

Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

No Hate Parliamentary Alliance

NEWS FEED

2014-2017

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2017

Roma genocide: remembering the past to strengthen the fight against prejudice



Strasbourg, 02 August 2017 - *PACE's General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance makes a declaration on the occasion of International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day*

“On the occasion of International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day, I call on the member States of the Council of Europe to strengthen their efforts to ensure that sites where Roma were persecuted and exterminated during World War II are recognised and that the public knows about the horrific crimes that were committed against Roma during this conflict,” said the PACE’s General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), speaking on the eve of this event (2 August 2017).

“In these troubling times of rising populism and as more and more survivors of the genocide pass away, International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day reminds us that there is still much to be done. Today more than ever, places of remembrance must allow us to preserve the memory of victims while promoting tolerance and mutual understanding, so as to strengthen the fight against discrimination today,” she said.

“Remembrance is not an abstract thing. We must apply the memory of the past to present events, to give meaning to Europe today,” she concluded.

[Link to the press release](#)

Italian parliament's Jo Cox Committee on hate, intolerance, xenophobia and racism adopts final report



Rome, 06 July 2017 - *The Jo Cox Committee adopted its final report.*

on how to counter them.

In May 2016, accepting a call addressed to parliaments of Council of Europe member States by the No Hate Alliance, Italy's Chamber of Deputies set up a special committee on hate, intolerance, xenophobia and racism, in charge of studying hate phenomena and providing recommendations

This committee, composed of one member of parliament for each political group, as well as independent experts and representatives of international governmental and non-governmental organisations, was chaired by Speaker Laura Boldrini. It was later named after Jo Cox, the British parliamentarian murdered during the Brexit referendum campaign. Deputy Secretary General Gabriella Battaini Dragoni and two members of the secretariat, respectively of ECRI and the Parliamentary Assembly, represented the Council of Europe within the committee.

On 6 July 2017, the Jo Cox Committee adopted its final report. The document presents evidence of high levels of prejudice and misinformation in Italy, with widespread forms of intolerance and discrimination based on grounds such as gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity. The report describes a "pyramid of hate", an effective visual representation of how negative stereotyping and misrepresentation, which

constitute the base of the pyramid, lead to discrimination and then to hate speech, which in turn escalates into hate crimes.

While it cooperated with the Council of Europe and made use of its work, including ECRI general policy recommendations and PACE adopted texts, the Jo Cox Committee collected and processed indications from a variety of actors at national level. The conclusions and recommendations presented in the final report, however, may be of interest for those committed to countering hatred and intolerance also beyond the boundaries of Italy.

- [Press release](#)
- [Summary of the main findings of the Jo Cox Committee](#)
- [Recommendations by the Jo Cox Committee](#)
- [Full report by the Jo Cox Committee \(Italian only\)](#)

‘We must break the cycle of ignorance and anti-Gypsyism’



Strasbourg, 08 April 2017 - *General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance makes a declaration on the occasion of International Roma Day*

“Discrimination against and exclusion of Roma and Travellers must give way once and for all to recognition and inclusion” said Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, on the occasion of International Roma Day (8 April 2017). “On this day of commemoration, we should commit ourselves to engaging actively in promoting better knowledge of the culture and history of Roma and Travellers and improving intercultural coexistence.”

“As the Assembly underlined in its recent [Resolution 2153 \(2017\)](#), nobody’s life chances should be determined by their ethnic origin,” Ms Santerini stressed.

“Integrating Roma and Travellers is in everyone’s interests, and more and more States are adopting strategies to this effect. But for such initiatives to have a lasting impact, it is crucial to fight anti-Gypsyism and combat prejudices and stereotypes. Today more than ever, I invite national parliaments, political leaders and citizens to mobilise against anti-Gypsyism and all forms of racism and intolerance,” she concluded.

[Link to the press release](#)

Places of remembrance and cultural institutions



Paris, 21 March 2017 – *The Alliance held a hearing on places of remembrance and cultural institutions as tools to counter hatred*

Once again we are witnessing “a very worrisome spike in antisemitic, anti-Roma, islamophobic and especially anti-refugees and migrants rhetoric”, Valeriu Nicolae, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues, told members of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance on 21 March 2017 in Paris.

How to counter this rhetoric and the risk that it may escalate further, as already happened in History more than once? Preserving the memory of the times when prejudice turned into discrimination, violence and even genocide is one of the many ways to fight against hatred today. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has pursued this mission since it was established in 1993, and has received over 40 million visitors, as Paul Shapiro, Director of the Museum's Centre for Advanced Holocaust Studies, explained to Alliance members. The Museum aims to be a living memorial and not only a collection of objects and documents.

The European Commission, which fights against all forms of racism and xenophobia, established in 2015 the posts of Coordinator on combating anti-Semitism, held by Katharina Von Schnurbein, and Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred, held by David Friggieri who took part in this meeting of the Alliance. The two Coordinators act as contact points for the Muslim and Jewish communities, liaise with international organisations, EU member States, European institutions and civil society, with a view to strengthening policies against antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred. Countering these scourges, Mr Friggieri said, should not be left to Jews and Muslims alone, as it is a responsibility for society at large.

Places of remembrance of the Holocaust are numerous across our continent, showing that the extermination of Jews, as Mr Shapiro affirmed, was “a European project”. Sites where the memory of discrimination against Roma may be preserved and shared also exist, and the same applies to islamophobia, xenophobia and slavery. Many of them should be recognised as places of remembrance, or better organised and promoted as such.

The No Hate Alliance will continue to work on these themes, also in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and traditional partners such as national parliaments and the No Hate Speech Campaign. All those who are aware of manifestations of hatred and discrimination in Europe should get involved. Pretending not to see and failing to take action, as History should have taught us, turns us into accomplices.

[Link to press release](#)

[Link to agenda](#)

A manifesto for keeping the internet free from racial hatred



Paris, 21 March 2017 – The Committee on Equality and Non-discrimination continues to support the No Hate Alliance as an initiative to combat hate speech.

On the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March), the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) renewed its commitment to combating racism and hatred in all their forms:

"The internet must become a safe public and private space for open and pluralist debates, where freedom of expression is fully respected. The internet has unfortunately offered fresh outlets for hatred. Yet, the committee is convinced that everyone, all users and service and platform providers has a crucial role to play in complying with the rules and spreading greater respect for individual dignity and integrity on the web. The internet should be a platform for opportunity rather than a vehicle for danger, fear and hate.

In line with the Assembly's recent resolution on “Ending cyberdiscrimination and online hate”, the committee urges member States, civil society and other relevant players to take measures to foster a common culture for the responsible use of the internet. Comprehensive strategies and countermeasures should be developed and implemented on a daily basis to prevent and tackle online hate speech, and combat the manipulation of information and public opinion.

The committee strongly supports initiatives against hate speech, such as those of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, as well as numerous civil society organisations and individuals who work daily towards a more accountable internet. More needs to be done to raise awareness of the need to resolutely combat online racism.

For their part, governments and parliaments must enact strong laws to regulate online content and promote ethical conduct, providing for proper complaint systems and criminal sanctions to ensure that perpetrators are brought to account."

[Link to press release](#)

[Resolution 2144 \(2017\) on Ending cyberdiscrimination and online hate](#)

Berlin: conference on the rise of online hate and conspiracy theories

Berlin, 13 February 2017 – *The Alliance participated in a conference in Berlin organised in conjunction with the German Parliament on the rise of online hate and conspiracy theories*



There is an increasing number of instances of online hate speech and conspiracy theories. What is the reason for this? Who are the victims? Does online hate speech give rise to real violence against particular groups? What dangers do conspiracy theories pose? Does this have an impact on the public perception of journalism and are the media currently experiencing a crisis of trust? Should politicians be coming up with counter-measures?

These questions will lie at the heart of a conference in Berlin on 13 February organised by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in conjunction with the Bundestag, as part of the activities of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance.

Speakers will include Caren Marks, State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth; Gerd Billen, State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection; Frank Schwabe (Germany, SOC), Vice-Chair of the German delegation to PACE; Gabriela Heinrich (Germany, SOC), the initiator of the conference; and other members of the Bundestag.

Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE), Ambassador of the No Hate Speech Movement; Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), PACE General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, and Co-ordinator of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance; Cécile Kyenge, Co-president of ARDI (European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup); Sascha Lobo, blogger and online journalist, along with experts and academics will also make a contribution.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Conference programme](#)

[Live stream \(only for Panel 2 on “The impact of online hate speech and conspiracy theories”\)](#)

2016

Sarajevo: Combating intolerance and discrimination by countering hate speech



Sarajevo, 15 December 2016 - *The Alliance participated in a national seminar on the role of parliamentarians in combating hate speech hosted by the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

A seminar on “Combating intolerance and discrimination by countering hate speech: the role of parliaments” was held at the National Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo on 15 December, in the framework of the activities of the PACE No Hate Parliamentary Alliance. It was the first seminar organised within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015-2017.

Speakers included, in particular, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minister of Human Rights and Refugees, and representatives of the Ombudsman’s Office and civil society.

In the road map for activities for the period 2016-2017, the No Hate Alliance decided to hold a series of national seminars aiming on one hand to take stock of the situation in specific Council of Europe member States as regards hatred, racism and intolerance, and on the other hand to discuss measures to counter these phenomena.

