



Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 13952

23 January 2016

Activities of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly between the fourth part of the 2015 Ordinary session and the first part of the 2016 Ordinary session

Communication

President of the Assembly



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1. Visits and meetings

1.1. Activities of the President between 28 September and 20 November 2015

1.1.1. Migration and refugee crisis

The migration phenomenon and the refugee drama were on the top of my agenda during this period. Building upon the results of the Assembly's debates during the October 2015 part session, I tried to identify a number of practical steps that the Parliamentary Assembly and national parliaments could take to address these.

On this basis, speaking at the 133rd IPU Assembly, on 18 October 2015, I presented some concrete ideas to my counterparts, in a form of an eight-point blueprint. The key points of my presentation were as follows:

- Raising awareness: parliamentarians must initiate a comprehensive political debate and make governments aware of the gravity of the problem and the implications.
- Strategic approach: a strategic migration management policy is needed in each of our countries and at an European level.
- Addressing the root causes: countries of origin need our help to build sustainable societies with accountable institutions and a strong rule of law.
- Ensuring respect for fundamental rights: any person coming to our countries must enjoy the same rights and the same protection as we enjoy. We must be guided by the highest human rights standards, including those enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Integrate – integrate – integrate: refugees and migrants have to become active members of our societies. We cannot afford to marginalise them and we cannot afford to treat them simply as temporary guests. Integration is a two-way process involving migrants and their host societies.
- Educate – educate – educate: education is one of the most important tools to promote integration and cohesion within our societies: we must help these newcomers, especially the young ones.
- Speaking out against stereotypes, discrimination, intolerance and xenophobia: this is all the more important as populist and extremist ideas are on the rise within our societies.
- Think global, act local: as elected parliamentarians, we have to be active in the field, within our constituencies: talk to our citizens and reassure them, explain policy decisions, support grass-roots initiatives, especially in the field of integration and education.

In the margins of the IPU Assembly, I shared these ideas with the Director General of the International Organization for Migration, the President of the Inter-parliamentary Union, senior officials from UNHCR and OHCHR, as well as a number of representatives of the diplomatic corps. Many concrete synergies were discussed, including awareness raising activities and visits by parliamentarians to refugee camps and reception facilities, sharing information and best practices about successful integration initiatives, and speaking out against hate and intolerance. It was particularly encouraging to see clear support from all interlocutors for the NO HATE Campaign and Parliamentary Alliance.

On 21 October 2015, I participated in the plenary session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and addressed the members of the Congress within the framework of a debate on the "Refugee and migrant crisis: what is the role of local and regional authorities". I encouraged local and regional elected representatives to participate in a fair distribution of refugees amongst and within member States. I also encouraged local and regional politicians to bring solidarity back at the local level, where it actually starts, by combating hatred and intolerance at its roots, raising awareness at schools and encouraging better understanding and interaction between communities. We have to encourage cities and communities by acknowledging those who do outstanding work, possibly by creating a label of "Welcoming cities".

I stressed the same messages in my address to the 67th session of the Nordic Council which was held in Reykjavik, from 27-29 October. Presenting the blueprint for parliamentary action in response to the refugee crisis, I called for more North-South solidarity, urging a global and strategic approach to migration and action at national and local levels. At the same time, I encouraged all parliaments to organise, on 18 December 2015 – International Migrants Day, visits to detention facilities for irregular migrants in order to check that the fundamental rights of these detainees are being respected and that reception conditions are up to standard.

In Brussels, on 9 and 10 November 2015, I met the President of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, and the EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Mr Dimitris Avramopoulos, and assured them of the Assembly's support for the EU's actions to address the refugee crisis. I highlighted the Council of Europe's specific contribution and added value in three key areas: human rights standards and legal co-operation; awareness raising and parliamentary support; and counteracting the manifestations of intolerance, hate, violent extremism and terrorism. I was encouraged in particular by the support that my EU interlocutors expressed for the NO HATE Campaign and Parliamentary Alliance. Clearly, there is a huge potential for synergies in this field.

1.1.2. Terrorists attacks in Paris, on 13 November 2015

I was deeply shocked and utterly appalled by the barbaric terrorist attacks perpetrated in Paris, on 13 November 2015. In telephone conversations with the Speaker of the Senate, as well as in a message to the Speaker of the National Assembly and the French Secretary of State for European Affairs, I extended my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims as well as to the people of France, on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The awful crimes committed by the terrorists were an unprecedented attack on the very foundations of our democratic societies. Like the President of the Republic François Hollande, I am convinced that the values we share in the Council of Europe remain our best defence against cruelty and barbarism. It is our duty to overcome all political and ideological divisions in order that we stand together against the scourge of terrorism.

I strongly believe that the NO HATE Parliamentary Alliance is an appropriate tool for parliamentarians across the board to join efforts at a Pan-European level to combat hate and intolerance, which fuels radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism. I shall therefore continue to actively support the Alliance as part of my activities as President of the Assembly.

1.1.3. Relations with the Russian delegation

In the margins of the 133rd IPU session, I met, on 19 October 2015, the Speaker of the Council of the Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Ms Valentina Matvienko, together with a group of Russian MPs participating in the IPU session.

This was the first direct contact with Russian parliamentarians since January 2015, when the Russian delegation decided to suspend co-operation with the Assembly after the extension of sanctions, in accordance with [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#).

It was encouraging to hear in my exchange of views that Russia sees the Council of Europe as an important and appropriate platform for Pan-European co-operation and that the Speaker of the Council of the Federation was open to discuss problematic issues in the relations between the Russian delegation and the Assembly. At the same time, it is clear that Russian parliamentarians disagree with the Assembly's decision regarding sanctions and maintain that they would resume co-operation with the Assembly only if all sanctions are lifted.

