



Doc. 11684

09 July 2008

Use by Parliamentary Assembly members of their dual parliamentary role – both national and European

Report

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

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Summary

The participation of Parliamentary Assembly members, through their role and function, in both national and European parliamentary activities has great potential. It constitutes an important political link and an element of mutual enrichment. It not only entails exposure to other political traditions but above all also accustoms Assembly members to a culture of co-operation. This participation also enables members of the Assembly to familiarise themselves with standards of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, the fundamental values of the Council of Europe.

The report underlines the need not to intrude upon the institutional and constitutional responsibilities of either the Assembly or national parliaments and the need to recognise that members of the Assembly have additional heavy, competing demands on their time.

Some measures should be further developed both at national and international levels to give the Council of Europe the visibility, attention and impact it deserves. Assembly members, through their unique double role, are very well placed to contribute to this objective. There should be no organisational or communications obstructions to strengthening national parliamentary understanding of what is done by their representatives in their name.



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A. Draft resolution

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, founded in 1949, is the oldest and largest European parliamentary institution. It currently brings together 636 members from national parliaments of 47 countries. The Assembly provides them with a forum for work and co-operation on the core values it strives to defend: human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
2. The Assembly provides an international and European debating platform for the member states' parliamentarians, coming from diverse cultures and horizons. At the same time, it offers national parliaments an opportunity to take advantage of its activities in order to improve the situation in their own countries.
3. The Assembly is convinced that its members' dual parliamentary role, national and European, makes it possible, first, to heighten parliamentarians' awareness of human rights, rule of law and democracy issues, thereby helping to promote them at national level, and, second, to draw the international community's attention to problems that may exist in a member state or a given region. In addition, the Assembly notes that this dual role is of growing usefulness in a world where European and national issues are increasingly interlinked.
4. It is conscious of both the need not to intrude upon the institutional and constitutional responsibilities of either the Assembly or national parliaments and the need to recognise that members of the Assembly have additional heavy, competing demands on their time.
5. Nevertheless, the Assembly believes that its work deserves a higher profile in its member states and their national parliaments and that the dual role of Assembly members leaves them uniquely placed to raise the national profile of the Assembly.
6. The Assembly therefore:
 - 6.1. calls on the Bureau of the Assembly to:
 - 6.1.1. single out a small number of texts which reflect the Assembly's core values, for communication to national parliaments and to national delegations, in the hope and expectation that national delegations would determine appropriate follow-up action on such texts in their national parliament;
 - 6.1.2. ensure that the effectiveness of such measures is periodically evaluated to ensure that they are properly targeted on the basis of simultaneously uniting members of the Assembly and attracting domestic support;
 - 6.1.3. review plans to ensure that the Assembly's desired outcomes are attainable;
 - 6.2. calls on its committees to:
 - 6.2.1. be concerned, in the context of the preparation of specific reports, with the views of relevant committees in the national parliaments;
 - 6.2.2. pay due attention to the concerns of national parliaments regarding possible subjects of debate and report in the Assembly's committees;
 - 6.2.3. monitor closely, in co-operation with the representatives of national delegations, the follow-up given, if any, to adopted texts emanating from the Assembly's committees in the national parliaments;
 - 6.2.4. specifically consider how to engage with members of national parliaments who are not members of the Assembly when meetings and other activities of the Assembly are being held in a particular national state;
 - 6.3. calls on its members to:
 - 6.3.1. promote Assembly work and documents based on the core values of the Council of Europe in their national parliaments;
 - 6.3.2. monitor the implementation in their national parliaments of texts adopted by the Assembly and take such action as is considered appropriate to achieve their implementation;
 - 6.3.3. inform relevant committees of the Assembly of topics relevant to the work of the Assembly debated in their national parliaments;

- 6.4. calls on the national parliaments of the member states to consider the possibility of:
- 6.4.1. dealing with questions raised by the Assembly in their appropriate specialised committees;
 - 6.4.2. initiating a review of their procedures for dealing with the texts adopted by the Assembly with the aim of identifying appropriate action;
 - 6.4.3. promoting periodic examination of the state of ratification of Council of Europe conventions and identifying any necessary national action;
 - 6.4.4. monitoring the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights by the national authorities and taking all necessary measures for their rapid and efficient execution;
 - 6.4.5. establishing a mechanism for considering the conformity of national legislation with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights;
 - 6.4.6. seeking involvement, at national level, in the preparation and implementation of the programme of the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers when the Chairmanship is from their country;
 - 6.4.7. holding an annual debate on the activities of the Council of Europe if such is not already the case in their national parliament;
 - 6.4.8. systematically drawing up reports on the activities of the Assembly through the intermediary of the national delegations;
 - 6.4.9. considering how to significantly mark the 60th anniversary of the creation of the Council of Europe either by parliamentary debate or other appropriate means.

