



## **MINUTES OF THE CALRE 2014 PLENARY ASSEMBLY**

### **- 1<sup>st</sup> Part -**

#### **Santiago de Compostela, 7th NOVEMBER 2014**

Santiago de Compostela, at 10.30 a.m., the 7th November 2014 was met the CALRE's Plenary Assembly at the Galician Parliament premises, under Ms. Pilar Rojo Noguera Presidency, CALRE's President for 2014 and President of the Galician Parliament; with the assistance of the participants listed below, previously called to this effect to address the following issues:

### **AGENDA**

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 21TH AND 22TH OCTOBER 2013
2. CALRE 2014 PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY REPORT
3. CALRE'S INTERNAL RULES MODIFICATION PROPOSAL (discussion and approval)
4. FINAL REPORT OF CALRE 2014 WORKING GROUPS
  - Working Group on Subsidiarity
  - Working Group on E-Democracy
  - Working Group on Immigration. Intervention of the Quebec's Parliament on immigration policies
  - Working Group on Cohesion policy
5. PRESENTATION OF CALRE 2015 WORKING GROUPS
6. GALICIA DECLARATION PRESENTATION (CALRE 2014). (Discussion and amendments approval)
7. PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CALRE 2015 PRESIDENT
8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS



## PARTICIPANTS

As CALRE members:

- ✚ **Ms. Pilar Rojo Noguera**, President of the Galician Parliament and CALRE's President for 2014
- ✚ **Mr. Xosé Antón Sarmiento Méndez**, Clerk of the Galician Parliament and CALRE's General Secretary
- ✚ From CALRE Vice-presidency, **Mr. Fouad Ahidar**, Vice-president of the Brussels-Capital Parliament
- ✚ From Austria, **Mr. Franz Majcen**, President of the Styria Parliament
- ✚ From Austria, **Ms. Gudrun Mosler-Törnström**, Vice-president of the Salzburg Parliament and President of the Chamber of Regions of the Congress of the Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- ✚ From Austria, **Mr. Anton Mattle**, Vice-president of Parliament of Tyrol
- ✚ From Austria, **Mr. Gerald Grabensteiner**, Vice-director of the Upper Austria Parliament
- ✚ From Germany, **Mr. Reinhold Bocklet**, Vice-president of Bavarian Parliament
- ✚ From Germany, **Mr. Mathias Röbler**, President of the Saxony Parliament
- ✚ From Belgium, **Mr. Jan Peumans**, President of the Vlaams Parliament
- ✚ From Belgium, **Mr. Karl-Heinz Lambertz**, President of the German Speaking Community Parliament and President of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
- ✚ From Belgium, **Mr. André Antoine**, President of the Walloon Parliament
- ✚ From Belgium, **Mr. Jean-Charles Luperto**, President of the French Speaking Community Parliament
- ✚ From Spain, **Mr. Manuel Gracia Navarro**, President of the Andalusia Parliament and Chairman of the E-Democracy Working Group
- ✚ From Spain, **Mr. Francisco Celdrán Vidal**, President of the Regional Assembly of Murcia