As the credentials of all delegations to the Assembly would be re-examined at the opening of the January 2016 part session, I believed it was important for us to use the time ahead to resume contacts ahead of the January 2016 part-session. In this context, I was open for continuing discussions with appropriate Russian interlocutors. I transmitted this message to the new Permanent Representative of Russia, Ambassador Ivan Soltanovsky, whom I met on 17 November 2015.

1.1.4. Other activities

1.1.4.1. Participation in the "Play the Game 2015 Conference: Global sport: reform or revolution?" (Aarhus, Denmark, 25-27 October 2015)

On 25 October 2015, I participated in the "Play the Game Conference" held in Aarhus, Denmark. In my opening address, I called on the support from the sport sector for the NO HATE Parliamentary Alliance, stressing in particular, sports' contribution to spreading the values of fairness, respect for others and inclusion.

With regard to recent development in FIFA, I stressed that, while we respect the autonomy of sports movements, we have to refuse the idea that some leaders of major sport organisations could act as "monarchs" who rule outside the rule of law and abuse powers and resources which are entrusted to them.

Transparency and accountability are essential. If self-regulation cannot ensure this, then it becomes a problem that public authorities have to solve: this is an issue of public interest and not just a highly lucrative private business.

I also warned against match-fixing as possibly being the greatest threat to the integrity of professional sport. Our new Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (CETS No. 215), opened for signature in September 2014, is a response to this threat and I called on all countries, including non-European countries that had not yet done so, to take steps towards the ratification of this unique instrument.

Speaking about the integrity of sports, allow me also to mention the statement that I made following the scandal at the IAAF and the revelations published in a report by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

It transpired from this report that high-ranked officials were not only allegedly covering up the doping of athletes and preventing them from facing sanctions, but were also reportedly asking for bribes in order to profit from this situation. These officials are not only breaching the ethics code, the values of sport and the law, but they are endangering athletes' health, with deadly consequences.

In this context, I emphasised the urgent need for investigations into all major international federations in order to root out corruption and dirty administration, clean up sport and protect the vast majority of athletes and volunteers.

In conclusions of this section, I would mention that, on 20 October 2015, I visited the International Olympic Committee where I met Mr Christophe de Kepper, Director General of the IOC. We discussed the issues of integrity and sports ethics, the role of the Olympic movement in supporting human rights and democratic values, as well as the support that the Olympic movement could provide to the Council of Europe NO HATE activities. I would like to thank Mr de Kepper for confirming the IOC's support for the NO HATE Campaign and Parliamentary Alliance.

1.1.4.2. Council of Europe 2015 Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue: Building inclusive societies together (Sarajevo, 2-3 November 2015)

As a former Assembly rapporteur on the religious dimension of inter-cultural dialogue, I greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate in the 2015 Council of Europe Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue.

Speaking at the opening of the Exchange, I pointed out that all actors of society, including and especially religious communities and non-confessional organisations, must play an active role in the process of 'building inclusive societies together'.

In this context, the contribution of religious organisations to combating effectively extremism and radicalisation is absolutely crucial. Stressing the importance of co-operation between public authorities and religious leaders to fight radicalisation that may lead to terrorism, I called for the teaching of religion to become an opportunity for reciprocal listening and for developing critical thinking, including within religious communities.

I also recalled an earlier Assembly recommendation to the Committee of Ministers calling for the creation of 'a stable and officially recognised platform for dialogue between the Council of Europe and senior representatives of religions and non-denominational organisations in order to consolidate the existing relations with those partners and foster active commitment by all the stakeholders in activities to promote the Organisation's fundamental values, which underpin 'living together'.

I hope that discussions in the Committee of Ministers will eventually lead to the establishment of this platform.

1.1.4.3. Opening of the "Luther 2017" event: 500 years of Reform (Strasbourg, 31 October 2015)

On 31 October 2015, I participated in an event devoted to the opening of the thematic year for 2016 on the Reformation and the global world, in the context of the Luther decade, which was held at the Council of Europe, in the Assembly Chamber.

In my opening remarks, I appealed to all religious authorities to openly and unreservedly condemn intolerance, discrimination, hatred and violence.

Referring to an upsurge of manifestations of intolerance, rejection and violence, I stressed the need to establish a new pattern for living together. Everyone must not only accept the existence of diverse sensibilities, whether or not religious, but also respect them.

The fundamental values of the Council of Europe form the basis of what unites us. No religion, no school of thought can supplant them, let alone be placed above these fundamental values. So, it is indispensable that the various churches and religious communities uphold the European Convention on Human Rights, and affirm the equal dignity of all persons together with their wholehearted commitment to democratic principles and human rights.

Furthermore, I presented the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance to the participants in this event and expressed the hope of seeing this Alliance extend to other international organisations and institutions such as the European Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as well as to the world of voluntary service, sport and religion.

In the margins of this solemn event, I held bilateral meetings with the former Federal President of Germany Horst Köhler, the State Secretary for European affairs Michael Roth and his French counterpart, Minister of State Harlem Désir, as well as Archbishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, President of the Council of the Evangelical Church of Germany.

1.1.4.4. World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 18-19 November 2015)

On 18-19 November 2015, I participated in the World Forum for Democracy, moderating the discussions during the first plenary session entitled “Surveillance– what is the right dose?” and the Dialogue with international leaders on freedom vs control sponsored by International IDEA.

I also held a number of bilateral meetings with the participants in the Forum, in particular, Mr Harlem Désir, France’s Minister of State for European Affairs, Mr Richard Wike, Director de Global Attitudes Research at the Pew Research Centre, and many activists including a former detainee of Guantanamo Bay and a former German right wing activist.