7. The Assembly asks its Secretary General to continue ensuring that the communication methods through electronic means and the Internet make full use of the new possibilities made available by the technological development with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of communication about the work of the Assembly and thus the visibility of the Council of Europe.

B. Explanatory memorandum, by Lord Tomlinson

1. Introduction

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) is the oldest and largest European parliamentary institution and one of the two statutory organs of the Council of Europe, along with the Committee of Ministers.

2. The Assembly is composed of full members and substitutes elected by the national parliaments (NPs) of the 47 Council of Europe member states from among their own members or appointed according to the procedure that each NP may decide.¹ The political composition of each national delegation must reflect the representation of the different parties within the respective parliaments. The credentials of the delegation or of its members may be contested by the Parliamentary Assembly in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.²

3. As a common home of the parliaments of Europe, PACE is a pan-European forum for inter-parliamentary dialogue, where the major political issues of our society, which concern all European parliamentary democracies, can be debated. It is a unique place where common solutions can be found and where political initiatives can be launched.

4. The participation of PACE members, through their role and function, in both national and European parliamentary activities has great potential. It constitutes an important political link and an element of mutual enrichment. It not only entails exposure to other political traditions but above all also accustoms PACE members to a culture of co-operation. This participation also enables members of the Assembly to familiarise themselves with standards of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, the fundamental values of the Council of Europe.

5. Moreover, for parliamentarians, their participation in the Council of Europe carries an added value. PACE provides representatives from the whole of Europe with a platform for political expression and political action at international level which does not exist within any other European body.

6. This double role implies the double responsibility of informing citizens at both national and international levels; being a spokesperson of PACE's work as well as of NPs' work. The twofold European responsibility gives members an opportunity to commit themselves to the European cause, familiarise themselves with the situation in other European countries and become involved in parliamentary diplomacy. On returning to their parliaments, Assembly members can extend Council of Europe action to the national level and make their parliaments aware of major European developments. It is essential to the Council of Europe that Assembly members should be determined to pursue their European activities at a national level.

7. Furthermore, the two-way responsibility offers national parliamentarians the possibility of taking up the challenges of a greater Europe and acquiring experience of parliamentary work with Council of Europe member states wishing to join the European Union. They thus become forerunners in the efforts to build the united Europe of tomorrow and can, in their NPs, contribute to the essential debate on the enlargement of the European Union.

8. However, this double role also implies extra work for the parliamentarians; a double effort, in so far as they need to be aware of the issues dealt with at national level as well as of those related to PACE. In addition, their commitments at both national and European levels do not make it easy for them to attend all Assembly and committee activities. Some members also serve simultaneously as delegates to other international or regional interparliamentary institutions. Furthermore, it is not easy for very small national delegations in the Assembly to be represented in all these activities.

9. Over the years, PACE has adopted several decisions with important political consequences for Council of Europe member states. The impact of these decisions depends to a large extent on the level of co-operation and partnership between PACE and NPs. The present report will seek to suggest ways in which such co-operation and dialogue can be enhanced, as well as ways in which PACE members can contribute to this process.

1. Statute of the Council of Europe, Article 25
2. Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, Rule 6.

10. To ensure that proposals and recommendations have a chance of being implemented, they have been discussed with national delegations and individual parliamentarians to gain their support and commitment. There is no point in developing excessively ambitious ideas which may be adopted by the Assembly, but not followed up in practice.

11. On the other hand, I am convinced that there are a number of concrete measures which would have considerable impact on the efficiency of our action as parliamentarians in a double capacity, at both national and European level, and it is worthwhile to identify and implement them. We should be modest but realistic, taking full account of the views received in the consultation process.

