



GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TURKEY
SPEAKER

Ankara, April 10th 2012

Dear Colleague,

When we get together on 19-21 April 2012 in Warsaw for the next Conference of Speakers of European Union Parliaments a very significant item on the agenda will be how best to set up an interparliamentary forum for the democratic scrutiny of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). At last year's Conference, there has not been a compromise on this matter. We believe it of utmost importance that non-EU NATO Allies and candidate countries continue to enjoy a substantial standing in the new set-up, so that they can make a meaningful contribution to future deliberations of the prospective body, as well.

Let me briefly remind you of the background of this specific dimension of the issue at hand. The legal basis of the Western European Union (WEU) Assembly ended in line with the Statement of the Presidency of the Permanent Council of the WEU on the termination of the Modified Brussels Treaty dated 31 March 2010. The WEU Assembly has been a unique interparliamentary forum which enabled parliamentary scrutiny in the area of security and defence. For this reason, there was significant focus on the establishment of a new interparliamentary structure to maintain the democratic scrutiny of foreign and security policies.

Several initiatives have been taken concerning the question of future parliamentary scrutiny. In that vein, the proposals put forward by national parliaments largely aim to bring to life the objectives of the Protocol on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union, which underlines the greater involvement of national parliaments in the activities of the European Union. Needless to say, parliamentary involvement is particularly important in the area of foreign and security policies, since the related issues concern national sovereignty. It is a significant responsibility for us all, as elected members of national parliaments, not to abandon the democratic oversight of European foreign and defence policies.

On the other hand, we also take note of the debate and work in the European Parliament on the issue of future parliamentary scrutiny and recognize that there have been some differences of opinion regarding the respective roles of national parliaments and the European Parliament. From our standpoint, of course, it was particularly important to follow and express our views on the scale of inclusiveness and the representation of non-EU countries in the new interparliamentary structure.

Our Parliament is closely following the maturing debate on the future of parliamentary scrutiny and stands ready to offer its contribution. Non-EU NATO Allies and candidate countries should continue to have a say, illustrated through the experience built up by the WEU Assembly. Indeed, the WEU Permanent Council Members, through the aforementioned statement, expressed their encouragement on the enhancement of interparliamentary dialogue including with candidates for EU accession.





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Turkey has been an associate member of the WEU Assembly. It has also been a major contributor to security and defence in Europe through various instruments, including its participation in the military operations and civilian missions within CSDP. Turkey pursues an active foreign policy and makes utmost efforts to contribute to international peace and stability in its region and beyond. On almost every dossier concerning foreign and defence policy, Turkey and the EU have a common stake.

In light of the ongoing processes related to the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in terms of institutional restructuring of CSDP and the closure of WEU bodies, we attach utmost importance to Turkey's full representation in the newly emerging interparliamentary body. Thus, Turkey and other Allies' voices will continue to be heard on foreign and security policy issues through this new mechanism in a meaningful fashion.

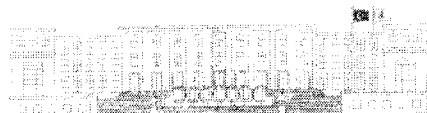
However, at the recent meeting of the Secretaries General of the EU Parliaments, which was organized in Warsaw in order to determine the agenda of the upcoming Speakers Conference, it has come to the attention of our delegation that the recent proposal is unfortunately far from giving the opportunity to non-EU Allies and candidates to fulfill their potential in making a fair contribution to the work of the new body. A representation of our countries that barely amounts to one fourth of member countries falls far short of our expectations, not to mention the step back that it would constitute compared to the WEU Assembly practice. Non-EU Allies and candidate countries should be able to represent their countries with equal number of parliamentarians as member countries.

We strongly hope these considerations could be taken into account in the run-up to the Conference. Your valuable support to this end would be highly appreciated. I am looking forward to the discussions at the Conference. Turkey will certainly be supportive of establishing the most effective parliamentary scrutiny mechanism to European foreign and security policies to the satisfaction of all.

Please except the assurances of my highest consideration.


Cemil ÇİCEK

Ms. Ewa KOPACZ
Speaker of Sejm
WARSAW





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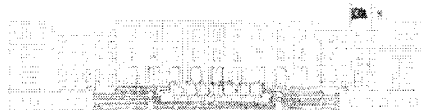
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Mr. Bogdan BORUSEWICZ
Speaker of Senate
WARSAW

