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To: EK-postbus <postbus@eerstekamer.nl>
Subject: FW: Letter for Speakers of Parliaments from PACE President Bayr / Lettre aux Président.e.s de Parlements de la Présidente APCE Bayr

Attachments:

Letter PACE Pdt Bayr to Speakers - Priorities mandate.pdf
English.pdf

Van: 5.1.2.e <5.1.2.e@coe.int>

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Onderwerp: Letter for Speakers of Parliaments from PACE President Bayr / Lettre aux Président.e.s de Parlements de la Présidente APCE Bayr

Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached a letter from Ms Petra Bayr, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, addressed to the Speakers of Parliaments.

We should be grateful if you would kindly forward this letter on to the Speaker/s of your Parliament on our behalf.

With many thanks and kind regards,

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Cher.e.s collègues,

Veuillez trouver ci-joint une lettre de la part de Mme Petra Bayr, Présidente de l'Assemblée parlementaire du Conseil de l'Europe, adressée aux Présidents et Présidentes de Parlements.

Je vous prie de bien vouloir transmettre cette lettre au Président/à la Présidente de votre parlement.

En vous remerciant d'avance,

Bien cordialement,

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*Council of Europe
Parliamentary Assembly*

The President

Strasbourg, 3 February 2026

Dear Speaker,

Having been elected President of the Parliamentary Assembly at the opening of the first part-session of the 2026 Ordinary Session, allow me to express my commitment to deepening our close interparliamentary cooperation.

I take on this mandate with deep respect for the trust placed in me.

The priorities of my presidency will focus on promoting freedom of expression and of assembly, as well as on protecting linguistic and cultural minorities. Equal access to education and genuine gender equality will remain central commitments, as democracy cannot be complete without full and equal participation and protection for all.

I will also place strong emphasis on the full implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights and the judgments of the Court, on strengthening democratic resilience against disinformation, corruption and intimidation, and on supporting political prisoners and persecuted democratic actors. At the same time, we must ensure that new challenges - including those linked to artificial intelligence and the digital sphere - are addressed through a firm human-rights-based approach.

Continued support for Ukraine will remain a key priority of my mandate. The war of aggression against Ukraine represents a grave violation of international law, and accountability for serious violations is essential. Ukraine continues to suffer from repeated attacks on civilian and energy infrastructure, leaving many vulnerable people exposed to severe winter conditions. In this context, I have co-initiated the cross-party humanitarian campaign in the Austrian parliament "Stop the Cold – Donate Sleeping Bags", aimed at providing practical winter assistance to civilians most affected by these attacks. You will find more information on this initiative in the files attached to this message.

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Another important objective of my Presidency will be to strengthen the visibility of the Council of Europe and bring it closer to citizens, especially young people. I will therefore continue to support outreach initiatives in schools, initiated by my predecessor, including the “Hour of the Council of Europe”, aimed at raising awareness of the Convention system and the protection it offers.

I very much look forward to working closely with you and your delegation during my term of office. I am confident that through sustained cooperation we can further advance our shared commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Please accept, Speaker, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

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Petra Bayr



Stop the cold - Donate sleeping bags

Helping freezing people in Ukraine together

Winter in Ukraine is relentless. In the capital Kyiv, temperatures drop to minus 20 degrees Celsius. Hundreds of thousands of people are exposed to the merciless cold — **no electricity, no heating, often no hot water.** After targeted Russian attacks on the energy infrastructure, people have been sitting in **dark, freezing apartments for weeks.**

We will not leave them alone. We are giving warmth.

We, the Austrian NEOS, the Greens, ÖVP, and SPÖ parties are launching a **relief effort**, supported by Ukrainehilfe. Our goal is clear and concrete: sleeping bags for people affected by poverty in Kyiv – where people are currently suffering from the cold the most.

100 euros = 1 sleeping bag

With 100 euros, you can finance a **high-quality sleeping bag that provides warmth**, protection, and hope. A sleeping bag makes the difference between freezing and persevering, between life and death! **And: a sleeping bag can be taken into bomb shelters.** Our Austrian NGOs will distribute them locally to the poorest people affected.

Please help! Donate 100 euros now for a sleeping bag.

Donation account:

Ukrainehilfe

Purpose: Sleeping bag

IBAN: AT192011184553762400

BIC: GIBAATWWXXX (Erste Bank)

FAQ:

Where do the sleeping bags come from?

Terra Inkognita is a Ukrainian supplier known for its reliable and durable products. By purchasing directly with them, we save money and time.

Who will distribute the sleeping bags?

Austrian NGOs such as Samariterbund, Volkshilfe, and Hilfswerk have been providing aid in Ukraine for a long time and know who is particularly affected. They will take care of the distribution.

Who owns the donation account?

The campaign is supported by Ukrainehilfe, which is providing its account for this purpose. We do not incur any costs!

Every cent is invested in sleeping bags.

ukrhilfe.com

Who initiated “Stop the cold – donate a sleeping bag”?

The Ukraine Round Table is a non-partisan platform founded by David Stögmüller (Greens), Andreas Minnich (ÖVP), Petra Bayr (SPÖ), Henrike Brandstötter (NEOS), and Cornelius Granig (Ukrainehilfe). The members have traveled to Ukraine several times during the war and are familiar with the situation on the ground.

Give warmth. Give protection. Give hope. THANK YOU!