2. Relations between PACE and NPs

12. The relations between PACE and NPs have always been fruitful. PACE and NPs both have every interest in co-operating and becoming more familiar with one another. European institutions are growing in importance and making decisions that have far-reaching political, legal, economic and other implications for citizens. Interaction between national and European parliamentary bodies is one of the principal means whereby governments can fulfil their obligation to report on their action at European level.

13. To be effective, the Assembly must be well aware of the concerns and needs of NPs and adapt its priorities accordingly. One of the Assembly's main challenges is to adopt texts that provide guidelines for national governments and parliaments and otherwise meet the latter's needs. The support of NPs is also important for the implementation of PACE texts. The resolutions the Assembly adopts commit only the Assembly itself but contain important recommendations addressed to the member states and, in particular, the NPs. It is through such recommendations that PACE may influence more directly governments.

14. However, it is worth asking to what extent PACE is using the resources at its disposal to strengthen its dialogue with NPs and, at the same time, whether NPs are sufficiently aware of PACE's potential.

15. One of the key opportunities of reinforcing parliamentary democracy lies in "revitalising" relations between PACE and NPs by strengthening the dialogue between them.

16. "Revitalising" the relations between PACE and NPs presupposes creating more efficient channels of communication and rationalising working methods

17. It should also be said that improvement of working methods alone will not drive this dialogue – a real political engagement from both sides is needed.

18. The selective exchange of relevant information between PACE and NPs is one important element to be taken into account when dealing with the effectiveness of channels of communication. Political will to use the information so communicated is necessary to make the process effective. The form of that political will cannot be prescribed; it must lie within the discretion of each NP and their delegation to the Council of Europe.

19. After each part-session, the President of PACE transmits a selection of PACE adopted texts³ via a mailing list which includes, among others, presidents of NPs, political groups, secretaries general of the NPs, observers to PACE, secretaries of national delegations and libraries (of both NPs and universities). By this means, PACE seeks to inform not only NPs but also those who have a say in parliamentary activity about its work. At national parliamentary level, these texts may be forwarded to the appropriate national parliamentary committees, depending on national procedure. The theory is sound but the practice less so.

20. In order to increase the efficiency of this exchange of information after part-sessions, when a small number of texts adopted by the Assembly are singled out and communicated to NPs, delegations should be asked to take appropriate follow-up commitments regarding the implementation of those texts at national level. I believe that chairs of national delegations could bear special responsibility for this task.

21. Leaders of national delegations and their delegations secretariats could co-ordinate any action deemed necessary to give effect to PACE texts. Meetings of members of national delegations could be used to ensure that delegation members are kept informed concerning any action deemed necessary or useful to follow-up texts after each part-session.

3. Recommendations, resolutions and opinions.

22. Since PACE has no legislative powers, its adopted texts are not legally binding at national level. Parliamentarians are able to have some influence on the detailed application of a PACE text at national level. PACE might wish to consider the possibility of introducing for example, systematic reports on action taken at national level (questions to the government, legislative initiatives, etc.).

23. An effective way of informing NPs of PACE work could be the preparation of a progress report by national delegations. These reports could be presented after each part-session to a committee of the NP. However, for some years now, certain delegations have not prepared such reports. This lends weight to the idea of a distant Europe, where nothing is decided.

24. In addition, several governments or Council of Europe member states submit reports on Council of Europe activities to their NPs. However, these reports are factual and rarely make mention of the follow-up to PACE texts.

25. Research and documentation services of NPs also play a considerable role in disseminating information relating to PACE's work. In the framework of research for the preparation of national reports, they are better placed to take into consideration texts adopted by PACE on the same subject.

26. In the same context, it is also worth welcoming and encouraging the work of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) which is a useful tool for inter-parliamentary co-operation and information exchange. Parliaments can only benefit from such a tool in that it facilitates the exchange of ideas and makes the retrieval of data and the circulation of studies easier between parliaments.

27. Over recent years, many parliaments have updated their structures and working methods to make them more accessible to citizens and to those who have a say in parliamentary work by improving the work of committees and by simplifying parliament's agenda, voting systems, etc. These parliamentary experiences could be of important value to PACE when improving its structures and working methods. A fruitful exchange of information on these concrete issues could help to better establish mutual co-operation. Sharing NPs' good practices could be an advantage in helping both institutions carry out parliamentary practices more easily, making them more understandable for all concerned.

