

Press Release

Parliamentary Assembly – Communication Division

Ref: 601a10

Tel. +33 (0)3 88 41 31 93

Fax +33 (0)3 90 21 41 34

Internet: <http://assembly.coe.int>

e-mail: pace.com@coe.int



47 member States

Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Moldova
Monaco
Montenegro
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia
San Marino
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom

As WHO Swine Flu advisors are revealed, PACE rapporteur renews call for greater transparency

Strasbourg, 12.08.2010 – Paul Flynn (United Kingdom, SOC), former rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on the handling of the H1N1 pandemic, has welcomed yesterday's publication by the World Health Organization (WHO) of the list of members of its Emergency Committee on the pandemic, as well as their declarations of interest.

“A year ago, these 15 experts told us the world was facing a grave health emergency. On this occasion, regrettably, they got it wrong: their advice led WHO, the EU and national governments to vastly overrate the seriousness of the H1N1 epidemic, wasting large sums of public money and scaring the world unnecessarily. Yet their task is not easy. They must try to predict the future, sometimes with limited data. Potentially thousands of human lives, as well as billions of euros in contracts, hang on their word.

With such conflicting pressures, we need to be absolutely certain that the advice of such experts is based on solid scientific evidence and is driven solely by the need to protect public health. The only way to do that is through total transparency. When a future pandemic is declared, the public has a right to know, from the outset, who is recommending such a drastic step – as well as any links they may have to the pharmaceutical industry, which stands to profit from such a recommendation.

I look forward to the recommendations of the panel currently reviewing WHO's handling of the H1N1 pandemic, and I hope it will propose publishing the names of such experts when they are appointed, and other steps towards greater transparency in how the organisation makes decisions, as recommended by the Assembly. This would help to restore WHO's credibility – and ensure that its advice is taken seriously when the next pandemic strikes.”

[WHO Emergency Committee list of members and advisor](#)
[PACE resolution and recommendation on the handling of the H1N1 pandemic](#)
[Mr Flynn's full report](#)

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.

President: Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG) – Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group); EDG (European Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).