

Council of Europe
The Secretary General

Strasbourg, 24 March 2017

Dear President,

Following allegations of corruption and wrongdoing made against members of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Bureau of the Assembly decided at its meeting of 27 January to prepare a Memorandum on the draft terms of reference for an external, independent investigation body to look into these claims. I gave my strong support to this decision.

During an exchange of views with you on 1 February, the Ministers' Deputies underlined that the matter should be dealt with in a swift and transparent manner.

However, I was informed that at its last meeting in Madrid on 9 and 10 March, the Bureau could not reach a conclusion regarding the setting up of this investigation body and the item will now be on the agenda of its next meeting on 24 April.

As Secretary General of the Council of Europe, it is not within my mandate to investigate parliamentarians. Nevertheless, the Parliamentary Assembly, as a statutory body of the Council of Europe, elects the Human Rights Commissioner, judges to the European Court of Human Rights as well as the Secretary General. In light of these important functions, it is paramount that all of its members act with integrity and are perceived as doing so by the wider public.

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Mr Pedro Agramunt,
President of the Parliamentary Assembly
of the Council of Europe

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I am therefore appealing to you personally to use your authority to expedite the decision to establish an independent external investigation body without any further delay.

The Parliamentary Assembly will soon elect a number of judges to the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the Human Rights Commissioner. It is my duty to ensure that these elections take place in line with the highest ethical standards.

Yours sincerely,



Thorbjørn Jagland

Copy:

Mr Axel Fischer, Chairperson of the Group of the European People's Party
Mr Michele Nicoletti, Chairperson of the Socialist Group
Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger, Chairperson of the European Conservatives Group
Mr Jordi Xuclà, Chairperson of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Mr Tiny Kox, Chairperson of the Group of the Unified European Left
Mr Wojciech Sawicki, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

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