- ✚ From Spain, **Ms. Margalida Durán i Cladera**, President of the Balearic Islands Parliament
- ✚ From Spain, **Mr. José I. Cenicerós González**, President of the La Rioja Parliament
- ✚ From Spain, **Mr. José I. Echevarría Echániz**, President of the Assembly of Madrid and President of the Conference of Spanish Regional Parliaments' Presidents
- ✚ From Spain, **Ms. María Josefa García Cirac**, President the Castile and Leon Parliament
- ✚ From Spain, **Mr. Antonio A. Castro Cordobez**, President of the Canary Islands Parliament
- ✚ From Spain, **Mr. Alejandro Font de Mora**, President of the Valencia Parliament
- ✚ From Spain, **Ms. Consuelo de Fátima Rodríguez Píriz**, Vice-president of the Extremadura Parliament
- ✚ From Finland, **Ms. Britt Lundberg**, President of the Åland Parliament
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Clodovaldo Ruffato**, President of the Regional Council of Veneto, Vice-chairman of the Conference of Presidents of the Regional Legislative Assemblies and of the Autonomous Province and Chairman of the Working Group on Cohesion Policy
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Raffaele Cattaneo**, P President of the Regional Council of Lombardy and Chairman of the Working Group on Subsidiarity
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Giovanni Ardizzone**, President of the Regional Assembly of Sicily and Chairman of the Working Group on Immigration
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Franco Iacop**, President of the Regional Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Giuseppe Di Pangrazio**, President of the Regional council of Abruzzo
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Daniele Leodori**, President of the Regional Council of Lazio
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Vincenzo Niro**, President of the Regional Council of Molise
- ✚ From Italy, **Mr. Roberto Giuseppe Benedetti**, Vice-president of the Regional Council of Tuscany
- ✚ From Portugal, **Ms. Ana Luis**, President of the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of Açores
- ✚ From UK, **Ms. Rosemary Butler**, President of the Wales National Assembly

As invited members:

- ✚ From Austria, Mr. **Andreas Kiefer**, General Secretary of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- ✚ From Belgium, Mr. **Michel Lebrun**, President of the Committee of the Regions (CoR)
- ✚ From Belgium, Mr. **Giovanni Kessler**, Director-General of the European Antifraud Office (OLAF)
- ✚ From Canada, Ms. **Maryse Gaudreault**, Vice-president of the National Assembly of Quebec
- ✚ From U.S., Ms. **Debbie Smith**, President of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and Senator for Nevada
- ✚ From Japan, Mr. **Yosiaki Matsuda**, President of the Japan Local Councilors Alliance

CALRE's President opens the session at 10.30 a.m. and welcomes all participants at the meeting, thanking them for their attendance to Santiago de Compostela. Thus, two CALRE's Plenary Assembly working days are open after an intense year of CALRE's works.

Thereafter, the President starts with the first item on the agenda.

## **1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 21TH AND 22TH OCTOBER 2013**

The President presents, for its adoption, the minutes of the Plenary Assembly held in Brussels the 21st and 22nd October 2013.

Since there is no objection to its contents, it results adopted by unanimous consent by all members of Standing Committee here represented.

## **2. CALRE 2014 PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY REPORT**

The CALRE's President summarized the undertaken works all along her mandate, aiming to inform all CALRE's members. Furthermore, she informs all attendees this information is available in the CALRE's web page ([www.calrenet.eu](http://www.calrenet.eu)).

Firstly, she highlighted the **cooperation** developed **with European associations**, notably with the **Committee of the Regions**. This cooperation started in January 2014 through a meeting held with the President of the Committee of the Regions, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, and through the participation at the reflection procedure on the Future of the CoR, on the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The main goal was to encourage the contribution of both entities to the European legislative process and thus offer a response to the specific needs of citizens.

In March 2014, Pilar Rojo attended the 6<sup>th</sup> European Summit of Regions and Cities which was celebrated in Athens. The CALRE's President took up this opportunity to meet the President of the Congress of Local and Regional authorities of the Council of Europe, Mr. Herwing Van Staa, to strength the cooperation between both organizations and to take advantage of common synergies.

She also participated in a CoR public consultation on the implementation of the EU budget in order to address the spending of EU funds from the regional authorities' perspective.

The 20<sup>th</sup> April 2014 the CALRE Presidency contributed to the opinion on the Committee of the Regions political priorities for 2015-2020, and in May 2014, she adhered, as CALRE's President as well as President of the Galician Parliament, to the Charter for Multilevel Governance in Europe launched by the Committee of the Regions. She also invited all CALRE's members to participate at this adherence.