1.1.4.5. Human rights concerns in Azerbaijan

On 16 October 2015, I addressed a letter to the President of Azerbaijan, Mr Ilham Aliyev, expressing my deepest concerns over the deterioration of the situation in Azerbaijan as regards democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Recalling Azerbaijan’s obligations and commitments to the Council of Europe, I listed in particular four worrying developments:

- A series of recent court decisions sentencing human rights activists and journalists to strikingly long prison terms which produce a chilling effect on freedom of expression and pluralism in Azerbaijan, in violation of the country’s obligations and commitments to the Council of Europe;
- Cases of harassment and humiliation as well as physical attacks against human rights defenders and civil society activists in detention. Citing the cases of Ilgar Mammadov and Intigam Aliyev, as well as the condition of Leyla and Arif Yunus, I urged the President to intervene to end such intimidation of prisoners.
- Azerbaijan’s failure to execute the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Ilgar Mammadov, which required Mr Mammadov’s release. I urged Mr Aliyev to take the necessary steps in order to remedy this failure.
- Azerbaijan’s failure to address a series of recommendations – both from the Assembly and from the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission – concerning the organisation of democratic elections. I again urged action on these recommendations ahead of the 1 November 2015 parliamentary elections.

On 13 November 2015, I welcomed the release of Arif Yunus on humanitarian grounds and expressed the hope that more prisoners would be released soon and especially those whose health condition is a matter of serious concern.

At the same time, I stressed that the concerns raised by the legal proceedings against Arif Yunus and other human rights defenders and journalists have not been resolved. I appealed, once more, to the authorities of Azerbaijan to act in accordance with the standards of the European Convention on Human Rights and their commitments and obligations to the Council of Europe.

1.2. Activities of the President between 20 November and 10 December 2015

1.2.1. Bilateral contacts on the margins of the Bureau and Standing Committee meetings (Sofia, 26-27 November 2015)

During my visit to Sofia, I met with the President of the Republic Mr Rosen Plevneliev, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Daniel Mitov, the Deputy Prime Minister for European policies co-ordination and institutional affairs Ms Meglena Kuneva and the Speaker of the National Assembly Ms Tsetska Tsacheva.

I expressed the Assembly's full support for 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 welcomed progress achieved in these fields, and expressed hope that co-operation within the parliament, as well as the stability of government, would reinforce the reform momentum.

In my discussions, I paid special attention to the need to resolutely combat stereotyping and hate speech in Bulgaria. I was pleased that my high interlocutors all enthusiastically expressed their support for the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the No Hate Speech Movement.

I also suggested that other member States should draw on some practices introduced in Bulgaria, such as the annual parliamentary examination of the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, and I expressed hope that the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers would serve to demonstrate and confirm Bulgaria's European achievements.

With my interlocutors, we agreed that the chairmanship was an opportunity to reinforce regional co-operation in the spirit of solidarity. Such meaningful and open co-operation is all the more important in the present context, when Balkan countries find themselves on the frontline of the migration/asylum drama. Moreover, European democracies are today under threat, on the one hand, from terrorists and on the other from populist xenophobic and liberticidal forces who use 'security' to strip Europeans of their freedom.

The co-operation between Bulgaria and the Assembly, 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. The President of the Republic assured me that the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) (2011, CETS 210) would be signed and ratified by Bulgaria shortly. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Speaker of the National Assembly both addressed the Standing Committee of the Assembly and took questions from members present.

1.2.2. Migration and refugee crisis (Working visit to Vienna, 4 December 2015)

The migration phenomenon and the refugee drama were again on my agenda during this period. After having tried to identify a number of practical steps that the Parliamentary Assembly and national parliaments could take to address these (as outlined in my last communication), I have decided to start focusing on what I think is one of the most important steps: integration.

On 4 December, I paid a working visit to Austria. Concerning the handling of the refugee crisis and the numerous arrivals, I visited the reception centre for refugees in Traiskirchen. It is of course necessary to welcome refugees with appropriate reception conditions and I was glad to see the efforts made to improve this reception centre in Traiskirchen.

We are faced with a much longer lasting challenge, and that is integration. Refugees and migrants have to become active members of our societies. We cannot afford to marginalise them and we cannot afford to treat them simply as temporary guests. This is why I asked to be shown integration projects on this visit. The first project, "Verein Lobby 16", aimed to help unaccompanied young refugees find their way into working life by accompanying them through apprenticeships. The other project, "Kontakttepool Wien", facilitated intercultural contacts and activities.

I was impressed by the outstanding work done by "Verein Lobby 16" and others that I met. This work, as with many of the support activities for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, can only be accomplished thanks to a large pool of remarkable volunteers. Integration is a two way process involving migrants and their host society. All these different initiatives, helping migrants find their place in our societies, are crucial for making this integration process successful.

No Hate campaign

During my working visit to Austria, I also visited the Democracy Workshop of the Austrian Parliament where I had discussions about cyber-mobbing and No Hate Speech with children. The “*Demokratiewerkstatt*” (*Democracy Workshop*) is an excellent initiative that could be an inspiration for other national Parliaments. It helps children understand the role of Parliaments in an interactive way. It is extremely important to educate children about democracy and the functioning of the institutions and bring them in contact with politics and political representatives.

1.2.3. Official visit to Morocco (Rabat-Fès, 7-10 December 2015)

At the invitation of the Parliament of Morocco, I paid an official visit to Rabat and Fez from 7 to 10 December 2015.

During the visit, I met Mr Rachid Talbi Alami, President of the Chamber of Representatives, Mr Abdelhakim Benchamach, President of the Chamber of Counsellors, Mr Abdelillah Benkirane, Head of Government, Mr Anis Birou, Minister in charge of Moroccans residing abroad and Migration Affairs, Mr Mustafa Ramid, Minister for Justice and Freedoms, Mr Charki Draiss, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of the Interior, and Ms Mbarka Bouaida, Deputy Minister in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation. I also had talks with the members of the Moroccan Parliament’s delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly and representatives of the National Human Rights Council. In Fez, I met Mr Lahcen Daoudi, Minister for Higher Education, Scientific Research and Executive Development, Mr Mohand Laenser, President of Fez-Meknès Region, and representatives of Fez Euro-Mediterranean University.

