

His Excellency
Yiannakis Omirou
Speaker
House of Representatives
1402 Nicosia
Cyprus

Dear Mr. Speaker

As national parliamentarians we are genuinely concerned about the future of the European project and deeply engaged in discussions about how to develop a more integrated financial, budgetary and economic union.

The decisions taken during the European Semester and the disciplines created under the Fiscal Compact will have a real impact on the everyday lives of the Union's citizens. As a result it is self evident that greater democratic control of what the European Union is engaging in is required.

Despite the European Council's recent call for increased democratic legitimacy and accountability, there is a worrying lack of concrete proposals as to how the role of national parliaments could be strengthened in this regard.

We, as members of national parliaments and being close to our citizens, have a special role to play in establishing closer links between the citizens of our Member States and European decision-making.

For that reason 27 chairmen of the European Affairs Committees of national parliaments gathered in Copenhagen for an informal meeting on 11 March 2013 to discuss how national parliaments could become proactive players in a more integrated financial, budgetary and economic union.

At our meeting we had a fruitful exchange of views on a number of concrete proposals as to how the role of national parliaments could be enhanced. Among the ideas discussed was the implementation of the interparliamentary conference established by article 13 of the Fiscal Compact, which is on the agenda of the EU Speakers' meeting taking place in Nicosia on 21-23 April. We have no desire to build new interparliamentary bodies. Instead, we believe that existing structures and resources should be exploited to their full potential. We therefore invite Speakers to consider the possibility of establishing a small effective conference focused on substantial issues – to be held in the margins of the biannual COSAC-meetings – using the existing venue and conference facilities and existing resources.

We believe the conference should be composed of representatives of those committees that hold the expertise and responsibility when it comes to dealing with financial, budgetary and economic issues in the parliaments of the 27 EU Member States, e.g., the chairmen of the European Affairs Committee and Finance Committees. However the final composition of the delegations should be left for each parliament to determine. The European Parliament should be represented at the conference on equal footing with national parliaments.

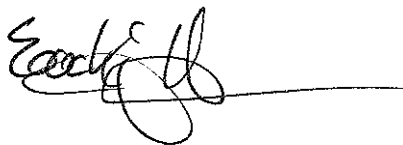
Finally we would like to underline that the democratic challenge of a more integrated financial, budgetary and economic union goes beyond the matters set out in the Fiscal Compact.

The “tool box of democratic legitimacy” should also contain instruments that might help national parliaments to turn into more proactive players in EU-decision-making - such as:

- a) a stronger common platform for national parliaments to coordinate views
- b) a strengthened political dialogue with the European Commission and
- c) the establishment of a set of key points in time at which the views of the national parliaments could be considered before and during the European Semester thereby strengthening its legitimacy.

Finally we hope you will consider our proposals and we are at your disposal for any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely



Ms. Eva Kjer Hansen,
Chairman of the European Affairs
Committee of the Danish Parlia-
ment



Mr. Dominic Hannigan,
Chairman of the Joint Committee
on European Union Affairs of the
Oireachtas