28. Progress reports can help spread PACE work in NPs. In some NPs they are published as documents of the NP and in some cases extracts of Assembly resolutions or recommendations are included or a list of adopted texts is appended to the document, thus giving rise to discussions in the corresponding fora. In addition, some NPs have an information bulletin where PACE work is mentioned. However, this practice still needs to be introduced on a broader scale with the backing of national delegations and their secretariats.

29. However, problems can be encountered. For instance, progress reports may be out of date by the time they are submitted. On burning issues such as the Middle East or various political crises, time is of the essence. Information technology is hence the most appropriate means of dealing urgently with certain subjects. For that reason, it is important that PACE and NPs keep abreast of all the technological resources available in order for them to have access to the information rapidly and securely.

30. Along with the electronic newsletter,⁴ which provides online information on PACE and its committees' activities, the PACE website helps to disseminate its work. National parliaments' documentation services could accordingly more systematically consult the PACE website.⁵ They would thus have access not only to the texts adopted by the Assembly in an online version but also to other PACE documents⁶ as well as verbatim records of the Assembly's proceedings.⁷ In addition, the websites of the NPs should clearly display a hyperlink to the PACE website.

4. See http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/APNewsLetter/forms/APCE_Newsletter_SubscribeForm.asp.

5. See http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/DocumentGuide_E.asp or http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/DocumentGuide_F.asp.

6. Motions for a recommendation or resolution, written declarations, oral or written questions to the Committee of Ministers, communications from the Secretary General, requests for opinion transmitted by the Committee of Ministers, progress reports of the Bureau and the Standing Committee, statutory report on the activities of the Committee of Ministers.

7. Official reports of debates contain the verbatim speeches in English or in French in the report compiled in that language and a summary of its simultaneous interpretation in the other official language.

31. Over the years, PACE has consistently sought that its resolutions be discussed and given the necessary and appropriate follow-up in NPs. The aim is to put pressure on governments to implement PACE recommendations. At the same time, PACE has always encouraged its members to take individual steps to support resolutions and recommendations in dealings with the ministers concerned and to put parliamentary questions to the government.

32. Council of Europe issues are normally followed at national level by foreign affairs committees, as opposed to European affairs committees. The latter committees rarely adopt conclusions on activity reports of the Council of Europe or PACE. Moreover, national delegations to PACE do not normally have an opportunity to express their views on European affairs in parliament. As long as their terms of reference remain limited to European Union affairs, it will not be possible for European affairs committees to focus on PACE texts. For that reason, NPs should extend the terms of reference of existing committees responsible for European or EU affairs in order to include the activities of the Council of Europe, and especially those of PACE.

33. Indeed, it is to be regretted that PACE adopted texts, when they reach NPs and are transmitted for discussion, are only sent to the foreign affairs committee. PACE texts often relate to specific issues, such as human rights, equal opportunities, environment, economy, migration, health, family, education, local government or cultural affairs. This has the restrictive effect of preventing parliamentarians who might be interested in the PACE work and activities from accessing the relevant information. To ensure some consistency in the work carried out, there is a need for close co-operation between the specialised national committees and the PACE committees. The NPs should no longer perceive the work of the PACE as being confined to foreign affairs, but, on the contrary, as an extension of their work at national level.

34. In response to the decline in the number of written questions and progress reports, the Assembly and some NPs introduced new co-operation methods. In particular, PACE tried to bring about targeted action in NPs on some Council of Europe issues such as the preparation of Council of Europe summits and follow-up to them at national level, Council of Europe campaigns, the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, and the Council of Europe's budgetary resources.

35. Moreover, it is of prime importance that NPs hold debates on the state of ratification, as well as on the state of implementation of Council of Europe conventions at national level. Members of national delegations should be able to report on these debates to PACE.

36. Special attention should also be paid to the issue of national implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. In this particular case, NPs and parliamentarians have an important role to play. NPs can ensure that governments table legislation consistent with international agreements. The experience acquired within the Assembly transforms the parliamentarians concerned into their countries' "watchdogs" in matters of respect for human rights and democracy. What is more, parliamentarians should also use their constitutional right to initiate legislation and themselves table bills taking into account the Court's case law. This will lead to the adoption of laws in line with Council of Europe core values. Mention should be made here of PACE [Resolution 1226 \(2000\)](#) on execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and [1268 \(2002\)](#) on implementation of decisions of the European Court of Human Rights.