These seminars involve, in addition to national members of the No Hate Alliance, also representatives of the Council of Europe Youth Sector’s No Hate Speech Movement campaign and the member of ECRI in respect of the country concerned. The aim is to consolidate synergies between different bodies of the Council of Europe working to combat racism and intolerance, and to reach out to civil society organisations active in this field.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Link to programme](#)

Anne Brasseur: ‘Let’s be stronger than racism, fear and hate’



Strasbourg, 15-16 December 2016 - *The Alliance participated in the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament in Strasbourg.*

of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and Ambassador of the No Hate Speech Movement, addressing the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament today.

“There are three elements, among others, which put our democratic systems under threat: poverty, corruption and hatred, said Anne Brasseur, member

Ms Brasseur made proposals in order to mobilise parliaments against hateful and racist societies forming in the member States. “Despite their political differences, parliamentarians should take up their responsibilities, draw together a red line and say no to hate speech, such as through the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and by using Council of Europe’s tools,” she said.

“They should also provide space in public debates to voices of minorities and those that are targets of hate speech – usually the same, that is women, LGBTIQ people, refugees, Roma, Muslims, and those who are considered as being “others”, she added.

Finally, she encouraged parliamentarians to promote access to social rights and strengthen human rights education, “a tool to empower young people to reject hate speech and discriminative narratives”.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Theme 3 – Mobilisation of Parliaments against hate for inclusive and non-racist societies](#)

[Video of the debate \(morning\)](#)

[Interview with Anne Brasseur](#)

The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance at the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament



Strasbourg, 15-16 December 2016 - *The Alliance participated in the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament in Strasbourg.*

What is the role of parliaments in response to the migration and refugee crisis? How to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law? How can parliaments counter hate and promote inclusive, non-racist societies? These and many more questions were debated in Strasbourg on 15 and 16 September 2016, at the European Conference

of Presidents of Parliament.

Over 350 delegates attended the Conference. Among them, several members of the No Hate Alliance, as well as Ms Anne Brasseur, Ambassador of the Council of Europe No Hate Speech Movement. Together with Mr Norbert Lammert, President of the German Bundestag, Ms Brasseur opened one of the three main sections of the Conference, on *Mobilisation of parliaments against hate and for inclusive societies*. During the debates, the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance was praised on several occasions.

In the lobby of the Assembly Chamber, an information booth was set to up to provide participants with information and documents on the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the No Hate Speech Movement Campaign. Parliamentarians, members of the secretariat and several Presidents consulted and collected the Charter of commitments for membership of the No Hate Alliance and various information material. The Golden book of the Alliance has a few more signatories: most notably those of Mr Vicenç Mateu Zamora, Syndic of the General Council of Andorra, Mr Olemic Thommessen, President of the Norwegian Parliament and Mr Janko Veber, President of the Slovenian Parliament.

[Link to the press release](#)

“We must talk about Afrophobia to prevent it becoming commonplace”



Paris, 5 December 2016 - *the Alliance held a hearing on violence and discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin.*

“While some types of ‘neo-racism’ based on supposedly cultural grounds do exist in Europe, traditional racism based on skin colour has never disappeared from our societies”, said Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), co-ordinator of the PACE No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, at the opening in Paris of a hearing on violence and discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin.

Cécile Kyenge, member of the European Parliament, Co-president of ARDI (European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup) and Chair of ARDI’s working group on Afrophobia, called on the participants to speak out against Afrophobia.

“We must talk about it, because the problem is being trivialised today in our societies with the aim of playing down its importance and gravity”. According to Ms Kyenge, it manifests itself most often in daily life, through the confirmation of stereotypes. “I was a victim myself as a black woman and doctor, when I was looking to rent a flat and people would ask me ‘where’s the doctor?’ and as a black woman and minister, when they would ask ‘why do you have that job?’ Now, more than ever before, anti-black racism must be recognised and combated. We need more education, greater efforts in terms of memory and better understanding of history. And we must all play our part,” she said in conclusion.

Momodou Malcolm Jallow, Vice-Chair of the European Network Against Racism (ENAR), member of the City Council of Malmö (Sweden) and Chair of the Pan-African Movement for Justice, made similar comments.

“Many people claim not to know that the problem really exists, which prevents the adoption of appropriate, effective policies to combat it”, he said. Only knowledge of the actual situation based on objective statistics would make it possible to implement effective policies. In Europe, blacks suffer discrimination in access to healthcare, housing and employment, and would often be victims of police repression or hate crimes. “To combat the problem, we must acknowledge it, talk about it and draw up policies at European level. The 15 million blacks in Europe and their rights must be respected,” he added.

Pham Huu Uyen, member of the Czech Republic’s Government Council for National Minorities, painted a much more optimistic picture of the situation of the Vietnamese minority in the Czech Republic, who are thought to number some 70 000. After difficult years for the generation who arrived in Czechoslovakia before the 1990s, today’s generation were integrating well. “The challenge now is gaining recognition as a national minority, as they do not currently have that status under Czech law,” he said in conclusion.

[Link to press release](#)

Milena Santerini: 'In combating radicalisation we must uphold fundamental freedoms'



Paris, 8 September 2016 - *The Alliance held a national seminar on combating racism, hatred and intolerance in France (Senate).*

“It is essential to strike a balance between the fight against radicalisation and respect for fundamental freedoms,” said Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), PACE general rapporteur on the fight against

racism and intolerance and co-ordinator of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, opening the seminar on the fight against racism, hatred and intolerance in France which was held at the French Senate as part of the Alliance’s programme of activities.

“Disproportionately limiting freedom of expression would be to fall into the trap set for us by the terrorists and to undermine the founding values of our European democracies,” Ms Santerini added. “The fight against hatred

requires patience, dialogue and inclusion. The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance believes that all forms of discrimination must be combated simultaneously, as they are closely intertwined and all stem from a common root,” she said.

“France has a sound and comprehensive legal and institutional framework to combat racism and intolerance,” said Nicole Duranton, French Senator and member of the Alliance in her speech.

“Nonetheless, in the dramatic context in which we find ourselves, we see a rise in the number of Islamophobic and anti-Semitic words and deeds.” With regard to hate speech on the Internet, she said that “social media were more and more being used as the preferred channels offering a formidable sounding board.” “But how can we control hate speech on the Internet, the ideal place for people to speak without any inhibition under cover of anonymity. The problem was not so much a technical one, but a political and legal one,” she stressed.

Anne Brasseur, Ambassador of the Council of Europe’s No Hate Speech Movement, spoke of the origins behind the Council of Europe’s No Hate campaign in 2013 following the events in Utoya. “The many tragic events that have occurred since then clearly show that this campaign, which has just been extended to 2017, is as relevant now as it was when it was first launched.”

Referring to France’s involvement in the campaign, Ms Brasseur welcomed the involvement of cities such as Strasbourg, but expressed regret that the French government had not yet taken an active part in the movement. She hoped nevertheless that it would do so in the near future.

Closing the seminar, Pierre-Yves Le Borgn’ observed a “road map” in the various proposals discussed. “Co-operation between states is more essential than ever. We must also get the Committee of Ministers on board as much as we can through the initiatives we take as members of parliament.” He added, “nothing can be more effective than exposing young people to the worst horrors brought forth by human nature. Showing them historically symbolic sites and providing them with real insight can help ensure they become involved and help win them over to our cause.”

[Link to press release](#)

Announcement of seminar to combat racism, hatred and intolerance in France

Paris, 8 September 2016 - *The Alliance held a national seminar on combating racism, hatred and intolerance in France (Senate).*

A seminar on the fight against racism, hatred and intolerance in France will be held at the Senate in Paris on Thursday 8 September, as part of the activities of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance (*) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Beginning with an analysis of the situation in France and in Europe, participants will be discussing how to combat these phenomena effectively.

Nicole Duranton, French Senator and member of the Alliance, and Milena Santerini, PACE general rapporteur on the fight against racism and intolerance, will present the opening speeches.

The participants will include Christine Lazerges, Chair of the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights; Gilles Clavreul, *Préfet*, interministerial co-ordinator for combating racism and anti-Semitism (Dilcra); and Régis de Gouttes, member in respect of France of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

Speakers will also include Anne Brasseur, Ambassador of the Council of Europe’s No Hate Speech Movement; Rui Gomes, Head of Division in the Council of Europe Youth Department; and Guillaume Buffet, President of the U Digital Transformation Platform. Pierre-Yves Le Borgn’, member of the French National Assembly and

member of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, will present the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar.

[Link to press release](#)

Remembering Roma genocide victims is crucial to overcoming today's discrimination



Strasbourg, 01 August 2016 – *General Rapporteur speaks on the Eve of the International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day*

“Tomorrow we pay tribute to the victims of the Roma genocide perpetrated during the Second World War,” said the Parliamentary Assembly’s General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), speaking on the eve of International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day (2

August 2016).

“For centuries, Roma and Travellers have faced discrimination and persecution throughout Europe. There is still too little awareness of the genocide committed against them in the middle of last century. This lack of knowledge feeds prejudice, hate crime and discrimination,” she said.