At the end of my official visit to Morocco, I praised Morocco’s commitment to an effective, stable and constructive partnership with the Council of Europe. I underlined that our relations were stable, effective, mutually beneficial and enriching. The values and standards of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are central to our partnership. In my discussions, I clearly sensed the need to 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.

With regard to the reforms under way, I addressed the authorities’ efforts in the areas of judicial reform, the fight against corruption, gender equality and parity and the implementation of advanced regionalisation. I noted that these reforms were part of an ongoing process and were based on efforts to achieve a broad consensus within society. Substantial progress has been made in all these areas and I urged our Moroccan partners to take full account of the standards and opinions of the various Council of Europe bodies, in particular the Venice Commission.

With regard to the role of Parliament, I noted the key part played by lawmakers in passing the organic laws provided for in the 2011 Constitution and made clear the Assembly’s willingness to further expand our co-operation on the basis of concrete requests from the Parliament in the areas where our expertise could add value.

I also discussed our co-operation concerning global issues such as the fight against radicalisation and extremism and the management of migration flows.

On the first point, I welcomed 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, I noted that Morocco’s efforts deserved our full respect, in particular in terms of the integration of migrants and refugees.

Lastly, I welcomed the strong and unanimous support of the authorities and all political players for the efforts to combat hate speech and intolerance.

1.3. Activities of the President between 10 December 2015 and 24 January 2016

1.3.1. Assembly meetings in London (13-14 December 2015)

On 13-14 December 2015, I participated in the meetings of the Presidential Committee and of the Bureau of the Assembly, held in London, at the invitation of the United Kingdom Parliament. In the margins of these, I held a number of bilateral meetings with United Kingdom officials, including with the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Minister of State for Europe, the Minister for Human Rights, and the Chairs of the Select Committees on Foreign Affairs, Justice and International Development.

I would like to thank the United Kingdom parliamentary delegation for their kind invitation, hospitality, and excellent organisation of our meetings.

In my bilateral discussions, I highlighted the important role that the United Kingdom has always played as a champion of human rights, a model of democracy and generous international donor.

Speaking about the debate on the role of the European Court of Human Rights in the United Kingdom, I urged my interlocutors to put emotions and politics aside and launch a calm and rational reflection on the matter. The United Kingdom leaders need to clearly explain to the public what are the problematic issues, including the complicated inter-linkage with the devolved structures and what is at stake for the people in the United Kingdom and in Europe if the European Convention on Human Rights system is undermined.

I expressed concern over the effects the possible repeal of the Human Rights Act may produce on the human rights situation in other countries, where the governments are not as human-rights-committed as the United Kingdom is, and where citizens rely on the Court as the supreme guardian of European standards and values. These concerns should be taken into account and duly voiced in the public debate on the Bill of Rights, where media have an important and responsible role to play.

1.3.2. Conference on “A comprehensive humanitarian and political response to the migration and refugee crisis in Europe” (Paris, 16 December 2015)

On 16 December 2015, I participated in the Conference entitled “A comprehensive humanitarian and political response to the migration and refugee crisis in Europe”, organised by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, with the support of the French National Assembly and the French delegation to the Assembly.

In my statement, I stressed that migration is a global issue that demands local action. I deplored the fact that Europe and our member States seem to be doing too little and too late to address the current refugee crisis. Providing shelter and support to those who are fleeing war and extreme poverty is not only our moral duty, it is also an international obligation. As many of the refugees who have come to Europe will not be going back, I called upon all actors to seek sustainable solutions to facilitate the integration of refugees.

1.3.3. Working visit to Germany (11-12 January 2016)

Integration is our key tool to address effectively the consequences of the current refugee crisis. Therefore, I decided to devote my last visit to a member State to study successful local integration practices. In this context, I travelled on 11-12 January 2016 to Germany, where I visited the village of Golzow in Brandenburg Land, and, subsequently, held bilateral meetings in Berlin with the Federal Minister of State for Migration, Refugees and Integration and the German delegation to the Assembly.

In Golzow, I praised Germany’s humanist response to the refugee crisis, based on a long experience of integrating migrants, an asset that will help the country deal with the tremendous task it now faces. In my discussions, I was impressed by the prevailing sense of community in Golzow and commended the commitment of the village, the school and the mayor. This example shows that great things can be achieved at a local level, when the right people come together to make a difference: all sides were ready to collaborate together as the community was ready to welcome refugees and refugees themselves were willing to integrate.

We must share information about such best practices and encourage similar initiatives in our member States.

1.3.4. Meeting of the Presidential Committee in Luxembourg and audience with His Royal Highness Grand-Duke Henri (14 January 2016)

At the invitation of the Parliament of Luxembourg, the Presidential Committee of the Assembly met, on 14 January 2016, in Luxembourg. This was an opportunity to hold an exchange of views on current developments and the preparations for the 2016 first part-session of the Assembly.

On 14 January 2016, the members of the Presidential Committee had the honour of being received by His Royal Highness Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg. This audience allowed us to exchange views with His Royal Highness Grand Duke Henri on the Assembly’s achievements and the current challenges on the European political agenda.

1.3.5. Other activities

1.3.5.1. Meeting with Mr Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament

On 20 January 2016, I met the President of the European Parliament, Mr Martin Schulz. Among the issues discussed were the refugee crisis and the migration phenomenon, the crisis in Ukraine, developments in Poland, the situation in Turkey, relations with Russia, as well as the Assembly's and the European Parliament's activities to counteract manifestations of hate and intolerance. I am extremely grateful to President's Schulz's support to the Assembly's No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the Council of Europe No Hate Campaign. The European Parliament leadership's political support to these activities opens the door for more concrete synergies between our respective committees and parliamentarians.