Finally, in September 2014, Pilar Rojo participated in a working lunch with the European Commission President, José Manuel Durão Barroso, and with the President of the Committee of the Regions, Michel Lebrun, as well as with other representatives of EU associations and with the Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn. During this meeting, it was highlighted the importance of the regional parliaments with legislative power to achieve the fixed targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

At European level, she has also developed a close cooperation with the **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and with**

**the Assembly of European Regions (AER).** Notably, the CALRE's President took part at the Bureau meeting of the Chamber of Regions of the Congress of Local and Regional authorities of the Council of Europe held in Strasbourg (France). She attended this meeting invited by the President of the Congress, Herwing Van Staa, aiming to assess potential cooperation ways between both institutions. Moreover, in October she participated in the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (France). She took part in the debate on the promotion on public ethics and corruption's prevention, on which she stated, the public ethic is an important issue for the CALRE and therefore, the regional parliaments of the CALRE created a Working Group on E-Democracy. The main aim of this Working Group is to promote the use of the ICT tools to boost institutions' transparency.

Regarding the collaboration undertaken with the AER, Pilar Rojo took part, through a videoconference, in the Plenary Assembly of European Regions (AER), held in Wroclaw (Poland). During this conference Pilar Rojo highlighted the role of the regional assemblies with legislative power and its contribution to the European integration process.

Secondly, she highlighted the CALRE's internationalization all along 2014. In this context, she attended last June 2014, invited by the President of the Taiwan Council Representatives Community Forum (TCF), Lin Chin-chang, its annual meeting in Taipei. During this meeting Ms. Rojo Noguera defended the European integration process, notably the importance of the regional policy makers in the European law process. Moreover, all along the global forum sessions it was presented a draft collaboration agreement aiming to create an international forum within the international participant associations (attached to the documentation provided).

In August 2014, the CALRE's General Secretary and General Secretary of the Galician Parliament, Xosé Antón Sarmiento Méndez, participated in the NCSL General Assembly held in Minneapolis, Minnesota (U.S.). During this meeting the CALRE interchanged practical information about the NCSL functioning and activities and assessed potential cooperation ways between both institutions.

Subsequently, Pilar Rojo stressed her participation in European conferences as well as other related activities. First of all, she noted she organized in March 2014 in the Galician Parliament premises a seminar on the European Union entitled as follows: "Why do we care about Europe? The future of the regions in the European Union" The main goal was to mobilize citizens to participate in the European elections. Further to this, in May 2014, on the occasion of the Europe Day, she made an institutional Statement highlighting the key role of regional parliaments in the future of Europe. Also, she attended a conference given by the President of the Committee of the Regions, Ramón Luís Valcárcel Siso, on the support to SMEs to contribute to the European growth, as well as she attended the official event, held in Madrid, organized by the information office in Spain of the European Parliament and by the representative office of the European Commission in Spain.

Finally, she pointed out a conference she organized in Brussels last 20<sup>th</sup> June on the occasion of the Refugee World Day. The conference was celebrated towards a common immigration policy for Europe, an immigration policy which safeguards citizens' rights and promotes their integration in our territories. The main goal of the conference was to promote good governance and a more democratization in Europe for the safeguard of citizens' fundamental rights. In this field also was developed our collaboration with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

Thereafter, she gives the floor to **Mr. Clodovaldo Ruffato**, president of the Regional Council of Veneto and Vice-chairman of the Conference of Presidents of the Regional Legislative Assemblies and of the Autonomous Province and Chairman of the Working Group on Cohesion Policy.

#### **Speech by Clodovaldo Ruffato, President of the Regional Council of Veneto**

On behalf of the Italian delegation, he thanked the CALRE's President for the undertaken activity all along her mandate and also, for the collaborations established with associations representing different territories than those represented by the CALRE. Further to this, he also thanked President Rojo Noguera for the support offered to all CALRE's Working Groups.

### **3. CALRE'S INTERNAL RULES MODIFICATION PROPOSAL (discussion and approval)**

The CALRE's President for 2014 opened the debate which was already been started in the CALRE's third Standing Committee and presented the agreed proposal on the CALRE's internal rules modification.