“International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day reminds us that there is still much to be done. Council of Europe member States should strengthen their efforts to ensure that sites of persecution and extermination of Roma are recognised and remembered, and that public awareness of these horrific crimes is increased,” Santerini said. “This is crucial to promoting tolerance and mutual understanding and to combating discrimination today.”

[Link to the press release](#)

'Let's join forces against hate crime', says General Rapporteur



Strasbourg, 21 July 2016 – *General Rapporteur speaks on the Eve of the European Day for the Victims of Hate Crime*

“In a world which faces increasing hate and violence, we need to stay strong and true to our values,” said Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, speaking on the eve of the

European Day for the Victims of Hate Crime (22 July).

“That is also why we should commemorate the victims of hate crime. On 22 July 2011, in Utøya and Oslo, 77 people were killed in the name of hate. Many preceded them and many followed, in Europe and beyond,” she added.

“Hate crime is the ultimate and most severe manifestation of the hatred and intolerance permeating our society, often expressing itself in the form of hate speech, on-line and elsewhere. It is the duty of public authorities to ensure that up-to-date legislation tackles the incitement and propagation of hate, which paves the way to violent crime. Attention should also be paid to the victims, who need justice, protection and assistance.”

“Protection of victims and of the population at large should be at the heart of our action against all manifestations of hate. This requires an effort by everybody: citizens and civil society, internet big players and public authorities. With everyone’s contribution, we can curb hate crime: the antidote to hate is solidarity,” she concluded.

In 2013, activists and supporters of the Council of Europe’s “No Hate Speech” movement initiated a petition to the Parliamentary Assembly to establish a European Day for Victims of Hate Crime on 22 July. The initiative received the support of the Assembly through its [Recommendation 2052 \(2014\)](#) on “Counteraction to manifestations of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism”. The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance actively supports this initiative.

[Link to press release](#)

Alliance members take action



Strasbourg, 1 June 2016 - Alliance members take action

Members of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance are mobilising in Council of Europe member States to raise awareness on hatred, racism and intolerance and cooperate with the other authorities and civil society.

On 11 May, Italy's Chamber of Deputies unanimously adopted a motion tabled by Ms Milena Santerini against cyberbullying and hate speech.

Mr Saša Magazinović initiated a declaration adopted on 24 May 2016 House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina to condemn hate speech ([link to the declaration](#)).

In Berlin, on 29 June, Ms Gabriela Heinrich took part in the official launch of the national No Hate Speech Movement campaign, together with Ms Anne Brasseur, Alliance member and Ambassador of the No Hate Speech Movement.

On 22 July, Alliance members will commemorate victims of hate crime all over Europe with social media actions and other activities ([Link to news](#)).

On 6 September, in Berlin, Alliance members will participate in the event of the OSCE Chairman in Office “Confronting Anti-Gypsyism: The role of political leaders in countering discrimination, racism, hate crimes and violence against Roma and Sinti communities”, hosted in co-operation with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Council of Europe and the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma.

On 8 September, in Paris, Alliance members will meet at the French Senate with national authorities, experts and representatives of the civil society in the context of the National Seminar of the No Hate Alliance, focusing on action taken to prevent and combat racism, hatred and intolerance in France and how to strengthen it.

[Link to the news](#)

All forces needed to combat racism



Brussels, 25 May 2016 - *The Alliance met with civil society, media and Council of Europe in Brussels*

On 25 May 2016, Milena Santerini, PACE General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, presented the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance to civil society organisations and the media at the Council of Europe Liaison office in Brussels. With the participation of representatives of ENAR (European Network Against Racism) and EQUINET (European Network of Equality Bodies), Ms Santerini was able to reach out to about 200 organisations (NGOs and equality bodies) in Europe and invited them to contact the members of the Alliance for activities at the national level. “All forces are needed to as to combat efficiently racism and intolerance”, she emphasised.

Participants held a discussion on the role of parliamentarians in preventing and combating racism and intolerance during which Ms Santerini stressed the responsibility of politicians in combating hate speech and racism. She answered questions on the composition of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, cooperation with equality bodies, counter-narratives, relevant on-going work at the Parliamentary Assembly, combating online hate speech and the development of positive narrative online. “Legislation is not enough to prevent and combat racism, a change of mind-sets is needed”, stated Ms Santerini. Claire Fernandez, representing ENAR, emphasised the importance of political will so as to ensure the full implementation of existing anti-discrimination legislation. Willingness to cooperate was expressed from all sides.

The development of stronger cooperation with members of ARDI (European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup) was also discussed. Membership in the Alliance is open to members of the European Parliament and the Alliance looks forward to future cooperation opportunities.

[Link to the news](#)

No Hate Parliamentary Alliance holds a meeting at the Swedish parliament to discuss anti-gypsyism



Stockholm, 18 May 2016 – *the Alliance held a hearing on anti-Gypsyism during a meeting organised at the Swedish parliament.*

“Anti-Gypsyism is a form of racism, it is incompatible with the values of a democratic society and should be condemned by political leaders throughout Europe with the same clarity as other types of racism”, stated Ms Alice Bah Kuhnke, Swedish Minister for Culture and Democracy, opening the meeting of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance held in Stockholm on 18 May 2016.

Alliance members had the opportunity to learn more about anti-gypsyism in Europe today, and how to tackle it, thanks to a hearing with the participation of Ms Soraya Post, MEP and co-Chair of ARDI, the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup of the European Parliament; Mr Martin Collins of the Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre of Dublin, and additional member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities in respect of Ireland, as well as Mr Adam Weiss, Managing Director, European Roma Rights Centre, Budapest.

The personal and political testimony of Ms Post and Ms Collins showed how a discriminatory discourse escalated to severe forms of discrimination and even physical violence against Roma, Sinti and Travellers. There was a link also between anti-gypsyism and the horrific housing conditions of many Roma, as Mr Weiss made clear. Such conditions, in turn, led to forced evictions and other forms of harassment by the public authorities.

There is no easy solution, but a variety of measures may be taken, the guest speakers explained. Developing good neighbourhoods, education and job opportunities is essential in order to turn the situation around. ECRI's

recent General policy recommendation n.15 contained useful guidelines on how to counter hate speech, ECRI Chair Mr Christian Åhlund recalled.

“Much remains to be done and it is politicians’ role to take up these issues”, concluded Ms Milena Santerini, General rapporteur on combating racism: “We should avoid both negative stereotyping and an idealised vision which underestimates the challenges”.

[Link to press release](#)

Stepping up the fight against antisemitism in Europe



Strasbourg, 20 April 2016 – *The Assembly adopted a resolution on fighting antisemitism in Europe and urged national parliaments to co-operate with the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

The Assembly today expressed its concern at the targeted attacks against members of the Jewish community in Europe, who every day are the victims of stereotypes, insults and physical violence, and called on member states to consider the fight against antisemitism as a

priority and their responsibility.

The resolution adopted on the basis of the report by Boriss Cilevics (Latvia, SOC) recommends that the legislative framework on combating discrimination should also cover manifestations of antisemitism, such as “public incitement to violence or hatred, public insults, threats and desecration and profanation of Jewish property and monuments”. The members of the Assembly also considered that the public denial, trivialisation or praise of the Holocaust, of crimes of genocide and of crimes against humanity should be made a criminal offence.

In addition, the Assembly encouraged member states to prosecute political figures and political parties for antisemitic statements and incitement to hatred, and to cease the public funding of organisations and political parties promoting antisemitism. The adopted text puts forward other measures regarding, in particular, the reporting of antisemitic and other hate crimes, and the prevention of antisemitism in educational establishments, the media and online.

Lastly, PACE called on members of national parliaments and political leaders to publicly condemn antisemitic statements, and urged national parliaments to co-operate with the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the No Hate Speech Movement campaign.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Video of the debate](#)

[Interview with Boriss Cilevičs](#)

[Press release on “Committee calls for renewed commitment in the fight against antisemitism”](#)

Milena Santerini: ‘Learning from the past to build a better future with Roma’



Strasbourg, 7 April 2016 – General Rapporteur on combating against racism and intolerance made a declaration on the eve of the International Roma Day

“In 2016 Roma and Travellers in Europe are still discriminated against, stigmatised and targeted by hate speech, including from political leaders and other public figures,” said Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), PACE’s General Rapporteur on combating against racism and intolerance, in a special message to mark International Roma Day (8 April 2016).

“Anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma and Travellers are little known and their extent is underestimated by the general public. The history of Roma and Travellers, including tragic aspects such as the genocide perpetrated against them during the Second World War, is also insufficiently known,” she said. “The memory of these events must be preserved: when the past is misunderstood, even denied by some, it is very hard to build a better future.”

International Roma Day, celebrated around the world on 8 April, is an important opportunity for these issues to be aired, Ms Santerini pointed out. “It is by working together and by taking a holistic approach which covers all aspects of life – ranging from education to political participation and including access to housing, employment and healthcare – that the ideal of inclusion for Roma will become a reality.”

[Link to the press release](#)

National seminar of the Alliance focusing on hate speech in Italy



Rome, 4 April 2016 – Ms Santerini chaired a national seminar of the Alliance focusing on hate speech in Italy

What does hate speech look like in Italy today and who are its victims? What can and should be done to counter it? These were the main questions debated at the first national seminar of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, held in Rome, at the Chamber of Deputies, on 4 April 2016.