1.3.5.2. Developments in Turkey

During this period, I continued to closely follow developments in Turkey. Reacting to the terrorist attack in Istanbul, on 12 January 2016, I addressed, in a letter to the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, a message of sympathy and support to the Turkish Parliament and to the people of Turkey. I deplored and strongly condemned the terrorist attack, stressing that it was the duty of all democratic political forces to stand up against radicalisation and the hatred that fuel violent extremism and terrorism.

On 13 January 2016 in a telephone conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey I reiterated our message of support to the Turkish authorities in fight against terrorism.

1.3.5.3. Developments in Poland

Reacting to the proposals of amendments to the legislation on the Constitutional Tribunal in Poland, I called upon the Polish parliamentarians not to enact these, as these amendments may seriously undermine the Rule of Law. The proposed far-reaching restrictions on the powers of a judicial institution, whose independence is constitutionally guaranteed, are a matter of serious concern.

These amendments, as well as the recent changes to the Radio and Television Broadcasting Act, were discussed at the meeting of the Presidential Committee in Luxembourg (14 January 2016) and I supported the proposal of the leaders of political groups to hold, during the January 2016 part-session of the Assembly, a debate under urgent procedure on the functioning of democratic institutions in Poland.

1.3.5.4. Meetings in Strasbourg

On 6 January 2016, I visited the Grand Mosque of Strasbourg and met the Secretary General of the Mosque as well as the Members of the Governing Council. We discussed the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue and the role religions should play to counteract manifestations of hate and intolerance. I am grateful to my interlocutors for their support for the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the No Hate Campaign.

On 21 January 2016, I participated in the launching event of 3 joint Council of Europe – European Union landmark projects within the field of sport.

On 22 January 2016, I visited the Strasbourg office of the "Office français de l'immigration et de l'intégration". My discussions focused on the refugee crisis, the issues of integration of migrants, as well as on mechanisms to share best practices in this field.

1.3.5.5. Developments in the Republic of Moldova

During this period I closely followed developments in the Republic of Moldova. The Presidential Committee of the Assembly discussed, at its meeting of 14 January 2016, the conclusions of Mr Schennach's mission to Chisinau and the information he has brought concerning the situation of Mr Filat and Mr Petrenco, currently in detention.

On 21 January 2016, following the appointment of a new Government in the Republic of Moldova, I called on the authorities to take concrete steps to address the origins of the current crisis and to restore citizens' confidence in institutions, address widespread corruption, ensure the integrity of public officials and judicial authorities, and promote an inclusive political dialogue on the reform agenda. Expressing concerns about the escalation of the ongoing political protests and the violent incidents outside Parliament on 20 January 2016, I urged protestors to keep calm and refrain from violence, and called on law enforcement officers to show the

utmost caution and respond in a measured way. The Council of Europe should provide the Republic of Moldova with its full support and our Assembly should continue to follow the developments, in particular, within the framework of our monitoring procedure.

Details of all my activities and meetings are to be found in the Appendices to this statement.

2. Press Releases

1. President expresses concern at attack on Hürriyet columnist (1 October 2015)
2. Anne Brasseur: 'GAME OVER for the FIFA system' (9 October 2015)
3. PACE President condemns bomb attack in Ankara (10 October 2015)
4. PACE President writes to Azerbaijan's President Aliyev citing 'deepest concerns' over human rights situation (16 October 2015)
5. PACE President presents eight-point blueprint to address migration crisis (18 October 2015)
6. PACE President calls for solidarity in tackling refugee and migratory crisis (21 October 2015)
7. Anne Brasseur: 'Louis Jung shaped the history of the Parliamentary Assembly' (22 October 2015)
8. PACE President calls for support from sport sector for No Hate Campaign (26 October 2015)
9. Migrants: PACE President calls for more North-South solidarity (28 October 2015)
10. Turkey: PACE President expresses concern over clampdown against two private television channels (28 October 2015)
11. PACE President calls on all religious authorities to condemn intolerance, discrimination, hatred and violence (31 October 2015)
12. PACE President calls for co-operation between public authorities and religious leaders to fight radicalisation (2 November 2015)
13. President calls for probes to 'root out corruption' in all major sport federations (9 November 2015)
14. PACE President welcomes the release of Azerbaijani civil society activist Arif Yunus (13 November 2015)
15. Shock and sorrow: Anne Brasseur reacts to the Paris attacks (14 November 2015)
16. Surveillance and protection of freedoms – what is the right dose? (18 November 2015)
17. Anne Brasseur: raising awareness is essential for protecting children from sexual abuse (18 November 2015)
18. PACE President condemns 'cold-blooded inhumanity' of recent wave of terrorist attacks (20 November 2015)
19. PACE President condemns terrorist bombing in Tunis (25 November 2015)
20. Anne Brasseur welcomes the European commitment of Bulgaria (30 November 2015)
21. PACE President to visit a reception centre for refugees in Vienna (1 December 2015)
22. FIFA arrests: "Football should be played with dirty boots not dirty money" (4 December 2015)
23. Educate children on democracy and the functioning of the institutions (7 December 2015)
24. [PACE President relieved with the release of Azerbaijani human rights activist Leyla Yunus](#) (9 December 2015)
25. "Our partnership with Morocco is efficient, stable and constructive", President says (10 December 2015)
26. "The year may be reaching an end but the human rights challenges continue" (14 December 2015)
27. "We need more of the UK in Europe, during these challenging times, not less" (16 December 2015)

28. 'Migration is a global issue that requires local action' (16 December 2015)
29. UN Resolution "a good start" for Syria, says Brasseur (19 December 2015)
30. PACE President concerned by threat to the Rule of Law in Poland (22 December 2015)
31. In 2016, living in democracies where human rights are respected (31 December 2015)
32. PACE President strongly condemns Istanbul attack (12 January 2016)
33. PACE President, ending Germany visit: we must stop the populists who surf on fear of migrants (13 January 2016)
34. President regrets Russian parliament's decision not to participate in the work of the Assembly in 2016 (19 January 2016)
35. President calls on new government in Chisinau to restore citizens' confidence in institutions (21 January 2016)

