter.gr

14. Council of Europe is considering possibility of including right to healthy environment in European Convention on Human Rights
[06/10/2020], Agence Europe
15. Le Président de l'Assemblée parlementaire reçu en audience papale évoque l'environnement, les violences faites aux femmes et l'unité européenne
[23/09/2020], Agence Europe
16. Rik Daems évoque l'importance de la cohésion européenne avec le Pape : « nous étions sur la même longueur d'onde »
[22/09/2020], La Libre Belgique
17. Le Pape a reçu le Président de l'APCE, le sénateur belge Rik Daems
[21/09/2020], Agence belge / RTBF
18. Council of Europe's objective remains accession of Belarus, says Parliamentary Assembly
[15/09/2020], Agence Europe
19. Rik Daems (Open VLD): "Nous voulons faire partie de la solution en Biélorussie"
[13/09/2020], La Libre Belgique
20. Solution will only come from the Belarusian people, says PACE President
[08/09/2020], Panorama / The Armenian Reporter
21. Bélarus : l'ex-candidate Svetlana Tikhanovskaïa appelle l'Europe à agir plus
[08/09/2020], Euronews
22. Belarus: opponent Svetlana Tikhanovskaya was heard by Political Affairs Committee of Council of Europe
[08/09/2020], Agence Europe
23. PACE President interview on Belarus
[08/09/2020], BBC News
24. Президент ПАСЕ: Беларуси необходимы всеобъемлющий национальный политический процесс и демократические реформы
[18/08/2020], Belapan
25. Президент ПАСЕ: Аплодирую смелости и решимости белорусского народа
[11/08/2020], Belapan
26. Выборы в Белоруссии были далеки от свободных и справедливых, считает глава ПАСЕ
[10/08/2020], RIA Novosti, RT, Izvestia
27. Глава ПАСЕ усомнился в честности белорусских выборов
[10/08/2020], TASS, Ren TV, Moskovskiy Komsomolets

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. The Parliamentary Assembly, consisting of representatives from the 47 national parliaments, provides a forum for debate and proposals on Europe's social and political issues. Many Council of Europe conventions originate from the Assembly, including the European Convention on Human Rights.

