

**STATEMENT
BY THE COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND DEMOCRACY**

ON

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ACADEMIC NETWORK ON COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONVENTIONS AGAINST CORRUPTION**

ATHENS, 22 MAY 2018

Corruption is a serious threat to the basic principles and values of the Council of Europe, undermines the confidence of citizens in democracy, erodes the rule of law, denies the enjoyment of Human Rights and hinders social and economic progress.

In its [Resolution 2170 \(2017\)](#) the Parliamentary Assembly called on governments to “pay particular attention, through further academic and policy research, to the ways in which corruption was and is embedded in social and cultural values, as these provide the essential environment in which institutional reforms and anti-corruption initiatives can succeed”. In the related [Recommendation 2105 \(2017\)](#), the Assembly underlined that anti-corruption and integrity strategies are more likely to succeed when they receive strong grass-roots backing from civil society and other relevant actors in the fight against corruption. The Committee welcomes the overall support of the Committee of Ministers for further academic and policy research in the area of anti-corruption.

Against this background, the Committee calls for the setting up of a network of academics on the Council of Europe Conventions against Corruption.

The Council of Europe, thanks to its broad expertise and in particular to the work of GRECO, can play a strategic role in supporting the work of governments and helping to set-up such a network in each Council of Europe member State, observer States and States whose parliaments enjoy partnership for democracy status with the Assembly. This academic network can thus be a powerful mechanism to share knowledge, support community building and encourage scholarship and innovation in the fight against corruption. Partnership with other Organisations, such as the OECD, will be key to the success of this initiative.

The Committee welcomes the offer by the Athens Public International Law Center to be a partner and engagement platform for this network. It calls on academic institutions, academics and scholars in all our member States to come together, and to form a European network.

Promoting a strong alliance with the world of culture, schools and universities will be instrumental to promote integrity and tackle corruption at all levels and in all our Institutions.