37. Where possible, PACE should try to involve members of NPs who are not PACE members in its conferences and events in order to bring its activities to the attention of a wider audience. The more members of NPs are aware and involved in PACE debates and discussions, the more they are likely to actively engage in the implementation of PACE resolutions at national level. A good example of such an approach is the holding of the Forums for the Future of Democracy.

38. In this context, why should Assembly committee meetings in member states not be accessible to interested national parliamentarians, who are not necessarily PACE members? Parliamentarians with scant awareness of European issues and of the PACE approach to debating and co-operation would find these meetings a very enriching experience. Committee meetings could also be held on NP premises to encourage non-member parliamentarians to attend. In addition, part of the meeting could be devoted to issues of topical interest to the member state in question.

39. If PACE is to improve its awareness of the interests and needs of NPs, a closer and more regular interaction between PACE and NPs is needed. This interaction would ensure European-level debates on issues helpful to national legislators in their day-to-day work. For this to be achieved, an examination of the situation in NPs, in cooperation with national delegations, would be required.

40. PACE has always maintained a number of institutional relations aimed at establishing and enhancing relations with NPs.

41. In that context it is worth mentioning the 1st Conference of Presidents of European Parliamentary Assemblies, which took place in Paris in 1963. Since 1975,⁸ this conference, renamed “European Conference of Presidents of Parliaments”, has met regularly. In 1981, it was agreed to organise a conference of parliaments of EU member countries and the European Parliament. The conferences of presidents have always provided an excellent forum for addressing issues concerning relations between NPs and international parliamentary institutions in Europe. The latest European Conference of Presidents of Parliaments took place on 22 and 23 May 2008.

42. For some years a committee for parliamentary and public relations existed, the successor to a Working Party on Parliamentary and Public Relations.⁹ This committee, among other issues, considered ways in which the Assembly’s work could be brought to the attention of NPs and the general public. To this end, it developed close links between the Parliamentary Assembly and NPs. In collaboration with national delegations, it reported to the Assembly every year on the actions taken in NPs as a result of the Assembly’s work and on measures taken to increase public awareness of the Assembly’s work. On 26 June 2000, the Assembly adopted a resolution¹⁰ reducing the number of its committees from 14 to 10. The activities of the committee for parliamentary and public relations concerning relations with NPs and the public were transferred to the Bureau, while those concerned with the functioning of democratic institutions were transferred to the Political Affairs Committee. With such a dichotomy of responsibility is it not understandable that we fail to establish the necessary impact for our work?

43. Given the disappearance of the committee for parliamentary and public relations, the Bureau could be committed to deal with all activities related to the strengthening of dialogue between NPs and PACE on a more regular basis.

44. In the framework of their parliamentary activity within PACE, rapporteurs regularly go to NPs to obtain first-hand information. They co-operate closely with NPs’ delegations and parliamentary bodies concerned and establish contacts in order to draft their reports.

45. In addition, the President of the Assembly and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe often exchange views, during their official visits, with parliamentary delegations to the Assembly.¹¹ For their part, Speakers of NPs regularly attend plenary sessions in Strasbourg.¹²

46. PACE committees, as well as its Standing Committee, have always sought to establish contacts with their counterparts in NPs. Committee meetings are therefore occasionally held in the capitals of Council of Europe member states. These committee meetings provide an opportunity for contacts and exchanges of views with representatives of the government and parliament of the host country. They also lead to the organisation of conferences or hearings. Standing Committee meetings should be used by the host country as an opportunity to disseminate information on the follow-up given to PACE adopted documents. Moreover, issues of major relevance to the host country could also be dealt with at these meetings, with a view to attracting the attention of the national media.

47. In the framework of the meetings between PACE committees and its national counterparts, the aforementioned visits could further enhance co-operation between both institutions. As a good example of this, the meeting held between the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the Greek Parliament’s Migration Committee on 11 May 2007 in Athens may be mentioned, where the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Migration Observatory was called for in an adopted joint statement.