Ms Milena Santerini, Coordinator of the Alliance, underlined that defending a target group should never mean attacking another. Online hate speech may be countered in various ways, including "counter-speech" and engaging in a dialogue with "haters". Cooperation from social media and effective reporting systems remain crucial, Ms Santerini added. Mr Michele Nicoletti, chair of the Italian delegation to PACE, praised the Council of Europe No Hate activities. "Le parole uccidono" ("Words kill") a milestone awareness raising campaign of 2014, was presented by Stefano Bernocchi, one of its authors. Stefano Valenti of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) presented the recently published General policy recommendation no.15 on hate speech. Ms Stefania Giannini, Italian Minister of Education, University and Research, announced that "Bookmarks", the Council of Europe's manual to combat online hate speech, would be distributed to all Italian high-schools and teachers would be encouraged to use it.

A parliamentary committee inspired by the No Hate Alliance was established within the Chamber of Deputies: the Study Committee on intolerance, xenophobia, racism and hate phenomena, composed of parliamentarians and experts, will hold its first meeting on 10 May 2016. Several members of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination (Ms Centemero, Mr Kronbichler and Ms Santerini), other MPs, scholars and civil society organisations will be part of this new body, as well as the Council of Europe, represented by the Deputy Secretary General, Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni.

[Link to press release](#)

Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: 'the fight is far from won'



Paris, 21 March 2016 – *The Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination adopted a statement on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 21 March 2016, the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination adopted the following statement:

"While significant progress has been achieved globally in combating racial discrimination in the last decades, the fight is far from won. On the contrary, there are clear indications that these phenomena are on the rise in Europe. Antisemitism, Islamophobia, Anti-gypsism, xenophobia and intolerance towards migrants and refugees are widespread. The unrest caused by the difficult economic climate of the last few years and the migrant and refugee crisis is not the only factor aggravating the situation: some activists, political leaders and media are spreading irrational fears and surfing on intolerance in order to gain support.

The Committee renews its commitment against all forms of racism and reiterates that parliamentarians and other politicians should:

- abstain from stigmatising individuals or groups of people on grounds of their ethnic origin or cultural traits, and from using xenophobic language. They should also react when public figures indulge in such behaviour;
- refer to accurate data and information concerning migrants, refugees and foreigners;
- counter all forms of institutional racism, whether in dealing with exceptional situations such as the refugee crisis, or in ordinary administrative matters concerning citizens and foreigners.

The Committee strongly supports the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and is determined to strengthen cooperation in this area with relevant international organisations. It calls on all members of the Parliamentary Assembly as well as members from observers and partner for democracy delegations to join the Alliance and actively participate in its activities.

[Link to the press release](#)

Milena Santerini: strengthening cooperation with the European Parliament on combating all forms of hatred



Brussels, 16 February 2016 - *The Alliance took part in a round-table on "Combating Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe", organised by the European Parliament Anti-racism and diversity intergroup (ARDI)*

"Antisemitism and islamophobia may differ but their common roots are in hatred and intolerance. We must spare no effort in tackling both," said Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), General rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance and coordinator of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, on the occasion of her participation in a round table on "Combating antisemitism and islamophobia in Europe", organised by the European Parliament Anti-racism and diversity intergroup (ARDI) on 16 February 2016 in Brussels.

The event saw the participation of members of the European Parliament, including Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the European Parliament Working Group on Antisemitism, and Sajjad Karim, Vice-President of ARDI and Chair of ARDI's Islamophobia Working Group. A variety of civil society organisations working on islamophobia and antisemitism also took actively part in the debate, and the social media were represented by members of Twitter's teams on Policy and Safety Outreach.

On the same occasion, Ms Santerini held a bilateral meeting with Claude Moraes, Chairperson of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) of the European Parliament, to present the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and discuss avenues for cooperation.

"I would like to strengthen our cooperation with the European Parliament on combating all forms of hatred. While the refugee crisis has been fuelling prejudice, respect for diversity should remain the foundation of Europe", concluded Ms Santerini.

[Link to the press release](#)

Meeting with ARDI

Brussels, 16 February 2016 - *The Alliance took part in a round-table on "Combating Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe", organised by the European Parliament Anti-racism and diversity intergroup (ARDI)*

On 16 February 2016 Ms Milena Santerini, General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance and Coordinator of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, took part in a round-table on "Combating Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe", organised by the European Parliament Anti-racism and diversity intergroup (ARDI) in Brussels.

The event saw the participation of members of the European Parliament, including Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the European Parliament Working Group on Antisemitism, and Sajjad Karim, Vice-President of ARDI and Chair of ARDI's Islamophobia Working Group.

Ms Katharina von Schnurbein, EU Coordinator on combating antisemitism, and Mr David Friggieri, EU Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred, also participated in the event. Both Coordinators were appointed by the Commission of the European Union in December 2015.

Several civil society organisations working on Islamophobia and Antisemitism were invited to take part in the debate. Social media were also represented, thanks to the participation of Ms Karen White and Ms Kira O'Connor of Twitter.

Ms Santerini highlighted that even though antisemitism and islamophobia may differ, the roots of both are in hatred and intolerance. She underlined that preventing and combating these scourges required more solidarity not only towards victims from society at large, but also between target groups. She called on participants not to underestimate discrimination even when it targets other people.

On the same occasion, Ms Santerini held a bilateral meeting with Mr Claude Moraes, Chairperson of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) of the European Parliament, to present the No Hate Alliance and discuss avenues for cooperation. Strengthening the relations with other major actors, including the European Parliament, is in fact one of the priorities of the Alliance. The respect of diversity, as the General rapporteur recalled, should remain the foundation of today's Europe.

[Link to press release](#)

Countering hate speech: a new challenge



Strasbourg, 26 January 2016 –
The Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination makes combating hate speech a priority

On 26 January 2016, the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination held a hearing on the work on combating hate speech of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

with the participation of Mirosław Wyrzykowski, member of ECRI in respect of Poland, and Michael Whine, member of ECRI in respect of the United Kingdom.

“Hate speech and populism have created new challenges for governments”, said M. Wyrzykowski. He commented that while the precise extent of hate speech remained unclear because of a lack of reporting, it was certainly on the rise.

“Hate speech undermines the rule of law and is a threat to cohesion and democracy”, underlined M. Whine. “Strong legislative tools are essential and parliamentarians can make an important contribution to the fight against hate speech”, he continued. They both highlighted the importance of education and awareness-raising among youth on the need to prevent and combat hate speech, including online.

In order to provide Council of Europe member States with a concrete policy tool, ECRI members recently adopted a General Policy Recommendation on combating hate speech based on good practices, soon to be made public.

The Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination will be working in the coming months on preventing and combating online hate speech, in the framework of the preparation of a report on “Ending cyber-discrimination and online hate” by Marit Maij (Netherlands, SOC). Combating hate speech is also one of the priorities of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance.

[Link to the release](#)

[A video interview of Mirosław Wyrzykowski, ECRI member in respect for Poland](#)

2015

Anne Brasseur welcomes efforts to combat hate speech and intolerance in Morocco

Morocco, 10 December 2015 – *PACE President Anne Brasseur welcomed the strong and unanimous support of the Moroccan authorities*



At the end of her official visit to Morocco, the PACE President praised Morocco's commitment to an effective, stable and constructive partnership with the Council of Europe.

"Our partnership is stable, effective, mutually beneficial and enriching. The values and standards of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are central to it. Our goal is to work together on issues of common interest and support the reforms under way in Morocco in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. We must continue our co-operation and give fresh momentum to our dialogue, drawing fully on the expertise and support which Council of Europe bodies can provide", she said.

During her meetings in Rabat and Fez, the President discussed the main reform projects in progress in Morocco, in particular judicial reform, the fight against corruption, gender equality and parity and the implementation of advanced regionalisation. These reforms are part of an on-going process and are based on efforts to achieve a broad consensus within society.

Substantial progress has been made in all these areas and Anne Brasseur urged the Moroccan partners to take full account of the standards and opinions of the various Council of Europe bodies, in particular the Venice Commission. In addition, she underlined that the Council of Europe can also provide useful support during the implementation of the legislation currently being drawn up. "The potential of our collaboration is very great and the co-operation priorities for 2015-2017 offer good prospects for launching new co-operation projects," she said.

With regard to the role of Parliament, the President noted the key part played by lawmakers in passing the organic laws provided for in the 2011 Constitution. "You have a complex and busy legislative agenda and I fully appreciate the challenges which you are facing. Our Assembly is willing to help you identify practical co-operation needs in order better to support your work", said Anne Brasseur.

The fight against radicalisation and extremism and the management of migration flows are both global challenges which demand global responses. "On the first point, I welcome the fact that our Moroccan partners agree that respect for human rights, democratic freedoms and the principles of the rule of law are vital in the fight against terrorism."

"With regard to the management of migration flows and the situation of refugees, Morocco's efforts deserve our full respect, in particular in terms of the integration of migrants and refugees. At a time when many countries on the northern shores of the Mediterranean are having to cope with the same challenges, Morocco's experience ought to be shared and taken into account," said the PACE President. In this context, she praised the commitment and active involvement of the members of the Moroccan delegation to the PACE in the Assembly's debates and activities.