Regarding the CALRE's Internal Rules modification proposals:

First, the **article 5 modification proposal** has already been in practice in order to avoid translation problems. This proposal regulates the interpretation coordination is in charge of the meeting coordinator upon the CALRE's members request which will pay the generated cost.

Thereafter, the modification proposal on the article 5 of the CALRE's internal rules has been submitted to the vote. The **amendment was adopted by unanimity.**

Second, the **article 7.4 modification proposal**, amendment submitted by the Galician Parliament. The Italian Conference also submitted an amendment to this article (both amendments are complementary). This amendment refers to the location of the CALRE's Standing Committee, preferably in Brussels in the Committee of the Regions headquarters. Further to this, the wording of this article generated confusion regarding the venue of the CALRE's third Standing Committee that it is why it is presented an alternative wording as follows: "The Standing Committee meets a maximum of three times a year and at least one of them has to be held at the CALRE's presiding headquarters. The other two meetings will be held preferably in Brussels, at the Headquarters of the Committee of the Regions".

Thereafter, the modification proposal on the article 7.4 of the CALRE's internal rules has been submitted to the vote. The **amendment was adopted by unanimity.**

Third, the **article 9.1 modification proposal**, amendment referred to the duration of the mandate of the CALRE's President. The main purpose of this amendment is to place the CALRE at the same conditions than other European associations and establishes the possibility to renew the President mandate for a second year and thus consolidate the developed works during the first year of

mandate. Pilar Rojo clarifies she submitted this amendment because she is not going to be proposed for a second year term.

Thereafter, the modification proposal on the article 9.1 of the CALRE's internal rules has been submitted to the vote. The **amendment was adopted by unanimity.**

Fourth, the **article 23.1 modification proposal**, it is composed by one amendment submitted by the Galician parliament and by one amendment submitted by the Italian delegation. Both agreed to **withdrawn this amendment** and thus the article 23.1 remains on its original version.

Fifth, the **article 24.1 modification proposal**, amendment submitted by the Italian Parliaments' Conference. It is referred to the possibility to create mixed groups with other associations.

Thereafter, the modification proposal on the article 24.1 of the CALRE's internal rules has been submitted to the vote. The **amendment was adopted by unanimity.**

Sixth, the **article 24.2 modification proposal**, amendment submitted by the Galician Parliament and by the Italian Parliaments' Conference. Its main purpose is to disseminate the CALRE's works. In order to combine both amendments, the President proposed the following wording: "The conclusions of the working groups will be published following the approval of the Plenary Assembly under its support".

Thereafter, the modification proposal on the article 24.2 of the CALRE's internal rules has been submitted to the vote. The **amendment was adopted by unanimity.**

Finally, the article **24, new paragraph 5**. The main purpose of this amendment is to boost the development of a joint work within the CALRE. To this end, it is needed to get at least members from three different countries in each Working Group on a concrete matter.

Thereafter, the modification proposal on the article 24.5 of the CALRE's internal rules has been submitted to the vote. The **amendment was adopted by unanimity.**

#### **4. FINAL REPORT OF CALRE 2014 WORKING GROUPS**

The CALRE's President highlights that all CALRE's Working Groups 2014 have developed a very important work all along this year.

The President opens the round of speeches to the CALRE Working Groups' chairmen to relate the conclusions achieved.

Thereafter, she gives the floor to the Chairman of the **Working Group on Subsidiarity, Mr. Raffaele Cattaneo, president of the Regional Council of Lombardy.**

Firstly, he thanked the President Pilar Rojo on how she managed the works of our association and in particular, for her support and commitment with the Working Group on Subsidiarity.

He noted that he took the coordination of the Working Group on Subsidiarity in the XVII CALRE General Assembly held in October 2013 in Brussels, due to the importance of the subsidiarity for the regional parliaments and also, for the role they can play in Europe.

He explained the conclusions presented are the result of three meetings held by this Working Group. Furthermore, he thanked the 18 assemblies taking part in this Working Group.

