

Berlin, 5.10.2018

PACE Should Not Weaken Its Sanction Mechanism

Dear Ms. Liliane Maury Pasquier,
Dear Vice-Presidents,
Dear PACE members,

We are deeply concerned about the PACE's Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs' attempts to amend the rules on challenge and reconsideration of credentials of national delegations as provided in the report "Strengthening the decision-making process of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning credentials and voting" (Doc. 14621, 21 September 2018). We are convinced that the draft resolution included in this report with its recommendations indicated in the points 6.1 and 6.2 aims to reintegrate Russian Federation in the Parliamentary Assembly still at PACE January 2019 session without Russia having implemented a single of PACE's calls to stop its aggression in Ukraine.

The new procedures would make it also in the future hardly possible to sanction or prolong sanctions on any national delegation. We believe that in the light of the recent corruption scandal at PACE and of increasing authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies in Europe it is of utmost importance to maintain strong and effective sanction mechanisms within this important democratic institution. The Council of Europe must protect its independence as a keen institution established to protect human rights and democratic values in Europe.

Therefore, we are calling upon the members of PACE to vote on October 9 session against this resolution.

This draft resolution, adopted on 20 September 2018, shall be voted already on the October 9 session and provides for substantial amendments in the Rule 8.1.a (Challenge of still unratified credentials on substantive grounds), Rule 41.1.a (Majorities required) and introduces a new Rule after a Rule 10.2 (Decision of the Assembly on a challenge or reconsideration of credentials) of the PACE Rules and Procedure.

In particular, the resolution provides new rules of implementing and prolonging sanctions which give the country under threat of a lost of credentials more leeway to block any sanctions already at their initial stage. According to the proposal, 1/6 delegates present at the session are needed to support an initiative of imposing sanctions while the current

regulation sees only 30 delegates needed to support such initiative.

Furthermore, the adoption of a resolution on challenge or reconsideration of national delegations' credentials needs currently a support of a simple majority of delegates while the draft resolution introduces a majority 2/3 of delegates needed to support it.

If the resolution would be adopted, PACE would deprive itself of an important instrument to safeguard the proper functioning of the institution.

With kind regards,



Stefanie Schiffer
European Exchange,
Executive Director