48. Meetings between the President of PACE and presidents of national delegations (a practice followed for some time now on the occasion of the January and June part-sessions in Strasbourg) should be encouraged. These meetings should provide on the agenda an opportunity for the President of PACE to discuss issues he feels should be significantly drawn to the attention of NPs and for national delegation leaders to respond.

8. Rome Conference.

9. Established in 1956. PACE [Resolution 104 \(1956\)](#) on the institution of a permanent working party in charge of maintaining close links between the Consultative Assembly and national parliaments.

10. PACE [Resolution 1220 \(2000\)](#) on the reform of the Assembly’s working methods and its committee structure. It entered into force at the first part of the 2001 Ordinary Session of the Assembly (22 January 2001).

11. Council of Europe press release from 25 April 2007, “Council of Europe Secretary General to visit Moscow and Kyiv”, Reference: 258b07; PACE press release from 2 April 2007, “At the Vatican, PACE President highlights Council of Europe’s unique role in intercultural and inter-religious dialogue”; PACE press release from 16 February 2007, “PACE President René van der Linden visits Cyprus to promote dialogue”.

12. Examples: 17 April 2007, Ranko Krivokapic, Speaker of the Montenegrin Parliament; 25 January 2006, Enrique Jackson Ramírez, President of the Mexican Senate.

49. One of the Assembly's concerns is to involve NPs more closely in the drafting of major resolutions and recommendations. According to PACE [Resolution 1177](#), the Assembly resolves "to reinforce its relations with national parliaments, particularly by submitting to their relevant national committees draft recommendations addressed to the Committee of Ministers before they have been finally adopted and invite those who do not already do so, to hold once a year a debate on Council of Europe activities".¹³ This being so, a consultation procedure of this kind could also include draft Assembly opinions on major draft conventions of the Organisation. National parliamentary delegations to the Assembly could be intermediaries for this purpose.

50. In terms of visibility, the dual responsibilities of our parliamentarians could be better exploited through different actions, such as:

51. Media: it should be recalled that rapporteurs are primarily responsible for the follow-up at national level (in their own country) to their work through interviews, press articles, participation in conferences, etc. Therefore, some efforts at national level, especially from press departments of NPs, could be further developed in order to avoid the current lack of visibility of PACE's work. Parliamentary gazettes, newsletters or television programmes should be devoted in part to PACE's decisions.

52. PACE publications: it is important to stress that parliamentarians play an active role in defending Council of Europe values and principles. Conceived with the aim of giving ideas to parliamentarians in order to promote PACE texts at national level, these publications are a very useful tool for parliamentarians and their use can only be encouraged at national level.

53. As an example of a current publication, it should be recalled that the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly launched the project Parliaments united in combating domestic violence against women, which is the parliamentary dimension of the Council of Europe's campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence (2006-08).¹⁴ This campaign aims at denouncing domestic violence as an assault on human dignity and a violation of human rights. It calls on governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities and the civil society to take action. In the framework of this campaign, a handbook¹⁵ has been produced aimed at being a practical tool for parliamentarians. It sets out practical ideas for elected representatives who want to support the campaign and help fight the source of domestic violence against women. This handbook not only overviews the problem but also sums up good practices for parliaments regarding this matter.

54. In the same vein, handbooks for parliamentarians explaining in detail some conventions are being published, such as the handbook on the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.¹⁶ These initiatives are to be welcomed since they contribute to promoting Council of Europe instruments at national level, through parliamentarians. These handbooks are designed to suggest working approaches for elected representatives who want to promote this legal instrument and convince their respective government and parliament of the importance of signing such a convention.

3. Conclusion

55. The Parliamentary Assembly members' dual role plays an important role in potentially strengthening the dialogue between the Assembly and NPs. The key to reinforcing this dialogue lies in mutual co-operation between both institutions, and each being convinced that such dialogue can be of ever-increasing mutual benefit.

56. Thanks to their dual role, PACE members facilitate the flow of information at both national and European level. They also act as spokespersons for PACE work and, at a more general level, as defenders of the Council of Europe's values and ideals.

57. This report describes some of the measures which should be further developed both at national and international levels to give the Council of Europe the visibility, attention and impact it deserves. PACE members, through their unique double role, are very well placed to contribute to this objective. There should be no organisational or communications obstructions to strengthening national parliamentary understanding of what is done by their representatives in their name. The results depend on our political will.