In brief, he stated this Working Group reached its objective, achieving a greater impact of the European regional legislative assemblies in the European legislative processes as well as a greater awareness on the key role of our assemblies.

In particular, he explained in detail the 3 meetings held by this Working Group. Firstly, the first meeting held in Brussels last 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014. During this meeting attention was given to the annual work program for 2014 and to the settlement of the basis for a deep reflection on the meaning of the subsidiarity principle, on its cultural and methodological meaning thus, the subsidiarity cannot be summarized as a simple procedure. Moreover, it was presented the main guidelines for an active participation of the European regional parliaments in the EU legislative process under the respect to the subsidiarity principle. Finally, it was analyzed the regional perspective through the European Commission working program to exercise the subsidiarity control.

Secondly, the second meeting was held in Brussels last 17th July 2014. During this meeting some attendees, as the case of Austria, interchanged their European regional experiences on their relation with the national assemblies. This interchange of experiences was focused in the European pre-legislative phase. Moreover, it was elaborated a report which demonstrates some critical reflections; in particular, the national parliaments do not pay attention to the regional opinions and the regional participation in the subsidiarity control is not enough. In this context, he pointed out it is important create an European awareness of the regional parliaments as well as to reinforce the role of the regional parliaments with regard to the national parliaments.

Third, the third meeting held in Milan last 2nd October. During this meeting it was been presented the results of a research focused on the regional assemblies and the cultural meaning of the subsidiarity. This research reflects how it can be developed a structured dialogue within the European institutions aiming to reinforce the role of the regional parliaments in the European legislative process; also, reflects the positive advanced experience of Belgium, Austria and Germany. He concluded highlighting the agreement collaboration of the Italian Regional Parliaments with the European Affairs Commission of the Senate of Italy.

Finally, he noted the subsidiarity needs to be considered as a political and cultural working method and thus, it is necessary to improve our participation in the pre-legislative phase through the collaboration with the European Commission and the inter-parliamentary dialogue with the COSAC (the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union).

#### **Speech by Mathias Rößler, President of the Saxony Parliament**

He noted we need to establish closer ties with the European institutions from the pre-legislative steps, and notably, now with the new term of the European Parliament.

#### **Speech by Franco Iacop, President of the Regional Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia**

He advocated for the establishment of closer ties with the COSAC to allow the participation of the regional assemblies in the EU law making process.

Thereafter, the Conclusions of the Working Group on Subsidiarity 2014 have been submitted to the vote. The conclusions were adopted by unanimity.

Thereafter, she gives the floor to the Chairman of the **Working Group on E-Democracy, Mr. Manuel Gracia Navarro, President of the Andalusia Parliament.**

He expressed his gratitude for the trust shown in the Andalusia Parliament to chair this Working Group and also to the 18 CALRE's members were part of it. Notably, he thanked the CALRE's President for all support given.

He pointed out in a broad sense the balance is positive, in a difficult moment for the European institutions on which citizens' are losing confidence in the democratic institutions, that it is why now more than ever it is needed the reinforcement of transparency and the development of best practices and e-democratic tools for a further democracy promotion. Moreover, he also added that these tools are a key element to prevent political corruption.

Subsequently, he presented the content of a report on e-democracy made in 21 CALRE's regional parliaments. This report highlights a positive progress in the participating parliaments, through the implementation of e-democracy measures and the emission of the parliamentary sessions in streaming, the social media and the web spaces dedicated to legislative initiatives to regain citizens' trust. Additionally, he pointed out the parliaments sharing of information and the mutual learning through common collaboration. Finally, he concluded the report shows positive progress in the different phases of e-democracy. In particular, in the first phase of the e-democracy, the e-information phase shows positive results through the increased number of visits in some parliaments' web pages. In the second phase of e-democracy, the e-consultation phase, a positive trend is observed, although the results are not so positive as the previous phase. In the third phase of the e-democracy, the e-participation phase reached very positive results, in this phase is very relevant the online contribution to ongoing legislation. In the fourth phase of the e-democracy, the e-voting phase is the one with lower data, because it is the last phase of implementation of e-democracy system and because it is under constitutional problems in some countries.

