

**ПОСТІЙНА ДЕЛЕГАЦІЯ
ВЕРХОВНОЇ РАДИ УКРАЇНИ
У ПАРЛАМЕНТСЬКІЙ
АСАМБЛЕЇ
РАДИ ЄВРОПИ**



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF THE VERKHOVNA RADA
OF UKRAINE
TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
PARLIAMENTARY
ASSEMBLY**

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To the President of the PACE,

To the Chairpersons of the PACE political groups,

To the Chairpersons of the PACE national delegations

Kyiv, 10 June 2019

Your Excellency,

On 3 June 2019, the Committee on Rules of Procedure of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted the draft report by Ms. Petra De Sutter “Strengthening the decision-making process of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning credentials and voting” where it is proposed to supplement Assembly’s Rules of Procedure to clarify that “*The members’ rights to vote, to speak and to be represented in the Assembly and its bodies shall not be suspended or withdrawn in the context of a challenge to or reconsideration of credentials*”.

The Committee also proposed a derogation from the PACE Rules of Procedure in order to be able to invite the parliaments of member States which are not represented by a delegation to the Assembly to present their credentials during the June 2019 part-session.

The initiators of these decisions might think that the adoption by the Assembly of the above-mentioned report could lead to the situation when the delegation of the Russian Federation would submit its credentials without worrying that its credentials could be challenged and any sanctions could be imposed.

We would like to remind that in the Resolution 1990 (2014) the Assembly considered that the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, and the involvement and actions of the Russian Federation in the lead up to this annexation, constituted a grave violation of international law and were a clear contradiction to the Statute of the Council of Europe and Russia’s accession commitments. The Assembly strongly condemned the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation, which required a strong signal of disapproval from the Assembly. The Assembly therefore decided not to suspend, until the end of the 2014 session, the voting rights of the Russian delegation as well as its right to be represented in the Bureau, Presidential Committee and Standing Committee of the Assembly and its right to participate in election observation missions. In addition, in this resolution, the Assembly reserved the right to annul the credentials of the Russian delegation if the Russian Federation did not de-escalate the situation and reverse the annexation of Crimea.

In the Resolution 2034 (2015) the Assembly resolutely condemned the grave violations of international law committed by the Russian Federation with regard to the conflict in eastern Ukraine

and the illegal annexation of Crimea. As a clear expression of its condemnation, the Assembly decided to deprive the Russian delegation to the Assembly of a number of rights for the duration of the 2015 session. However, for the sole and explicit purpose of maintaining an open and constructive dialogue with the Russian delegation, including on its actions with regard to Ukraine, the Assembly decided to ratify the credentials of the Russian delegation. At the same time, in paragraph 16 of Resolution 2034 (2015), the Assembly resolved to annul the credentials of the Russian delegation at its June 2015 part-session if no progress had been made with regard to the implementation of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, as well as the demands and recommendations of the Assembly as expressed in that resolution, in particular with regard to the immediate withdrawal of Russian military troops from eastern Ukraine.

Unfortunately, until now there was no progress on the Russian side with regard to the implementation of the demands mentioned above.

Despite the current situation it will be still possible to challenge the credentials of the Russian delegation and to impose certain sanctions that are provided for in the Opinion of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs approved on 30 September 2014 (AS/Pro (2014) 10 def).

In this regard, we urge all the members to support our proposal to challenge the credentials of the Russian Federation, if presented, and to impose sanctions in order to suspend any attempts related to the unconditional return of the Russian delegation to the Assembly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Volodymyr ARIEV', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Volodymyr ARIEV
Chairperson of the Delegation