Lastly, Anne Brasseur welcomed the strong and unanimous support of the authorities and all political players for the efforts to combat hate speech and intolerance. “I am very pleased that the Prime Minister, the Presidents of the two Chambers of Parliament, the Minister for Justice, the Minister in charge of Migration Affairs and the Deputy Ministers for the Interior and Foreign Affairs have agreed to join our support group of the No Hate Speech Parliamentary Alliance and the No Hate Speech Campaign”, she said in conclusion.

During the visit, Anne Brasseur met Rachid Talbi Alami, President of the Chamber of Representatives, Abdelhakim Benchamach, President of the Chamber of Counsellors, Abdelilah Benkirane, Head of Government, Anis Birou, Minister in charge of Moroccans residing abroad and Migration Affairs, Mustafa Ramid, Minister for Justice and Freedoms, Charki Draiss, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of the Interior, and Mbarka Bouaida, Deputy Minister in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation.

She also had talks with the members of the Moroccan Parliament’s delegation to the PACE and representatives of the National Human Rights Council. In Fez, the President met Lahcen Daoudi, Minister for Higher Education, Scientific Research and Executive Development, Mohand Laenser, President of Fez-Meknès Region, and representatives of Fez Euro-Mediterranean University.

[Link to the press release](#)

Anne Brasseur welcomes the European commitment of Bulgaria

Sofia, 26-27 November 2015 – *Bulgaria shows support to the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

On 26-27 November, Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), conducted an official visit to Bulgaria. In Sofia, she met with President of the Republic Rosen Plevneliev, Minister for Foreign Affairs Daniel Mitov, Deputy Prime Minister Meglena Kuneva and Speaker of the National Assembly Tsetska Tsacheva.

Ms Brasseur welcomed the priorities of the Bulgarian chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. “My interlocutors agreed that this chairmanship should give an additional impulse to domestic reforms, particularly with regard to independence of the judiciary, media freedom, the electoral system, fight against corruption and treatment of persons deprived of their liberty. I was impressed with progress achieved in these fields, and I hope that cooperation within the parliament, as well as the stability of government, will reinforce the reform momentum”.

Ms Brasseur also insisted on the need to resolutely combat stereotyping and hate speech in Bulgaria where challenges remain. “I was pleased and proud that my high interlocutors all enthusiastically expressed their support for the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the No Hate Speech Movement”, said Anne Brasseur.

“I was impressed by the genuine European commitment of the Bulgarian authorities. I saw that Bulgaria has a truly European heart in the heart of the Balkans. Many of our member states may learn from the practices introduced in Bulgaria, such as the annual parliamentary examination of the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, and I truly hope that the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers that Bulgaria currently holds will also serve to demonstrate and confirm Bulgaria’s European achievements.”

“This chairmanship is also an opportunity to reinforce regional cooperation in the spirit of solidarity. This meaningful and open cooperation is all the more important in the present context, when Balkan countries find themselves on the frontline of the migration drama. As the President of the Republic recalled, the countries in the region could in the past achieve something great, but only when they worked together. This is an important history lesson – not only for Bulgaria and the Balkans, but for Europe as a whole”, Ms Brasseur said. “This lesson is particularly valuable now, when European democracies are under threat, on the one hand, from terrorists – whom we should rather call criminals, for this is who they are, – and, on the other hand, from

populist xenophobic and liberticidal forces who would like the Europeans to give up their freedom and to abandon our way of life out of fear of the other.”

The visit took place on the margins of the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The cooperation between Bulgaria and PACE, the situation in Ukraine and the state of signature and ratification of the key Council of Europe conventions were among other topics discussed during the meetings.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Link to the press release “Our common objective must be to combat terrorism, not to combat migrants”](#)

[Opening speech to the Standing Committee \(27/11/2015\)](#)

World Forum for Democracy – Lab on Anti-hate responses

Strasbourg, 19 November 2015 – *The Alliance participated in the World Forum for Democracy – Lab on Anti-hate responses*



Ms Santerini presented the No Hate Alliance at the lab on Responses to Hate, moderated by Mr Le Borgn', of the World Forum for Democracy. The Alliance

was one of the three initiatives, presented as possible answers to hate speech and discrimination, to be assessed by a panel of international experts, parliamentarians and civil society representatives.

[Link to the World Forum for Democracy website](#)

PACE President calls for support from sport sector for No Hate Campaign in Denmark



Aarhus, 25 October 2015 – *PACE President Anne Brasseur addressed the “Play the Game Conference in Denmark and called for support for the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

In her address to the “Play the Game Conference” held in Aarhus on 25 October, the PACE President called on the support from the sport sector for the “No Hate Parliamentary Alliance” launched by the Assembly last January which brings together parliamentarians in member states who pledge to adopt firm and proactive public positions against racism, hatred and intolerance. “Sport is potentially a powerful vehicle to transmit the values of fairness, respect for others and inclusion, and would therefore be a most valuable supporter to extend our No Hate Campaign,” she stressed.

With regard to FIFA, the President recalled that at the time of the adoption of resolutions on good governance in 2013 and early 2015, PACE faced scepticism and protests from FIFA. “Today, I am sorry to note that the reality is worse than what we pointed out in our reports.”

Stressing her attachment to the autonomy of the sports movement, she said she refused the idea that some leaders of major sport organisations could “act as monarchs who rule outside the rule of law and abuse of powers and resources which are entrusted to them. Transparency and accountability shall be there. And if self-regulation cannot ensure it, this is a problem that public authorities will have to solve: this is an issue of public interest and not just a highly lucrative private business. FIFA has been stacking up the yellow cards for too long – now it is time for red. Simply replacing individuals will not solve the problem. It is time to blow the final whistle on it,” she said.

Anne Brasseur also warned against match-fixing as possibly being the greatest threat to the integrity of professional sport at this moment. “Our new convention on match-fixing, opened for signature in September 2014, is a response to this threat,” she said calling on all countries, including non-European ones, who had not yet done so, to take steps towards the ratification of this unique instrument.

In Copenhagen, PACE President also met a number of parliamentarians and had very fruitful discussions mainly on the refugee crisis.

[Link to the press release](#)

Political and media approaches to the current refugee and migrant crisis



Strasbourg, 29 September 2015 – *the Alliance approved a roadmap for 2015-2017 and held a hearing on political and media approaches to the refugee and migrant crisis.*

When he realised that he would “either get killed by President Assad’s forces or by ISIS”, Yousef Kak, a young Syrian doctor, decided to leave his country and seek safety in Europe. He joined friends who could help him in Germany but was sent back to France, where he had first landed, under the Dublin Regulation. Sleepless nights walking the streets of Strasbourg with no place to stay and nothing to eat were “still better than returning to Syria”.

Today he feels safe and, with the status of refugee which France has granted him, he is rebuilding his life with determination. He is learning French so that he can practice medicine, like he did back home. On 29 September 2015, Yousef shared his story with the members of the No Hate Alliance.

Are refugees welcome or not? Tim Finch, former director of communication of London based organisations Refugee Council and IPPR - Institute for Public Policy Research, told the Alliance that the attitudes of European authorities, media and people have been inconsistent. Mixed messages have been sent, leaving many confused. A large share of people are neither pro, nor relentlessly against migrants, but they are anxious about the current crisis. The authorities, deemed Mr Finch, should strike the right balance between welcoming and controlling, not just of refugees but other migrants too, combining principle and pragmatism.

At the same meeting, the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance approved a roadmap and decided to continue its activities at least until the end of 2017.

[Link to press release](#)

[Video interview of Mr Tim Finch](#)

[Video interview of Mr Yousef Kak](#)

[Video interview of Mr Kak on humanrightseurope’s YouTube channel](#)

PACE President gives a mixed assessment of the situation of human rights in Europe

Strasbourg, 28 September 2015 – *PACE President Anne Brasseur mentions the launch of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance as a positive development in her assessment of human rights progress in 2014-2015*

After almost two years at the head of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the President, Anne Brasseur, has given a mixed assessment of progress in human rights throughout Europe in her opening address at the autumn session in Strasbourg.

Among the positive developments, she mentioned the great mobilisation against violent extremism and terrorism following the Charlie Hebdo attack, in particular, including the launch of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, for which she was particularly honoured to have obtained the Pope's support, the declaration of a European Day for Victims of Hate Crime and the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

However, she stressed that "the challenges that our values are facing are enormous," and made an urgent call for the Assembly to stay united in responding to them. In this context, she regretted the fact that "in some member states, human rights defenders and civil society activists face a whole range of problems. Restrictive laws, complex and inappropriate administrative procedures, pressure, intimidation and reprisals... all too often, human rights defenders and NGOs are forced to operate in extremely difficult conditions, or even illegally and in secret. This is unacceptable in a democratic society and in Council of Europe member states."

Pointing out that last-year's winner of the Vaclav Havel Prize, Mr Anar Mammadli, is still in detention in Azerbaijan, the PACE President said that "over the past two years, the human rights situation in Azerbaijan has deteriorated significantly. The people targeted the type of charges, the length of the sentences and the blatant irregularities in the conduct of the trials all cast doubt on the authorities' willingness to respect the fundamental values of the Council of Europe."