Additionally, he highlighted the meeting held in Andalusia last June 2014 where it was presented the Andalusia Public Transparency Act as well as the good practices of different CALRE's members as Wales and Açores.

Further to this, a member of the Andalusia parliament presented his political web addressed to the citizens aiming to show his agenda and political activity. To this meeting also participated a Professor in political science and expert on international transparency. To conclude, he stressed the CALRE's President speech at this meeting who stated it is needed to take up the opportunities offered by the new technologies to boost transparency and thus, achieve a real and effective democracy.

To sum up, he pointed out the new technologies are a tool which gives an answer to the lack of citizens' trust in the democratic institutions, this involves a big cultural change.

Thereafter, the Conclusions of the Working Group on E-Democracy 2014 have been submitted to the vote. The conclusions were adopted by unanimity.

Thereafter, she gives the floor to the Chairman of the **Working Group on Immigration, Mr. Giovanni Ardizzone, President of the Regional Assembly of Sicily.**

He started to thank the President of the Andalusia Parliament for his participation in the meeting of the working group on immigration held last 3rd April in Palermo (Sicily). Furthermore, he highlighted this meeting was held in a key moment for migration flows and on which took part representatives from European institutions, the Italian Minister for Home Affairs as well as religious representatives.

He came into detail on the migration problem, an ongoing problem nowadays. In particular, he thanked the Brussels-Capital Vice-president, Mr. Fouad Ahidar, regarding his statement on migrations, saying the migration has to be understood from a broader view implying the need to reflect on the existent nationalisms nowadays.

He questioned the emergency situations management in case of massive migrations flows. This management falls on regional governments from each country. In particular, he noted the tragedy occurred in Lampedusa on 3rd

October 2013. Cases as this tragedy are covered by the European Union support. Nevertheless, the main charge relies upon regional governments in base of Dublin Treaty, which establishes that citizens are linked to the specific territory of arrival for a 5 years period. In conclusion, this is a legislative problem and not a national problem. Nonetheless, currently we are evolving to a new period with a new strategy, the called "Triton" strategy, which is focused in the migration flows management from the origin countries and the FRONTEX (he European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union) is involved in as well as an increased budget of 20 Million for 2015.

To sum up, he noted it is necessary to review the EU Asylum system aiming to improve the control of the external borders and to provide the FRONTEX Agency the needed resources to perform its duties. To resolve this problem it is essential intervene in the origin countries and thus, avoid massive migration which affects the European continent as a whole. In short, it is needed to develop a strong European policy against this problem.

He concluded encouraging a greater CALRE involvement in the European legislative process to enhance the awareness on this problem and thanking the CALRE's Presidency for the meeting held last 20<sup>th</sup> June in Brussels with European representatives on migration matters.

### **Speech by Maryse Gaudreault, Vice-president of the Quebec National Assembly**

She noted the Francophone population represents 4% of the total Canada population and that it is why Quebec encourages a cultural diversity through the defense of their own language, French, and culture. Such ambitions leaded the Quebec to reach the competence on migration planning and to signe an agreement in 1991 which intends to preserve the Quebec demographic weight in Canada and thus, ensure the migrants integration in the province, based on the respect of their diversity.

She explained Quebec has jurisdiction for determining the volume of immigrants who want to host, to select candidates, to the exception of refugees already installed and hosted or in case of family reunification. Quebec

is also competent regarding the hosting and linguistic, cultural and economic integration. In general, Quebec decides the composition of around 65% of migrants arriving in their territory annually. This selection procedure is looking for qualified migrants and business men as well as refugees abroad. In particular, they favor the francophone migration aiming to preserve the French in America.

