

Working Group IV

Working document 13

Working group IV – "Role of National Parliaments"

Subject: – **Observations by Mr Hans van Baalen, alternate member of the Convention,
to the Working Group on the role of National Parliaments**

Members of Working Group IV will find hereafter observations received from Mr Hans van Baalen, representative of the Dutch Parliament, alternate member of the Convention.

Observations on the role of the National Parliaments

The most effective way to involve National Parliaments in the EU community decision making process is to give them a role in the subsidiarity question which is to be considered a political question ex ante. The solution would be that the European Commission sends its subsidiarity check on legislation to the Council of Ministers which in public debates the matter and decides on the validity of the Commission's subsidiarity decision. National Parliaments can pro-actively question the position to be taken in the Council by their Ministers in the Council and force their Governments to take a certain stand or they can after the Council decision scrutinise their Governments' position taken in the Council. The same could be done by the European Parliament.

Furthermore, regarding the EU inter-governmental decision making process a EU Parliamentary Assembly could be established composed of Members of National Parliaments and the European Parliament. Also the COSAC could be given a strengthened political role.

National Parliaments could send Permanent Representatives to the EP which form a kind of Parliamentary COREPER.

The present practice makes clear that national MPs do not have the time to play a re-enforced role through participation in all kind of EP meetings how useful and well intended they are. It is to be advised that National Parliaments delegate such participation to their Permanent Representatives.

The Hague, July 16th 2002

Hans van Baalen