13. [Resolution 1177 \(1999\)](#) on building greater Europe without dividing lines.

14. See www.coe.int/stopviolence.

15. "Handbook for parliamentarians. Parliaments united in combating domestic violence against women", Secretariat of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, PACE, 2006.

16. See: http://assembly.coe.int/committeedocs/2007/Trafficking-human-beings_E.pdf.

Reporting committee: Political Affairs Committee.

Reference to committee: [Doc. 10672](#), Reference No. 3140 of 3 October 2005.

Draft resolution unanimously adopted by the committee on 25 June 2008.

Members of the committee: Mr Göran **Lindblad** (Chairman), Mr David **Wilshire** (Vice-Chairman), Mr Björn **Von Sydow** (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Kristiina Ojulang (Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Fátima Aburto Baselga, Mr François Agius, Mr Miloš Aligrudić, Mr Claudio **Azzolini**, Mr Alexander Babakov, Mr Denis Badré, Mr Ryszard **Bender**, Mr Fabio Berardi, Mr Radu Mircea Berceanu, Mr Andris Bērziņš, Mr Aleksandër **Biberaj**, Mrs Guðfinna Bjarnadóttir, Mr Giorgi Bokeria, Mr Predrag Bošković, Mr Luc **Van den Brande**, Mr Mevlüt **Çavuşoğlu**, Mr Lorenzo Cesa, Ms Elvira Cortajarena, Ms Anna Čurdová, Mr Rick Daems, Mr Dumitru Diacov, Mr Michel Dreyfus-Schmidt, Ms Josette Durrieu, Mr Frank Fahey, Mr Joan Albert Farré Santuré, Mr Pietro Fassino, Mr Per-Kristian Foss (alternate: Mr Vidar **Bjørnstad**), Ms Doris Frommelt, Mr JeanCharles Gardetto, Mr Charles Goerens, Mr Andreas **Gross**, Mr Davit Harutiunyan, Mr Joachim **Hörster**, Mrs Sinikka **Hurskainen**, Mr Tadeusz **Iwiński**, Mr Bakir Izetbegović, Mr Michael Aastrup Jensen, Mrs Birgen **Keleş**, Mr Victor Kolesnikov (alternate: Mrs Olha **Herasym'yuk**), Mr Konstantin Kosachev, Ms Darja Lavtižar-Bebler, Mr René **van der Linden**, Mr Dariusz Lipiński, Mr Younal Loutfi, Mr Mikhail Margelov, Mr Dick Marty, Mr Frano Matušić (alternate: Mrs Marija **Pejčinović-Burić**), Mr Mircea **Mereuță**, Mr Dragoljub Mićunović, Mr Jean-Claude **Mignon**, Ms Nadezhda Mikhailova, Mr Aydin Mirzazada (alternate: Mr Sabir **Hajiyev**), Mr João Bosco **Mota Amaral**, Mrs Miroslava Němcová, Mr Zsolt Németh, Mr Fritz Neugebauer, Mr Hryhoriy **Omelchenko**, Mr Theodoros Pangalos, Mr Aristotelis Pavlidis, Mr Ivan **Popescu**, Mr Christos Pourgourides (alternate: Mr Andros **Kyprianou**), Mr John Prescott, Mr Gabino Puche, Mr Andrea Rigoni, Lord Russell-Johnston, Mr Oliver Sambevski, Mr Ingo Schmitt (alternate: Mr Eduard **Lintner**), Mr Samad Seyidov, Mr Leonid Slutsky, Mr Rainer Steenblock, Mr Zoltán **Szabó**, Mr Mehmet **Tekelioğlu**, Mr Han Ten Broeke (alternate: Mr Tuur **Elzinga**), Lord **Tomlinson**, Mr Mihai Tudose, Mr José Vera Jardim, Ms Biruté Vėsaitė, Mr Wolfgang **Wodarg**, Ms Gisela Wurm (alternate: Mr Albrecht **Konečný**), Mr Boris Zala (Mr Eduard **Kukan**).

Ex officio: MM. Mátyás Eörsi, Tiny **Kox**.

NB: The names of the members present at the meeting are printed in bold.

The draft resolution will be discussed at a later sitting.