"The recent convictions of Leyla Yunus, Arif Yunus and Khadija Ismailova are deeply troubling. It is high time Azerbaijan changed its attitude to human rights and engaged in a root-and-branch effort to tackle systemic problems in terms of the functioning of the justice system and respect for media freedom and freedom of association and assembly," she added.

"With Azerbaijan due to hold parliamentary elections in just over one month's time, this is all the more important", she said and confirmed the decision of the PACE Bureau to send an election observation delegation to Baku on 1 November 2015. Speaking purely for herself, she nevertheless said that unless the long- and short-term ODIHR observers were present, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for the ad hoc committee to make a thorough and comprehensive assessment as to whether the election was consistent with Council of Europe standards and with Azerbaijan's commitments to the organisation.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Video of the Press conference of Ms Brasseur](#)

[Video of the opening speech by Ms Brasseur](#)

The No Hate Parliamentary Assembly is gaining increasing support throughout Europe and beyond



Strasbourg, 21 September 2015 - *President Brasseur and other leading personalities support the No Hate Alliance*

Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, announced after her private audience with His Holiness Pope Francis that he had agreed to support the Alliance. Ms Brasseur, who states that political leaders "have a responsibility to join forces to defend the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, which are more threatened than ever", seized every opportunity to make the No Hate Alliance known by her high-level interlocutors.

She presented it to her international parliamentary counterparts Blanca Alcalá Ruiz, President of the Latin American Parliament, Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-parliamentary Union, and Martin Schultz, President of the European Parliament, inviting them to strengthen cooperation.

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, when addressing the Assembly on 23 June 2015, welcomed the creation of the Alliance.

On 21 September 2015 Jean Asselborn, Minister of foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg, currently chairing the Council of the European Union in its Home Affairs Council configuration (JHA), recently expressed his support for the No Hate Alliance and so did Doris Bures, President of the National Council of Austria, on the occasion of a meeting with Ms Brasseur's in Vienna last August.

On 29 September 2015, at the next meeting of the No Hate Alliance, Ms Brasseur will share information with Ms Santerini, General rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, and the other members, on her contacts with these leading international personalities and contribute to the discussion on future activities of the Alliance at national and European level.

'In the face of indifference and rejection, we must move towards a globalisation of solidarity'



Strasbourg, 18 September 2015 – *The Pope support the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

Following her audience with His Holiness Pope Francis at the Vatican today, Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), made the following statement:

"In the course of my discussion with Pope Francis, I expressed my conviction that our absolute priority must be to deal with Europe's migration crisis. Faced with the explosive combination of an economic crisis, a massive influx of refugees and the rise of extremist parties, we must put in place policies which say no to hatred. Otherwise, our democracies themselves will be under direct threat", said Ms Brasseur.

"The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance launched by the Assembly last January brings together parliamentarians in the member states who pledge to adopt firm and proactive public positions against racism, hatred and intolerance. I would like this alliance to be extended to other international bodies, such as the European Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as well as to figures in the voluntary sector, sport and religion. I was honoured that His Holiness agreed to support our No Hate Parliamentary Alliance.

When His Holiness addressed the Council of Europe in November 2014, he spoke of the 'globalisation of indifference'. I would add that we are now confronted with a globalisation of rejection which we must overcome in order to move towards a globalisation of solidarity in defence of the most vulnerable.

We have a responsibility to join forces, despite our religious, cultural, national or historical differences, to defend the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, which are more threatened than ever", she concluded.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Link to press release “Pope Francis receives PACE President at private audience”](#)

[Link to the press release “PACE President calls on all religious authorities to condemn intolerance, discrimination, hatred and violence”](#)

Call for a European Day for Victims of Hate Crime



Oslo, 22 July 2015 – *PACE President Anne Brasseur makes an address to the Commemoration of the victims of the 22 July 2011 massacre*

After the commemoration ceremony held today in Oslo for the victims of the brutal attacks of 22 July 2011, Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and the Speaker of the Storting Olemic Thommessen have called for 22 July to be recognised as the

European Day for Victims of Hate Crime.

“It has been four years since the tragic events in Oslo and Utøya took place. The reality we face today is much more worrying than we would have thought four years ago: hatred and intolerance have become even more widespread in Europe, when they should have no place in our democratic societies,” said the two Presidents.

“We need this European day to show solidarity with all those who have been victims of hate crime, to enable people to recognise these human rights violations and to promote a wide and inclusive effort to combat hate.”

[Link to the press release](#)

[Link to Address](#)

[Link to the interview by the No Hate Movement](#)

Measures to combat racism and intolerance



Strasbourg, 26 June 2015 – *the Assembly adopted a resolution on Recognising and preventing neo-racism*

PACE has expressed its concern over the rising tide of racism, xenophobia and intolerance for some years in Europe, particularly the appearance of a “race-less racism” targeting certain groups and individuals. It is especially concerned at the emergence of overtly anti-migrant and populist political parties and movements in several member states, and at the growing dissemination of hate speech in the political sphere and on the Internet.

Basing its position on the report by Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC), the Assembly asked in a resolution “that the legal framework on hate speech and includes the broadest possible range of grounds of discrimination”, including “race”, colour, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, migrant status, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity.

The resolution also stresses that groups which are victims of racism should co-operate with the public authorities for the implementation of policies to counter discrimination.

Among the other tangible measures requested by the Assembly are the introduction into the rules of procedure of national parliaments and political parties of rules banning racist remarks and hate speech and providing for penalties.

According to the adopted text, Internet service providers and social networks should adopt guidelines to prevent the propagation of racist remarks and hate speech, and co-operation between these parties and the authorities should be reinforced so that the authors of such remarks can be prosecuted. PACE also encouraged the activity of on-line moderators and mediators.

[Video of the debate](#)
[Link to the Resolution](#)

Ban Ki-moon calls for mobilisation against violent extremism



Strasbourg, 23 June 2015 – *United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, welcomed the creation of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

In his address to PACE convened today in plenary session in Strasbourg, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon assured Europe of UN support in combating violent extremism and the rise of antisemitism, anti-muslim attacks and related forms of discrimination.

He commended the action of the Council of Europe to address this issue, including how radicalisation leads to terrorism, welcoming the Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism adopted by the Council and the creation of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance. He announced the launch in November of a United Nations action plan to prevent extremism. To counter the terrorist threat, “security measures and even military action” might be required, he said.

Ban Ki-moon also advocated protection of the rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, particularly those crossing the Mediterranean and the Andaman Sea, as well as the Bay of Bengal. He recommended setting up “legal channels” in Europe, such as resettlement, family reunification and work and study visas, to guarantee safe migration.

Regarding the conflict in Ukraine, which has caused over 6 000 fatalities in just over a year, Ban Ki-moon reiterated his appeal that there should be “all possible efforts to press the parties to fully implement the Minsk Agreements and achieve a political solution”. Any peaceful resolution, he emphasised, must be based on “human rights protection, accountability and justice for victims – in a sovereign, independent and unified Ukraine”.

[Link to the press release](#)
[Video of the Press point](#)
[Video of the address by Ban Ki-moon](#)

Preventing Islamophobia while combating radicalisation of young people



Strasbourg, 23 June 2015 - *the Alliance held a hearing on "Preventing Islamophobia while combating radicalisation of young people".*

There have been waves of young people from countries of Western Europe becoming fighters in various conflicts (in Kashmir, the Gulf and Bosnia among others) in the last decades, Professor Tahir Abbas of the Fatih University of Istanbul explained at the joint meeting of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development on 23 June 2015 in Strasbourg.

Many of them were young Muslims, often with a migrant background. Today countries like France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom face a new generation of young people radicalising their ideas and joining fighters in Syria and other war sceneries in the region.

The phenomenon is increasingly intertwined with Islamophobia. Muslims are presented as a potential threat, with far-right and populist movements contributing to spreading this misconception. In turn, young Muslims feel increasingly isolated and overexposed. They often have difficult access to good work opportunities, especially in times of economic crisis. Some of them may turn to extreme and violent ideologies to find a purpose in their lives. Even though the numbers are tiny, the phenomenon has great visibility in the media and raises serious, perhaps disproportionate concern among the public.

How to prevent young people from turning to extremism and violence without stigmatising an entire community? Avoiding presenting Islam as a source of terrorism, combating segregation in schools and ensuring access to work and education for young people from a migrant background were some of the measures recommended by Mr Bernard De Vos, Ombudsman for Children's Rights of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, who also believed that communities can play a positive role in tackling social problems within them. Excessive reaction may lead to an escalation of violence, warned Mr Francesco Ragazzi of the University of Leiden: the role of police forces and of social workers should remain distinct, he believed, and soft anti-radicalisation measures, including partnerships between the police and the communities or the use of "counterdiscourse" in social media, should be preferred.

The participation of President Anne Brasseur, and the Deputy Secretary General Gabriella Battaini Dragoni, who underlined that the Council of Europe has raised awareness on Islamophobia for over a decade, confirmed the commitment of all the bodies of the Council of Europe to this theme.

