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Follow-up to the report of the Independent Investigation Body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2128 (2018)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2128 \(2018\)](#) on “Follow-up to the report of the Independent Investigation Body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly”. It has brought it to the attention of the member States and transmitted it to the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) for information and possible comments.
2. The Committee of Ministers recalls that the fight against corruption is a high priority for the Council of Europe. Corruption poses a major threat to the core values defended by our Organisation, in particular the rule of law. The fight against corruption is also the main priority of the Croatian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, which will organise, in co-operation with GRECO, a high-level conference on “Strengthening transparency and responsibility aimed at prevention of corruption”, on 15 and 16 October 2018, in Šibenik (Croatia).
3. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the Assembly’s “zero tolerance” in respect of corruption and unethical behaviour, wherever it occurs, and takes note of the measures already taken by the Parliamentary Assembly since January 2017 when allegations of corruption within the Assembly were revealed.
4. When seized of this matter last year, the Committee of Ministers adopted a series of decisions in which it underlined the need for a full and fair investigation into these allegations. It welcomed the Assembly’s decision to establish an independent external investigation body to look into them and urged member States’ to fully co-operate in the investigation, in accordance with applicable national law.
5. As indicated in the letter sent on 3 May 2018 by the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Committee of Ministers raised its serious concerns with regard to the conclusions of the report of the Independent Investigation Body of the allegations of corruption (IBAC) within the Assembly, published on 22 April 2018. While these allegations of corruption concern members of the Assembly, they undermine the trust, legitimacy and respect of the Organisation as a whole. The Committee of Ministers considers that it is of utmost importance that the Organisation not only ensures the highest level of integrity in its activities but also ensures that its relevant rules and regulations are in line with the highest standards.
6. The Committee of Ministers concurs with the Assembly that all member States should take appropriate action against corrupt practices. In that respect, it informs the Assembly that GRECO will take the findings of the IBAC report into account in its monitoring of the member States mentioned in the report.
7. As regards the overall integrity framework of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Committee of Ministers recalls GRECO’s Assessment of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted by GRECO in June 2017 and notes that the IBAC report “strongly endorses”

1. Adopted at the 1320th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (20 June 2018).



GRECO's recommendations and calls for their full implementation. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the steps taken so far by the Assembly to implement these recommendations. It strongly encourages the Assembly to stay fully engaged in its action in this direction and to ensure effective follow-up of the recommendations contained in the report of the IBAC as well as to those formulated by GRECO.

8. The Committee of Ministers reiterates its commitment to support the Assembly's efforts in combating corruption among its members. It will continue to follow this matter closely and invites the Assembly to inform it of the other measures it will take in order to fully restore confidence in its activities.