Finally, she added the employment planning in Quebec offers a Program to support the employment integration of immigrants and recognized minorities. This program provides financial support to the companies recruiting migrants by the first time. Moreover, Quebec has launched a program which promotes the integration of skilled people trained abroad regulated by a professional order.

#### **Speech by Reinhold Bocklet, Vice-president of Bavarian Parliament**

He highlighted that currently in Europe the immigration is a serious problem which affects regional and local authorities from different countries. In particular, it is needed to review the Dublin Treaty, because even if it links migrants for a five years period to the arrival territory, based on FRONTEX data, last year 62.000 migrants arrived in Italy by June 2014, but only 25.000 were registered in Italy.

In brief, we have to think about national quotas in order to get a fair equitable distribution and a better migration flows' regulation.

#### **Speech by Fouad Ahidar, Vice-president of Brussels-Capital Parliament**

He stated it is important to take up advantage of the migrants' arrival and their integration to preserve the use of languages.

#### **Speech by Giovanni Ardizzone, President of the Regional Council of Sicily**

He supported the idea of the establishment of national quotas by country aiming to avoid undue burden of migrants in a specific territory.

Thereafter, the Conclusions of the Working Group on Immigration 2014 have been submitted to the vote. The conclusions were adopted by unanimity.

Thereafter, she gives the floor to the Chairman of the **Working Group on Cohesion Policy, Mr. Clodovaldo Ruffato, President of the Regional Council of Veneto**

He pointed out that the Working group on Cohesion policy has been undertaking its first year of existence, giving continuity to its predecessor, the Working Group on Financial Federalism.

Currently, this Working Group has 12 members and has addressed specific problems of the European cohesion, notably in the workshop held last 20<sup>th</sup> October in Venetia on cohesion policy and financial federalism. The cohesion policy and the financial federalism are an essential pairing which allows a deeper insight into the needed strategies for an efficient management of public resources and the encouragement of territories development.

Through the work undertaken by this Working Group it was proved the lack of harmonized data at European level on regional public expenditure and incomes. This lack of data implies a deficit for the European institutions and in a period of crisis as we are living now it would be suitable the European institutions could obtain data on financial flows at regional level.

Moreover, it was analyzed another important matter such as the public estate expenditure, remembering the Sixth Report on economic, social and territorial cohesion, presented by the Commissioner Johannes Hahn last September in Brussels, includes an entire chapter on the local and regional authorities role in the public investment expenditure. Also, were shown reflections on the efficiency of the public administration in the European Union member States.

He noted during the 2014-2020 period the cohesion policy will become an essential policy for the growth and employment policy of the European Commission. He stressed the cohesion policy now is an open policy for all territories, involving the need to reinforce the task of lobby, notably with the European Commission and with the European Parliament, which are starting a new term.

To conclude, he proposed the continuity of this Working Group on Cohesion Policy by 2015.

Thereafter, the Conclusions of the Working Group on Cohesion Policy 2014 have been submitted to the vote. The conclusions were adopted by unanimity.

**Speech by Pilar Rojo Noguera, President of the Galician Parliament and CARLE's President**

The CALRE's President for 2014 ask to postpone the points 5, 6 and 7 of the agenda to the second part of the Plenary Assembly, due to the scheduled time for this first part has been expired. Moreover, she announced she gives the floor to the international attendee, Yosiaki Matsuda, for his introduction, because he cannot attend the second part of the Plenary Assembly.

Since there is no objection, the points 5, 6 and 7 of the agenda are postponed to the second part of the Plenary Assembly and the President gives the floor to the President of the Japanese Local Councilors Alliance, Yosiaki Matsuda.

### **Speech by Yosiaki Matsuda, President of the Japanese Local Councilors Alliance**

He thanked the opportunity given to him by the CALRE's presidency to participate in its Plenary Assembly as President of the Japanese Local Councilors Alliance and Member of the Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly (Japan).

He explained the Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly was created in 1878 and in May 2007 he was elected the 100<sup>th</sup> speaker of the Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly.

