

6TH MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTS OF PARLIAMENTS OF THE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

EXTENDED

TO THE PARTICIPATION
OF THE PRESIDENTS OF PARLIAMENTS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA AND ROMANIA

SEJM OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
WARSAW, 25-26 JUNE 2006

JOINT STATEMENT

At their 6th Meeting, held in Warsaw on 26th June 2006, the Presidents of Parliaments of the Regional Partnership - Mr. Andreas Khol, President of the National Council of Austria, Mrs. Sissy Roth-Halvax, President of the Bundesrat of Austria, Mr. Přemysl Sobotka, President of the Senate of the Czech Republic, Mr. Marek Jurek, Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Bogdan Borusewicz, Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Mr. France Cukjati, Speaker of the National Assembly of Slovenia, Mr. László Mandur, Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament,* and Special Guests Mr. Georgi Pirinski, Chairman of the Bulgarian Parliament, Mr. Gavriela Vasilescu Secretary of the Standing Bureau of the Senate of the Parliament of Romania, Mr. Valeriu Ștefan Zgonea, Quaestor of the Standing Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of Romania, made a Joint Statement in which—

(1) they welcomed the European Council's decisions taken in Brussels on 15th and 16th June 2006;

they stated that

(2) the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality were basic principles of the functioning of the European Union because, like the Community method, they put into practice the idea of the division of powers, which is fundamental to Europe. In this regard they welcomed the respective reference to the role of national parliaments in the conclusions of the European Council from 15th and 16th June 2006;

* The Slovakian party was represented by His Excellency Mr. František Ružička, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Poland.

Thereby an initiative launched by the Presidents of Parliaments of the Regional Partnership in 2005 was now accepted by the European Council;

(3) the solemn political declaration to be taken next March, on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, should remind all European Union members of the principle of solidarity which had been the basic spiritual motivation of the European Union founding fathers;

(4) stated that the strengthening of the family should be a priority of the European social policy;

(5) welcomed with satisfaction the European Council's position on that issue;

(6) the extended period of the two-way reflection on the future shape of the Union should provide an opportunity to initiate cooperation among national parliaments that would be closer than so far; at the same time, cooperation among national parliaments was a value in itself; horizontal structures, such as the COSAC Conference of Speakers and the IPEX platform for electronic exchange of information, made a way to overcome democratic deficit within the European Union;

(7) improvement of interparliamentary cooperation should apply also to the carrying out of the European Commission's initiative regarding the forwarding of documentation directly to individual national parliaments; the relevant positions of respective national parliaments, especially with regard to the subsidiarity and proportionality check, should thus be transmitted to the European Commission through the IPEX computer platform;

(8) under the European Union's Eastern Dimension, the emergence of the European vocation of the Union's European neighbours, embraced by the Union's New Neighbourhood Policy, should lead to giving prospects for membership to those of them who were bent on further integration with the European Union and who had the will to carry out reforms necessary to meet the relevant criteria;

(9) in view of their recently gained experience in economic and political transformations and in adopting the *acquis communautaire*, the parliaments of new Member States from Central Europe were particularly well prepared for assisting new and emerging democracies in the countries embraced by the European Neighbourhood Policy;

(10) the existing *acquis communautaire* contained hidden reserves that should be revealed through the enforcement of the Single Market freedoms and through making the creation of a better legal environment our priority; at the same time,

verification of legislative initiatives still during the legislative process should not be a one-off activity;

(11) they supported the opening of Council meetings to the public, which was a great step in making the EU more transparent;

(12) voiced their conviction that Bulgaria and Romania would join the European Union on 1st January 2007, and launched an appeal to the Parliaments of the Member States to accelerate their respective procedure in order to complete the ratification process of the Accession Treaty in due time;

(13) welcomed the announcement of the admission of Slovenia to the euro zone as of 1st January 2007; and voiced their conviction that all Member States, without any exception, would comply with the Maastricht criteria;

(14) welcomed the dialogue with religious authorities launched by the European Commission, which should enhance appreciation of the common Christian heritage of Europe;

(15) voiced their conviction that by the end of 2007, all countries cooperating with one another within the framework of Regional Partnership should have joined the Schengen area;

(16) supported the creation within the European Union and in cooperation with other interested countries of new instruments to support the principles of democracy, the rule of law, independent courts, press and political freedoms in the countries neighbouring on the European Union;

(17) declared themselves in favour of the adopting by the European Union of its own strategy regarding globalization, derived from the values fundamental to Europe;

(18) decided to convene the next Meeting of the Presidents of Parliaments of the Regional Partnership in Vienna on 23rd – 24th November 2006;