3. Speeches

1. Opening statement for the 4th part of the 2015 ordinary session (Strasbourg, 28 September 2015)
2. Speech at the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize award ceremony 2015 (Strasbourg, 28 September 2015)
3. Welcome speech to His Royal Highness the Grand-Duke of Luxembourg (Strasbourg, 29 September 2015)
4. Speech at the 133rd IPU Assembly General Debate on "The moral and economic imperative for fairer, smarter and more humane migration" (Geneva, 18 October 2015)
5. Address to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Strasbourg, 21 October 2015)
6. Welcome Address at the "Play the Game" Conference: Global sport: reform or revolution? (Aarhus, Denmark, 25 October 2015)
7. Speech in the General debate of the 67th session of the Nordic Council (Reykjavik, Iceland, 28 October 2015)
8. Speech on the occasion of the opening of the 2016 thematic year "Reform and the global world" in the framework of the commemoration of "Luther 2017: 500 years of Reform" (Strasbourg, 31 October 2015)
9. Speech at the Council of Europe 2015 Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue: Building inclusive societies together (Sarajevo, 2 November 2015)
10. Introductory remarks at the World Forum for Democracy: "Plenary session 1: Surveillance– what is the right dose?" (Strasbourg, 18 November 2015)
11. Introductory remarks for the dialogue with international leaders on freedom vs control, sponsored by International IDEA in the framework of the World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 19 November 2015)
12. Opening speech delivered at the Standing Committee (Sofia, 27 November 2015)
13. Speech delivered on behalf of the President of the Assembly at the High level Conference on the Constitutional Reform (Kyiv, 2 December 2015)
14. Speech delivered at the Conference entitled "A comprehensive humanitarian and political response to the migration and refugee crisis in Europe" (Paris, 16 December 2015)
15. Speech delivered at the event to mark the launch of three landmark EU-COE joint projects within the field of sport

Appendix 1 – Activities between 27 September and 20 November 2015

1. Bilateral meetings (in chronological order)

4th part of the 2015 Ordinary session (Strasbourg, 28 September-2 October 2015)

- Members of the Panel of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2015
 - Mr František Janouch, President of the Council of the Carta 77 Foundation
 - Mr Dick Marty, former Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
 - Ms Nuala Mole, Senior lawyer, Founder of the AIRE Center
 - Mr Marek (Antoni) Nowicki, Lawyer for human rights, President of the Consultative Council on human rights of the United Nations in Kosovo
 - Mr Martin Palouš, former Ambassador of the Czech Republic, President of the Foundation of the Václav Havel Library in New York et member of the Council of the Václav Havel Library
 - Mr Christos Pourgourides, former member of the Chamber of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, former member of the Parliamentary Assembly
- Candidates of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2015
 - Ms Ludmilla Alexeeva, veteran human rights defender, Russian Federation
 - Women for Afghan Women, Afghanistan
 - The Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia
- Mr Igor Crnadak, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers
- Mr Selahattin Demirtaş, leader, HDP, Turkey
- Mr Rudi Renschler, mathematician and politician, Germany
- Mr László Trócsányi, Minister of Justice, Hungary
- Ms Nigar Yagublu, civil society activist, Azerbaijan
- Ms Veronika Szente Goldston, Advocacy Director, Europe and Central Asia Division, HRW
- 40 young people from the national Information Centre for Youth (CIJ), Luxembourg
- Their Royal Highnesses The Grand-Duke and The Grand-Duchess of Luxembourg
- Mr Mars di Bartolomeo, Speaker, Chamber of Deputies, Luxembourg
- Ms Laura Boldrini, Speaker, Chamber of Deputies, Italy
- Mr Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the OECD
- Mr Denis Zvizdić, President of the Council of Ministers, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Ms Samira Merafi, Minister for Women, Family and Childhood, Tunisia
- Representatives of human rights organisations working on Azerbaijan
- Mr Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister, Serbia
- Ms Dinara Yunus, human rights activist, Azerbaijan
- Reg. Rat Anton Salesny, Journalist, Representative for Europe of Kolping International, Austria

Parliamentarians

- Mr Petro Symonenko, Ukraine (Honorary member)
- Mr Kimmo Sasi, Finland (Honorary member)
- Members of the delegation of Morocco
- Ms Josette Durrieu, France

- Ms Liliana Palihovici, Chairperson of the Moldovan delegation
- Dr Dzyema Grozdanova, Chairperson of the Bulgarian delegation
- Members of the delegation of Japan
- Mr Mehmet Caglar, Representative of the Turkish Cypriot Community
- Ms Daphné Dumery, Vice-President of the Belgian delegation
- Mr Vladimir Voronin, Member of the Moldovan delegation
- Mr Reha Denemeç, Chairperson of the Turkish delegation
- Ms Marie-Christine Dalloz, member of the French delegation (telephone conversation)
- Members of the delegation of Palestine
- Ms Ingjerd Schou, Chairperson of the Norwegian delegation
- Mr João Bosco Mota Amaral, Chairperson of the Portuguese delegation
- Mr Robert Walter, Chairperson fo the UK delegation
- Mr Karl Gardarsson, Chairperson of the Icelandic delegation
- Mr Michael Aastrup Jensen, Chairperson of the Danish delegation
- Mr Volodymyr Arieu, Chairperson of the Ukrainian delegation
- Mr Gvozden Flego, Chairperson of the Croatian delegation

Meetings in Strasbourg (6-7 October, 15-16 October 2015 and 20-21 October 2015)

