

**JOINT MEETING OF EUROPEAN UNION AFFAIRS COMMITTEES
OF THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS OF SLOVENIA AND CROATIA
Ljubljana, 6th May 2014**

MEETING CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the first joint meeting of the Committee on EU Affairs of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Affairs Committee of the Croatian Parliament, in view of the upcoming European elections;

Acknowledging that democratic legitimacy must be ensured at all stages of the European decision-making process but also in the mutual interactions between institutions while recognizing the Lisbon Treaty provisions on national Parliaments' active contribution to the good functioning of the Union;

Underlining that in the integration process, national parliaments play a special role in bringing the European Union closer to its citizens and in strengthening European awareness in the Member States. In this, recalling Article 10(3) of the Treaty on European Union, which provides that every citizen has the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union and that decisions are taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizens;

Reaffirming their support in reconnecting the citizens of the European Union to the European Integration and to the European institutions with regard to the European Parliament elections in May 2014 while stressing at the same time that the result of these elections depends above all on the relevant work and activities of the European Parliament;

Emphasising the role and the accountability of European political parties in the legislative process as well as in the interparliamentary cooperation;

Reaffirming their commitment to the interparliamentary cooperation in line with Lisbon Treaty provisions, especially having in mind the importance of collective action of the national Parliaments emerging from the Lisbon Treaty, particularly in relation to the subsidiarity principle checks;

The Committee on EU Affairs of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Affairs Committee of the Croatian Parliament

Highlight the importance of dialogue with the citizens at various levels, possibly with the participation of NGOs, on the future of the European Union in order to restore or enhance their confidence in the Union and in its role as protector of peace, democracy and human rights, which is important in the light of the developments on its eastern border;

Believe that such dialogue must include issues related to EU enlargement, particularly to the countries of the South-East Europe;

Welcome current involvement of national parliaments in the European semester for economic policy coordination procedure and support gradual inclusion of the European Parliament in that regard;

Believe that national parliaments have a specific task when it comes to bringing the Union closer to citizens, also in relation to the measures needed at the EU level to exit the financial and sovereign debt crisis, as well as in the process of creating a deep and genuine economic and monetary union. Democratic legitimacy and accountability are in fact a necessary component of any major reform of the European Union;

Agree that even though after the Lisbon Treaty scrutiny of the government's actions remains the main European activity of national parliaments, their important political task at the EU level is to monitor the compliance with the principle of subsidiarity;

Stress that COSAC is and should remain the important institutionalised interparliamentary cooperation forum for regular exchange of views and best practices regarding the (political) aspects of the national parliaments' European role, with their particular attention to be given to the evaluation of the current state and of the future of the European integration;

Call on COSAC to use the occasion of the 5th anniversary of coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty to analyse the activities of national parliaments in the European Union in order to assess the success of the Treaty in coping with the European Union democratic deficit;

Welcome individual initiatives of some national Parliaments on how the role of national Parliaments in the European process could be strengthened and express their support to the Speakers Conference conclusion that existing weaknesses in subsidiarity checks should be first corrected within the framework of political dialogue and thus avoiding the Treaty amendments;

Affirm their support to the meetings of the European Affairs Committees of the Parliaments of the South as a forum for the discussion of topics and the exchange of views on issues of common concern of the Member States from the South within the particular EU framework;

Invite the European Parliament to redefine the outcome of interparliamentary meetings organised by European Parliament, so that these are more useful to national parliamentarians;

Agree that due to the dual nature of the European Union Citizenship, European Parliament and National Parliaments are accountable to European citizens and citizens of national states respectively, making the European Parliament, as an institution where EU citizens are directly represented, responsible for communicating with and informing citizens on particular European matters;

Draw attention, ahead of the elections to the European Parliament, to Recommendation 2013/142/EU on enhancing the democratic and efficient conduct of the elections to the European Parliament adopted by the European Commission on 12 March 2013, and particularly to the fact that "Member States should encourage and facilitate the provision of information to the electorate on the affiliation between national parties and European political parties before and during the elections to the European Parliament, inter alia, by allowing and encouraging the indication of such an affiliation on the ballots used in those elections";

Stress that also the elected Members of the European Parliament should seek to have voters properly informed of the affiliation between the national and the European political party. This could significantly contribute to increasing the political importance of the European Parliament and thus of the European Union among its citizens.


Jozef Horvat
Chairman of the Committee on EU Affairs


Daniel Mondekar
Chairman of the European Affairs Committee