

25 January 2017

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Bureau

The recent allegations towards the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and its members, on corruption and conflict of interests, are damaging the integrity and credibility of the Assembly. The allegations go beyond only one case. It is therefore of utmost importance that PACE initiates concrete action for thorough, transparent and independent investigations.

As the prime human rights organization in Europe and defender of democracy and the principle of rule of law, there should be no doubt that the Assembly has zero tolerance on corruption and pursue full transparency in all its endeavors.

As a body of democratically elected representatives, the strength of the Assembly is to be found in our integrity, moral values and trust.

For these reasons, the Nordic and Baltic delegations call on the Bureau to immediately launch an independent and external investigation of the allegations.

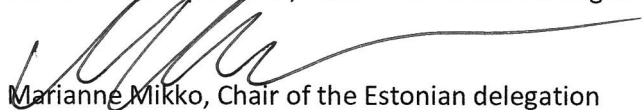
It goes without saying that a process like this should be open and conducted with full transparency.

Additionally, the Bureau should establish a parallel process to evaluate the organization's code of conduct and the members' respect and implementation of these guidelines. Furthermore, we recommend the establishment of an appropriate follow-up mechanism to be applied in cases when a member has clearly acted in violation of the Assembly's common rules, so that future corruption allegations are avoided.

Please accept, Mr. President and Members of the Bureau, the assurance of our highest consideration.



Michael Astrup Jensen, Chair of the Danish delegation



Marianne Mikko, Chair of the Estonian delegation



Anne Kalmari, Member of the Finish delegation



Andris BĒRZIŅŠ Vice-Chair of the Latvian delegation



Algirdas Butkevičius, Chair of the Lithuanian delegation



Ingjerd Schou, Chair of the Norwegian delegation



Tobias Billström, Vice-Chair of the Swedish delegation

Due to recent parliamentary elections, the Icelandic delegation was not present during the 2017 January session