- Mr Philippe Boillat, Director General Human Rights
- Ms Astrid Mühlmann, Geschäftsführerin, Staatliche Gesellschaft „Luther 2017“
- Ms Mireille Paulus, Secretary of the Committee of Ministers
- Mr Dean Spielmann, President, ECHR
- Mr Niels Muiznieks, Human Rights Commissioner
- Dr Spangenberg, President of the Directory of Societaet Chorus AG
- Ms Snezana Samardzic-Markovic, Director General Democracy

Participation in the 133rd Assembly of the IPU (Geneva, 17-20 October 2015) and meetings with the International Olympic Committee (Lausanne, 20 October 2015)

- Mr Saber Chowdhury, President of the IPU
- Mr Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the IPU
- Mr William Lacy Swing, Director General of the IOM
- Mr Gianni Magazzeni, Director for Europe and international organisations, OHCHR
- Ms Valentina Matvienko, Speaker of the Council of the Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation
- Ambassador Joachim Rucker, Permanent Representative of Germany to UN Office in Geneva and other international organisations, Chairman of the Human Rights Council
- Mr Volker Turk, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR
- Ambassador Jean-Marc Hoscheit, Permanent Representative of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva, and representatives of the international community in Geneva
- Mr Christophe de Kepper, Director General of the International Olympic Committee
- Ms Pâquerette Girard-Zappelli, Chief Ethics & Compliance Officer, IOC

Meetings in Strasbourg and participation in the 29th Session of the Congress (Strasbourg, 21 October 2015)

- Ms Snezana Samardzic-Markovic, Director General for Democracy

Conference «Play the Game 2015» (Aarhus, Denmark, 25-27 October 2015) and meeting with the members of the Nordic Council (Reykjavik, Iceland, 27-29 October 2015)

- Mr Mogens Jensen, Chairperson of the Danish delegation, and members of the Foreign Policy Committee
- Mr Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland
- Ms Maria Lohela, Speaker of the Finnish Parliament
- Ms Esabelle Dingizian, 3rd Vice Speaker of the Swedish Parliament,
- Mr Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland
- Ms Pia Kjaersgaard, Speaker of the Danish Parliament
- Members of the Committee on Judicial Affairs and Education of Parliament of Iceland
- Mr Einar K. Guðfinnsson, Speaker of the Parliament of Iceland
- Ms Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Culture and Democracy of Sweden
- Mr Timo Soini, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland

Opening of the «Luther 2017» event: 500 years of Reform (Strasbourg, 31 October 2015)

- Mr Horst Köhler, former Federal President of Germany
- Mr Michael Roth MdB, State Secretary for European Affairs, Germany
- Mr Harlem Désir, Minister of State for European Affairs, France
- Representatives of religious authorities

Council of Europe 2015 Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue: Building inclusive societies together (Sarajevo, 2-3 November 2015)

- Ms Johanna Mikl-Leitner, Minister of the Interior of Austria
- Mr Jakob Finci, President of the Jewish Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, President of the Interreligious Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Mr Almir Šahović, Ambassador, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Mr Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina
- Mr Drahošlav Štefánek, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the Council of Europe
- Mr Husein Kavazović, Grand Mufti of the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Mr Francesco Ragazzi, Assistant Professor in International Relations, Leiden University, Netherlands
- M^{me} Michèle Eisenbarth, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the Council of Europe
- Mgr Grigorije, Bishop of Zahumlje-Herzegovina and the Littoral from the Serbian Orthodox Church, member of the Interreligious Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom
- Delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Parliamentary Assembly
- Ms Ismeta Dervoz, civil society activist, Bosnia and Herzegovina

High level group on sport and bilateral meetings with members of the European Commission (Brussels, 9 November 2015)

- members of the High level group on Grassroots Sport of the European Commission
- Ambassador Torbjorn Froyshes, Head of the Council of Europe Liaison Office in Brussels
- Mr Hans Van Baalen, MEP, ALDE
- Mr Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship
- Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

Meetings in Luxembourg (12-13 November 2015)

- Mr Petr Kubernat, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Luxembourg
- Mr Eliot Wang, Director of the Division of Public Affairs of the Office of the Taipei Representation in the European Union and Belgium

Bilateral meetings at the margin and during the World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 17-20 November 2015)

- Mr Yuriy Boyko, Head of the Ukrainian Opposition Bloc Parliamentary faction, Ms Yuliya L'ovochkina, Member of Ukrainian delegation, and Mr Yevhenii Muraiev, Member of the Ukrainian Opposition Bloc Political Party
- 3 young people: Steven Hartung: former neo-nazi, Eleonora Zbanke: human rights activist, and Mourad Benchellali: former prisoner in Guantanamo
- Mr Richard Wike, Director of Global Attitudes Research, Pew Research Centre
- Mr Mickaël Heidmann, specialist sport and Europe
- Mr Harlem Désir, Minister of State for European Affairs, France
- Hegumen Philipp (Ryabykh), Representative of the Patriarcate of Moscow
- Mr Thomas Markert, Secretary of the Venice Commission

Contacts with the diplomatic community in Strasbourg

- Mr Onno Eldererenbosch, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Council of Europe
- Mr Gerhard Küntzle, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Germany to the Council of Europe
- Ms Satu Mattila-Budich, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Finland to the Council of Europe
- Mr Stelios Perrakis, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Greece to the Council of Europe
- Ms Katrin Kivi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Estonia to the Council of Europe
- Ms Maria Esther Rabasa Grau, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Andorra to the Council of Europe
- Mr Mohamed Trabelsi, Consul of Tunisia in Strasbourg
- Ms Katya Todorova, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the Council of Europe
- Mr Rémi Mortier, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Monaco to the Council of Europe
- Mr Ferenc Robak, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the Council of Europe

- Mr Guido Bellatti Ceccoli, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of San Marino to the Council of Europe
- Mr Ivan Soltanovsky, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Council of Europe

