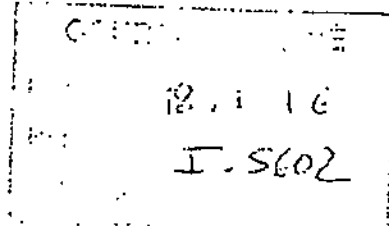




REPRESENTATION PERMANENTE
DE LA FEDERATION DE RUSSIE
AUPRES DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



URGENT

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Strasbourg, 18 January 2016
N 41ce

Dear Mrs. President,

Please, find attached a letter signed by Mrs. Valentina Matvienko, Chair of the Council of Federation of the Russian Federation, and Mr. Sergey Naryshkin, Chair of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, on the matter of credentials of the Russian parliamentary delegation during the PACE January session.

We would like to attract your attention to the request by the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation to distribute this letter among the PACE members.

Yours sincerely,

Ivan SOLTANOVSKY
Permanent Representative

Mrs. Anne BRASSEUR
President of the PACE
Strasbourg

Unofficial translation from Russian

Dear Mrs. President !

We would like to inform you that the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation does not consider it possible at this very moment to approach the PACE for ratification of Russian delegation credentials during the January 2016 Assembly session in accordance with Rule 6.1 of the PACE Rules of Procedure.

It is due to the fact that restrictive measures were applied with regard to the delegation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation by the decisions of the Assembly in 2014-2015, which imposed considerable constraints to realisation of its democratic credentials as a deputation of Russian parliament which functions in compliance with the will, expressed by Russian citizens.

These decisions were based on perfunctory or biased interpretation of Ukrainian crisis, and thus on an a priori impracticable demands raised by the Assembly in respective resolutions. Therewith the Assembly did not perform its mission, isolated itself from drawing up constructive decisions on Ukraine and created an impasse on the way to dialogue with Russian delegation in PACE. The way out from such a deadlock should also be found by the Assembly itself by means of an open and free discussion on the issue place and role of the PACE within the Council of Europe activities and European affairs on the whole and not via questioning the credentials of the Russian delegation.

**Ms. Anne BRASSEUR
President of the PACE
Strasbourg**

It is common knowledge that a disagreement with political sanctions in respect to members of parliaments was expressed by participants of the recent 133 IPU Assembly in Geneva, and it was reflected in the special statement by the IPU President S.Chowdhury (attached).

The respective practice in principle is not specified by the OSCE PA Rules of Procedure neither, where despite the artificial external obstacles created by the EU regulations, an intensive dialogue has been continuing recently on different challenging issues on security and cooperation in Europe, common for all of us.

Understanding of the hopelessness and counterproductive character of obstructing interparliamentary dialogue is spreading more and more among the PACE members recently. We will monitor the development of respective discussions during January session of the Assembly, including on the draft resolution on "Introduction Sanctions against Parliamentarians" which criticizes such sanctions as contradicting the very nature of parliamentarism.

On behalf of the Chambers of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation we would like to confirm once again our principled position on unacceptability of sanctions approaches used against parliamentarians largely, and against Russian parliamentary delegation in particular.

The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation remains convinced supporter of interparliamentary dialogue and it will be ready to resume its work in the PACE in case of observance of equal rights and possibilities for all national delegations.

Under the existing challenging circumstances the duty of European parliamentarians is to continue equitable dialogue – an essential instrument of democracy, rule of law and human rights enforcement, and a precondition to solving topical problems of present-day world including those which caused known disagreements in the PACE in the last two years.

The Assembly is destined to overcome a temptation of settling interstate accounts which are often based on outdated phobias and prejudice, and revive in its

work commitment to the Council of Europe's basic aim, as it is declared in its Statute: "unity between its Members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress".

In accordance with Rule 6.4 of the PACE Rules of Procedure the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation intends to form a delegation at the later stage when all necessary conditions emerge.

We request to distribute this letter among the PACE members.

Chair of the Council of Federation
The Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation

V.MATVIENKO

Chair of the State Duma
The Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation

S.NARYSHKIN