

Working Group IV

Working document 29

Working group IV – "Role of National Parliaments"

Subject: **" Draft proposal for conclusions "**
 – paper by Ms Johanna Maij-Weggen, member of the Convention

Members of Working Group IV will find hereafter a paper by Ms Johanna Maij-Weggen, member of the European Parliament, member of the Convention.

WORKING GROUP IV "ROLE OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS"

Note from Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN to the working group "National Parliaments"

Draft proposal for conclusions

1. The working group expresses a general satisfaction with the final report of the working group on Subsidiarity, which reflects the views of this working group on the role of national parliaments in controlling the principle of subsidiarity. The working group underlines that no new institutions should be formed.
2. The working group calls on the national parliaments to improve the national parliamentary scrutiny systems. In order to strengthen monitoring by national parliaments in relation to their governments it is crucial for national parliaments to build up a level of expertise regarding European legislation. National parliaments do have the power to scrutinize their government's action and positions in European affairs and should make full use of them. It is up to the national parliaments to create basic framework conditions to co-ordinate their national parliamentary scrutiny systems towards the governments all along the legislative procedure. Based on a code of conduct a permanent exchange of views on the best practices of national scrutiny provisions should be established. In order to facilitate this control the Council shall act in public, whenever it acts in the legislative process.
3. The meetings of the Council should be as open as possible, also to create the possibility for the national parliaments to control their governments in the Council.
4. The working group proposes to notify the possibility for national parliaments to be consulted in the Commission's annual legislative programming. The Commission shall forward its annual legislative programme to the national parliaments without delay in order to allow for an annual political debate. The result of this debate should be given to the national governments.

5. An amended Amsterdam protocol on the role of national parliaments or a new provision in the future constitutional text can contribute to better conditions for scrutiny on the national level. The future text should therefore include a provision that the Commission will transmit documents (annual legislative programme, all legislative and consultative documents) directly to national parliaments - at the same time as it does to the Union legislator - as a complement to the transmission to governments. As the legislative texts are often amended in the course of the legislative process, it is important that national parliaments continue to exercise their scrutiny role towards their governments all along the legislative procedure.

Annual legislative programme

"On the first of November, the Commission shall forward the annual legislative programme of the Union for the following year to the European Parliament, the Council as well as to the national parliaments."

Legislation procedure

"Proposals for Union laws and Union framework laws shall be submitted by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. The Commission shall put forward its proposals to the national parliaments without delay."

Publicity of Council meetings

"Whenever the Council acts in the Union's legislative process, it shall meet in public. The minutes of the meetings of the Council shall be forwarded within one week after the meeting to the European Parliament and the national parliaments".

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