2. Contacts with media (between 27 September 2015 and 20 November 2015) (in chronological order)

MEDIA	TYPE	COUNTRY
video message for the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize conference	COE TV	Council of Europe
Ria Novsti	Press Agency	Russia
Radio Prague	Radio	Czech republic
Press from Luxemburg	Various media	Luxembourg
Sputnik	Radio	Russia
IChamber TV	TV	Luxembourg
Peter von Kohl, special correspondent for EU reporter	Web	European Union
COE TV Journal	COE TV	Council of Europe
video message for «International Romani Women's Review Conference»		"The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
local journalists	Written press, TV, radio	France
Club de la presse, Strasbourg	Written press, TV, radio	France
Ms Uli Botzler, Editor, Télécran	Web	Luxembourg
Mr David Krivanek, Associate Editor	Online magazine Opendemocracy.net	United Kingdom

Appendix 2 – Activities between 20 November and 9 December 2015

1. Bilateral meetings (in chronological order)

Bilateral contacts on the margins of Bureau and Standing Committee meetings (Sofia, 26-27 November 2015)

- Mr Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic
- Mr Daniel Mitov, Minister for Foreign Affairs
- Ms Meglena Kuneva, Deputy Prime Minister for European policies coordination and institutional affairs
- Ms Tsetska Tsacheva, Speaker of the National Assembly

Working visit to Austria (Vienna, 2-4 December 2015)

- Ms Veronika Krainz, Director, Integration project „Verein Lobby 16“
- Ms Karoline Preißer Federal Interior Minister
- Mr Franz Schabhüttl, Director of the der first reception center of Traiskirchen West
- Ms Martina Sinowatz, MA, Director of the project „Kontaktpool Wien“

Official visit to Morocco (Rabat, Fès, 7-10 December 2015)

- Mr Rachid Talbi Alami, Chairperson of the Chamber of Representatives
- Mr Abdelhakim Benchamach, Chairperson of the Chamber of Councillors
- Mr Abdelilah Benkirane, Head of the Government
- Mr Anis Birou, Minister in charge of the Moroccans living outside and migration issues
- Mr Mustafa Ramid, Minister of Justice and freedoms
- Mr Charki Draiss, Minister delegate to the Minister of Interior
- Ms Mbarka Bouaida, Minister delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and co-operation
- Members of the delegation of the Moroccan Parliament to the Assembly
- Representatives of the National Council for human rights
- Mr. Lahcen Daoudi, Minister of higher education, Scientific research and training of executives
- Mr Mohand Laenser, Chairperson of the Fès-Meknès region
- Representatives of the Euro-Méditerrananean University of Fès

2. Contacts with media (between 25 November and 9 December 2015)

MEDIA	TYPE	COUNTRY
Press stand up	Various media	Austria

Appendix 3 – Activities between 10 December 2015 and 24 January 2016

1. Bilateral meetings (in chronological order)

Presidential Committee, Bureau and high-level bilateral contacts (London, 14 and 15 December 2015)

- Mr Dominic Raab MP, Minister for Human Rights, Ministry of Justice
- Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP, Chair, Joint Committee on Human Rights, House of Commons
- Rt Hon David Lidington, Minister of State for Europe
- Mr Crispin Blunt MP, Chair, Foreign Affairs Select Committee, House of Commons
- The Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons
- Mr Robert Neill MP, Chair, Justice Select Committee, House of Commons
- Mr Stephen Twigg MP, Chair, International Development Select Committee and colleagues on the Committee, House of Commons
- Sir Roger Gale MP, Leader of the United Kingdom delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly

Working visits to Strasbourg (16 December 2015, 18-19 December 2015 and 5-6 January 2016)

- His Eminence Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith of the Holy See
- Ms Mireille Paulus, Secretary of the Committee of Ministers
- Mr François Brunagel, Ambassador of the Order of Malta
- Mr Bruno Theret, elected representative of AFE for Benelux and a group of visitors from Luxembourg
- Mr Saïd Boulahtit, Secretary General, President of the Grand Mosque of Strasbourg
- Mr Ilan Blindermann, Director General of the Alsatian League of Football Association

Working visit to Germany (Berlin and Golzow, 11-12 January 2016)

- Mr Frank Schütz, Mayor of Golzow
- Various institutional representatives: District, school, daycare, Chamber of Crafts, Industry and of Commerce, Federation Arbeiter-Samariter, Club Golzower for Golzow
- Syrian families
- Ms Aydan Özoğuz, Minister of State to the Federal Chancellor and Federal Government Commissioner for migration, refugees and integration
- Members of the German Delegation

Meeting of the Presidential Committee in Luxembourg and audience with HRH the Grand-Duke Henri of Luxembourg (Luxembourg, 14 January 2016)

- Mr Marc Angel, Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, Defense, Co-operation and Immigration, Chamber of Deputies, and members of the delegation of Luxembourg to the Assembly
- HRH the Grand-Duke Henri of Luxembourg

Working visit to Strasbourg (20-24 January 2016)

- Mr Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament
- Ms Mireille Paulus, Secretary of the Committee of Ministers
- Ms Marja Ruotanen, Director of Human Dignity and Equality, Council of Europe;

- Mr Antonio Silva Mendes, Director for Youth & Sport, DG Education and Culture, European Commission;
- Mr Leandro Montello, Regional Manager at the Office français de l'immigration et de l'intégration (OFII)
- Ms Vira Savchenko, sister of Ms Nadiya Savchenko

2. Contacts with media (between 10 December 2015 and 24 January 2016) (in chronological order)

MEDIA	TYPE	COUNTRY
Petra Klingbeil, DPA – Deutsche Presse Agentur	Tel meeting re. visit to Germany	Germany
Interviews with various media	Written and oral press	Luxembourg
Council of Europe Journal	Web interview	