[Link to press release](#)

[Video interview of Mr Ragazzi](#)

[Video interview of Mr Devos](#)

[Video interview of Mr Abbas](#)

[Presentation by Professor Tahir Abbas PhD FRSA \(PDF\)](#)

Cooperation with United Nations: PACE President calls for political discourse that values benefits of migration

Geneva, 11 June 2015 – *When highlighting ways for the Council of Europe and the United Nations to work hand-in-hand, PACE President Anne Brasseur cited the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance as a tool to combat hate and intolerance.*

"Politicians must break the negative stereotypes and destroy the myths about the dangers of migration, engage in a deep and substantive debate about the challenges and opportunities it represents, and develop a positive political discourse that values the benefits of migration," said PACE President Anne Brasseur, speaking at the end of a visit to UN institutions in Geneva.

"Due to a number of social and economic factors and - in particular the demographic transition - our societies need migration. We must design policies that help migrants integrate into our societies and promote social cohesion. This is all the more important today, when populist and xenophobic rhetoric is on the rise. All democratic political forces must speak out against manifestations of hate and intolerance and support the values that underpin democratic societies: human rights, respect for diversity, tolerance and living together. The Council of Europe and the UN are natural partners in the defence of these values. We must work hand-in-hand

and build upon each other's strengths and expertise," emphasised the President, citing PACE's NO HATE Parliamentary Alliance as an appropriate tool to combat hate and intolerance.

Speaking about the situation of refugees and asylum seekers, Anne Brasseur called on the international community to show greater solidarity and share responsibility. "Respect for human dignity is a universal fundamental value. Solidarity is not only a political necessity, if migration challenges are to be addressed in a comprehensive way, but also our responsibility as human beings vis-à-vis those who are most vulnerable and flee war, conflict, poverty and economic hardship," she stressed.

Turning to human rights challenges, Anne Brasseur deplored the "shrinking of space for fundamental rights and freedoms" that can be seen in a number of Council of Europe member States, as well as globally. "Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are the three pillars of strong, stable, inclusive and sustainable societies. The UN and the Council of Europe share a political mission to defend the universality of these values. My exchanges with interlocutors in Geneva were very inspiring in this respect and I look forward to continuing these discussions with the UN Secretary-General during his forthcoming visit to Strasbourg, especially as regards co-operation between the UN and the Council of Europe in the realisation of the future Sustainable Development Goals," continued the PACE President.

As regards standard-setting, the President highlighted the contribution that Council of Europe conventions can make to the development of international human rights standards at global level. "A number of our conventions are open for signature to non-member states, as is the case for example with the Convention on combating violence against women and domestic violence. Guided by the principle of the universality of human rights, we must work towards ensuring that the standards established by this legal instrument are not watered down in the development of legal standards at global level."

Finally, turning to the situation in Ukraine, the PACE President welcomed close the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the UN institutions in addressing the human rights and humanitarian challenges of the conflict. Calling on all sides to stop violence and abide by what has been agreed in Minsk, she stressed the need to ensure a prompt and effective investigation into all human rights violations. "There should be no impunity for human rights violations," she concluded.

During her visit to Geneva, Ms Brasseur met the UNHCR High Commissioner and held high-level meetings at the IOM, ILO, ICRC, UNRISD and IPU, as well as with NGO representatives working in the field of human rights.

[Link to the press release](#)

'Joining in one large movement to say no to intolerance'



Brussels, 19 May 2015 – *PACE President Anne Brasseur addressed the Committee of Ministers in Brussels inviting all to join in one large movement to say no to hate and intolerance*

Addressing today the 125th Session of the Committee of Ministers in Brussels, PACE President Anne Brasseur commented on the worrying increase of intolerance and hate speech.

"In January we launched a no-hate parliamentary alliance. I propose that the Council of Europe takes the initiative to ask all democratic political forces - despite their differences - and civil society, as well as religious leaders, to join in one large movement to say NO to hate and intolerance. Hate and intolerance are undermining our democracies", she said.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Link to the address](#)

Hearing on freedom of expression and hate speech



Paris, 19 March 2015 – *Members of the Alliance met national coordinators of the Council of Europe's Youth Campaign against Hate Speech. On this occasion an exchange of views was held on freedom of speech and hate speech.*

“There are numerous ideological and conceptual divisions at the European Court of Human Rights with regard to the issue of hate speech. This situation is due to the difficulty in distinguishing between the “Charlie Hebdo” approach and “the Dieudonné approach”. Where does one draw the line

between offensive and provocative speech, which is nevertheless at the heart of our democratic values, and genuine but cleverly concealed hate speech?”, asked Nicolas Hervieu of the Panthéon-Assas University at a meeting of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance.

At a hearing held by the Alliance today in Paris under the auspices of the PACE Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, the participants discussed how to draw the line between the need for openness in a democratic society and the inevitable reflex of closing the door on “otherness”. In short, how can freedom of expression thrive without fostering hatred and violence? According to Mr Hervieu, the ambivalence of the concept of ‘democracy’ is at the heart of the dilemma: the need to protect freedom of expression at all costs in the name of democracy while preventing harmful rhetoric that undermines democracy. “There are two opposing trends in case-law. On the one hand, there is the axiological approach according to which particular offensive statements may only be stigmatised if they collide with or offend certain values; on the other hand a liberal tendency which, in the name of democratic freedom, tolerates all types of rhetoric, no matter how abject and shocking it is” said Mr Hervieu.

The participants unanimously concluded that “in the face of this classic dilemma, it is most important to avoid becoming intolerant oneself: under the pretext of combating offensive rhetoric, the watchdogs of democracy and free public debate may ultimately disavow the very heart of democratic freedom. In these troubled times, any of us may find ourselves in the reverse situation, for censorship can pursue humanist motives and freedom of expression may be used as a pretext by the enemies of freedom. It is precisely against this risk of losing our democratic bearings that we must fight” they said.

[Link to press release](#)

[Agenda](#)

Day Against Racism: education has a key role to combat prejudices



Strasbourg, 20 March 2015 – *On the Eve of the International Day against Racism, PACE President declares that through the establishment of the “No Hate Parliamentary Alliance”, the Parliamentary Assembly is demonstrating its determination to fight racism, intolerance and hate speech.*

“European states must urgently take concrete steps to combat all forms of racism and be vigilant in the face of the rising tide of racism and

hatred in our societies” said Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, on the eve of the International Day against Racism.

Education has a key role to play in combating prejudices. On this special day for the remembrance of the human tragedies that have taken place in the past, I would like to point out that studying the origins of racism and racial discrimination necessarily helps to combat their current manifestations. Awareness-raising activities and citizen protest movements have succeeded in reducing racism and discrimination everywhere in the world. I firmly believe that diversity is an asset for our civilisation and inevitably helps to bring our societies closer together.”

“Through its support for the Council of Europe’s youth campaign against hate speech and the establishment of the “No Hate Parliamentary Alliance”, the Parliamentary Assembly is demonstrating its determination to fight racism, intolerance and hate speech and encouraging its members to conduct activities at national level” she said.

[Link to the press release](#)

Copenhagen terrorist attack targets our values and freedoms



Strasbourg, 15 February 2015 – *Following the deadly shootings in Copenhagen, PACE President called for support to the No Hate Speech Movement, and No Hate Parliamentary Alliance in all European countries.*

"I am shocked at yet another terrorist attack targeting our basic values and freedoms ", said Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) following deadly shootings during the debate on freedom of expression and at a synagogue in Copenhagen which left two killed and three injured over the weekend.

Expressing solidarity with the victims, she added: "There can be no justification for these cynical acts. Using violence against peaceful people because of their convictions or religion is unacceptable in democratic societies. These crimes will only strengthen our determination to combat intolerance and antisemitism, and promote freedom of expression as a necessary condition for democracy and the protection of human rights". The No Hate speech Movement , as well as the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance have to be supported in all our countries."

[Link to the press release](#)

Official launch of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance



Strasbourg, 29 January 2015 - *The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance was officially launched. On the occasion, an exchange of views on the rise of antisemitism in Europe was held.*

On 29 January 2015, during the Winter part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly, the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance was officially launched in the presence of Anne Brasseur, PACE President, and Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Most of the 47 Council of Europe member states are already represented in the Alliance by members of their parliaments. Other will follow, by signing the Charter of Commitments based on the awareness that “hate

speech and manifestations of racism and intolerance on any grounds are a plight affecting all countries in Europe and all levels of society”.

Members of the Alliance commit themselves to taking stance openly against racism, hatred and intolerance and to promoting non-discrimination and respect for diversity. They will endeavour to raise awareness amongst politicians and civil society by campaigning against racism using all available communications means. Social media will play a significant role in this quest.

Ms Brasseur and Ms Battaini-Dragoni expressed their wholehearted support for the initiative. Ms Brasseur underlined that concrete action against hate speech is urgently needed and reaffirmed that fighting intolerance and promoting respect for diversity were among her priorities, as “diversity is what makes us rich and represents the future of our societies”.

The Alliance’s first activity was an exchange of views on anti-Semitism in Europe, with the participation of Maurice Sosnowski, Chairperson of the Coordination Committee of Jewish Organisations in Belgium, Snezana Samardzic-Markovic, Director General, Directorate General of Democracy of the Council of Europe, and Jane Braden-Golay, President of the European Union of Jewish students.