Subsequently, he gives practical data of the Kanagawa Prefecture. Kanagawa is placed almost near the geographic center of the country, it is roughly 24,000 square kilometers and it has more than 9.9 Million of inhabitants. The most important cities are Yokohama and Kawasaki, industrial cities of the eastern part. The rest of the prefecture has an unique nature. Moreover, he referred to the natural disaster caused by a tsunami in 2011, and took up this opportunity to thank all people helped them.

The Japanese Local Councilors Alliance was founded in 1977 with the aim to improve their country, it is not just a political union it is also a citizens' union. It should be noted that Japan has so many municipalities and small towns which uses the Alliance of Local Councilors to transfer their voice to the state government. Notably, he highlighted the concentration they organized, with more than 10.000 persons, aiming to modernize the Japan Education Act and they achieved its amendment. In particular, one of they pledges is to include the martial arts as compulsory education. Also, he stressed the celebration they

organized on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Japanese emperor, and underlined the need to preserve the traditional culture and the royal family for the country development.

He concluded, stressing the essential role of the local government for helping national government work for a better country.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The President, Pilar Rojo, referred to a proposal made by the Italian Conference on the Russian sanctions to the European Union products import. Nonetheless, the time scheduled for this meeting was already expired, the President ask to postpone this debate to the second part of the Plenary Assembly.

Furthermore, she announced the official candidature for the CALRE Presidency 2015 from the President of the Regional Council of Lombardy, Mr. Raffaele Cattaneo, and then, she gave him the floor.

### **Speech by Mr. Raffaele Cattaneo, President of the Regional Council of Lombardy**

He started his speech appointing his personal candidature for the CALRE Presidency for 2015 will be the President Pilar Rojo, because she has developed an excellent work during her mandate all along this year. Unfortunately, he explained she declined her possibility to continue as President in 2015, that it is why he presents his candidacy for the CALRE Presidency for 2015 under two conditions. First, he asked for an active Vice-president who helps the CALRE Presidency on its tasks. Second, he asked for the collaboration of all CALRE members in order to have a shared work and therefore hopes all different CALRE's countries will be involved.

He ends his intervention underlining he will do all he can do with the help of the Vice-president Pilar Rojo and with the active participation of all CALRE's countries and participating regions.

### **Speech by Pilar Rojo Noguera, President of the Galician Parliament and CALRE's President for 2014**

Due to the hesitations generated by the Italian Conference Declaration proposal against the Russian sanctions to the European Union products import, the President, Pilar Rojo, ask to the presidents' participant to the Plenary

Assembly to analyze this proposal for its debate during the second part of the Plenary Assembly. Moreover, she clarifies this proposal will not be part of CALRE's works and thus, do not have to be under the CALRE's internal rules; the debate arisen has as main goal to know if the CALRE supports this declaration.

**Speech by Britt Lundberg, President of the Aland Parliament**

She stated her Parliament does not have any competencies on external policy matters and thus, she cannot support the Italian declaration.

**Speech by Reinhold Bocklet, Vice-president of the Bavarian Parliament**

He reiterates the need to accomplish with the CALRE's internal rules, which were not accomplished in this occasion, in order we could proceed for its debate and adoption.

**Speech by Clodovaldo Ruffato, president of the Regional Council of Veneto**

He pointed out that the Italian parliaments accomplished with the CALRE's internal rules and also clarified this do not interfere external policy competencies. This document only request the actuation of the European Council and the European Commission against this trade interdiction, due to the immense economic loses this is generating in the European regions; notably in the regions of Spain, Germany and France.

**Speech by Pilar Rojo Noguera, President of the Galician Parliament and CALRE's President for 2014**

She declared if the document proposed arises any doubt it should be left for a later discussion and, on the contrary, she recommends proceeding for a more in deep assessment during the second part of the CALRE's Plenary Assembly.

Without further delay the meeting is closed at 12h40.