The situation depicted by the guest speakers is alarming: anti-Semitism is becoming more widespread in Europe in various forms, both in political discourse and in an increasing number of violent attacks.

Mr Sosnowski called on political leaders to “call things by their name” and not to underestimate anti-Semitism in whatever form and context it presents itself. On the other hand, various organisations are striving to counter anti-Semitism; and the Council of Europe is very active in this field. As Director General Samardzic-Markovic explained, “this will be a long process and we must start now”.

There was hope in Braden Golay’s words, as she was confident that the members of the Alliance as parliamentarians have the ability to shape the political debate in their home countries. She called on members of the Alliance to dedicate themselves to creating a Europe where the Jewish community and all other communities are safe and fully embraced. As Buchenwald survivor Rabbi Lau said a few days ago, “We can’t change the past – But we can change the present”.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Link to the second press release](#)

[Interview with Gülsün Bilgehan](#)

[Interview with M. Sosnovsky](#)

Anne Brasseur marches for tolerance: ‘we are united in defending democratic values’

Berlin, 14 January 2015 – PACE President joins march for tolerance

“Yesterday, at the invitation of Norbert Lammert, President of the Bundestag, I joined the march for tolerance organised in Berlin by Muslim religious leaders in order to take a proactive stand against racism, hatred and intolerance. The President of Germany, Joachim Gauck, and those taking part in the march gave a strong message that terrorism can never act on behalf of religions,” said the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Anne Brasseur, speaking during an official visit to Germany.

“The recent tragic events in Paris were not only a direct assault on our physical security, but also on the Council of Europe’s basic values of freedom of opinion and expression, tolerance and mutual respect.

We, as Europeans, are facing a double challenge: the threat of terrorism and insecurity, and the rise of extremist intolerance and xenophobia. The fallout from the attacks in Paris is already fuelling further tension between Muslims and Islamophobic movements.

Since Wednesday, according to the French Council for the Muslim Faith, more than 50 anti-Muslim incidents have been recorded in France, while in Germany anti-Islamic protests are also gathering momentum. This is a worrying sign.

The Parliamentary Assembly believes strongly in diversity and promoting non-discrimination, hence it has set up a “No Hate Parliamentary Alliance”, whereby parliamentarians commit to campaign against intolerance and discrimination, and exchange information on law and best practice in these fields.

I want to applaud all those who have organised and taken part in marches across Europe in recent days. Many PACE members, including the former President of the Assembly Jean-Claude Mignon, marched in Paris and other cities. We all gave a strong message: Nous sommes Charlie, we believe in free expression, and we respect diversity while defending democratic values.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Speech by German President Joachim Gauck \(in German\)](#)

[Announcement of the visit](#)

Attack against Charlie Hebdo: a hate crime based on rejecting freedom of expression



Strasbourg, 08 January 2015 – *PACE General Rapporteur for the fight against racism and intolerance and the Rapporteur on protection of media freedom in Europe made a declaration following the attack on Charlie Hebdo in Paris.*

“We condemn with the utmost firmness the murders committed on Wednesday at the headquarters of the French satirical paper Charlie Hebdo, and we extend our sincere condolences to the families of the victims and those close to them,” said Maria Giannakaki (Greece, SOC), PACE general rapporteur for the fight against racism and intolerance and Gvozden Srecko Flego (Croatia, SOC), rapporteur on protection of media freedom in Europe.

“These murders are hate crimes founded on fanaticism, intolerance and rejection of the other person for being different and of their freedom of thought and expression. These crimes must strengthen our determination to counter intolerance, peacefully and with dignity, and to act resolutely for freedom of the media, one of the foundations of freedom for us all.”

“Freedom in the media comprises the right to express political opinions and to criticise the public authorities and various groups of civil society. This freedom must not be further restricted to respond to the growing sensitivity of certain religious or political groups. The culture of critical debate is a necessary component of democratic societies. Satire, humour and artistic expression must therefore benefit from a high degree of freedom of expression.

[Link to the press release](#)

2014

'The Council of Europe is more important than ever'

Strasbourg, 11 December 2014 – *PACE President Anne Brasseur welcomes the future No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

“Given the challenges facing human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe today, the Council of Europe’s work is more important than ever”, said Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), at the end of her three-day visit to France.

The PACE President called for broad mobilisation of all democratic political forces and all players in society, in particular in response to the rise in populism and intolerance. “All European countries are affected by this unprecedented rise in hate speech and intolerance. France is no exception. I welcome the response of the French government and the country’s political players; combating racism and anti-Semitism must be a national cause that unites society. Let us mobilise and take action against all manifestations of hatred so as to stop the spread of intolerance!”

The PACE President also welcomed the efforts by the Ministry of Justice and the initiatives by the Ombudsman in this area. “The Council of Europe’s instruments and tools – in particular, the future No Hate Parliamentary Alliance – are fully at your disposal and I am sure that we can considerably boost the impact of our action by stepping up our co-operation and direct contacts between the relevant bodies”, said Anne Brasseur.

With regard to the issue of the management of migration, the PACE President and her discussion partners underlined the need to develop a real European policy in this area so as to promote solidarity between states and meet international commitments, in particular the standards of the ECHR, while taking account of the specific situations facing member states and the constraints affecting local communities. “I am pleased that the National Assembly and the Senate place particular emphasis on this issue in their work and I welcome the initiative by the members of the French delegation who recently visited a holding centre for migrants in Calais in order to examine the situation and help find solutions together. Other national delegations should follow this example, also drawing on the expertise of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.”

The discussions also focused on the questions of the implementation of the judgments of the Strasbourg Court and, in particular, the role which national parliaments should play in the process. “All Council of Europe member states are bound by an international undertaking to execute the Court’s judgments and must take steps to comply with the standards of the Convention when shortcomings are identified. I urge the National Assembly and the Senate to continue their discussions of the matter with a view to establishing a mechanism to enable parliamentarians to play an active part in monitoring the execution of the Court’s judgments, in close co-operation with the executive and other national bodies, for instance, the Ombudsman”, said Anne Brasseur.

With regard to the crisis in Ukraine and relations with Russia, the PACE President and her discussion partners stressed the importance of parliamentary diplomacy. “As elected representatives, we have a political responsibility to look for and identify solutions together. Dialogue must continue”, said Ms Brasseur.

Lastly, the PACE President called on France and all member states to continue providing the Council of Europe with the political and financial support which the organisation needs so that it can perform its tasks effectively and ensure compliance with Council of Europe standards in all member states.

During her visit, Anne Brasseur met Claude Bartolone, Speaker of the National Assembly, Gérard Larcher, Speaker of the Senate, Christine Taubira, Minister of Justice, Jacques Toubon, Ombudsman, Elisabeth Guigou, Chair of the National Assembly’s Foreign Affairs Committee, and the French delegation to the PACE. She also held exchanges of views with the European Affairs Committees of the National Assembly and the Senate.

[Link to the press release](#)
[Announcement of the visit](#)

PACE backs plan for a Europe-wide day for victims of hate crime

Strasbourg, 30 September 2014 – *PACE has given its strong backing to a proposal put forward by youth activists to declare 22 July – the anniversary of the terrorist attack in Oslo and at Utøya – as a “European Day for Victims of Hate Crime”.*

The Assembly was debating a report by Marietta de Pourbaix-Lundin (Sweden, EPP/CD) on how to counteract manifestations of neo-Nazism, with the participation of the Speaker of the Norwegian Parliament Olemic Thommessen.

"Hate affronts and attacks our equality of esteem and human dignity, values that are fundamental to all member states of the Council of Europe," said Mr Thommessen. "We need to slow down hate, not help it on its way."

In its resolution, the Assembly called on politicians to “take up the debate with neo-Nazis and expose them publicly by clearly and unequivocally challenging, rejecting and condemning neo-Nazi ideology and rhetoric”.

“Neo-nazis should not be ignored, but they should not be turned into martyrs either,” the Assembly said. It listed examples of good practice from around Europe, including action to prevent young people becoming drawn into neo-Nazi groups or to help them leave, strong laws against hate speech and hate crimes, and steps to encourage a strong “democratic consensus” against neo-Nazi parties both inside and outside parliament.

[Link to the press release](#)

[Adopted texts](#)

[Video: Statement by Olemic Thommessen, Speaker of the Norwegian Parliament](#)

[Video of the debate](#)

[Interview with Marietta de Pourbaix-Lundin](#)

A ‘No Hate Parliamentary Alliance against racism and intolerance’



Strasbourg, 20 March 2014 – *On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21st March), the Chairperson of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination proposed to set up a No Hate Parliamentary Alliance*

“On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March), I call on parliamentarians to lead by example and fully take up, visibly and forcefully, their responsibilities to prevent, combat and condemn manifestations of racism and racial discrimination and intolerance”, Gisela Wurm (Austria, SOC), Chairperson of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, declared today.

“Recalling the Charter of European political parties for a non-racist society, I call on political leaders to take a public stand against racism and intolerance and mobilise political will within their parliaments and political parties. Determined to react to this scourge and in support of the Council of Europe No Hate Speech Movement, I propose the setting up of a No Hate Parliamentary Alliance against racism and intolerance, involving the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, national parliaments, the European Parliament and other international assemblies”, concluded Gisela Wurm.

[Link to the press release](#)