



MINUTES OF THE CALRE 2014 PLENARY ASSEMBLY

-2nd Part-

Santiago de Compostela, 8th NOVEMBER 2014

Santiago de Compostela, at 10.00 a.m., the 8th 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. ADOPTION OF CALRE 2015 WORKING GROUPS
2. APPROVAL OF THE DECLARATION OF GALICIA 2014
3. ELECTION OF THE NEW CALRE PRESIDENT FOR 2015
4. LECTURE OF DECLARATION OF GALICIA 2014
5. SPEECHES: OUTGOING PRESIDENT AND ELECTED PRESIDENT



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. Echevarría Echániz**, President of the Assembly of Madrid and President of the Conference of Spanish Regional Parliaments' Presidents
- ✚ 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 Aland 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 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

CALRE's President opens the session at 10.00 a.m. and welcomes all participants at the meeting

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

1. ADOPTION OF CALRE 2015 WORKING GROUPS

The President reported the CALRE's 2014 3rd Standing Committee had adopted the following Working Groups for its debate and adoption in the plenary session:

1st.- **Working Group on Subsidiarity**. The CALRE's permanent Working Group, is proposed to be chaired by the Bavaria Parliament Vice-president, Reinhold Bocklet.

Thereafter, it is submitted to vote the chairman of this Working Group. Reinhold Bocklet was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Subsidiarity Working Group for 2015.

2nd.- **Working Group on Gender Equality**. This Working Group is proposed to be chaired in 2015 by the President of the National Assembly of Wales, Rosemary Butler.

Thereafter, it is submitted to vote the chairman of this Working Group. Rosemary Butler was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Gender Equality Working Group for 2015.

3rd.- **Working Group on E-Democracy.** This Working Group was chaired by the Andalusia Parliament President, Manuel Gracia Navarro, and he proposed to continue chairing this group.

Thereafter, it is submitted to vote the chairman of this Working Group. Manuel Gracia Navarro was unanimously elected as Chairman of the E-Democracy Working Group for 2015.

4th.- **Working Group on Immigration, Social Inclusion and Fundamental Rights' protection.** This working group was chaired in 2014 by the President of the Sicily Regional Council, Giovanni Ardizzone. Even though, a formal proposal to chair this working group for 2015 has not yet been agreed.

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

He pointed out he presents the candidacy of Vincenzo Niro, President of the Regional Council of Molise, to be chairman of the Working Group on Immigration for 2015.

Thereafter, it is submitted to vote the chairman of this Working Group. Vincenzo Niro was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Immigration Working Group for 2015.

5th.- **Working Group on Cohesion Policy.** This Working Group was chaired in 2014 by the President of the Regional Council of Veneto, Clodovaldo Ruffato, who proposes his candidacy to continue to be chairman of this Working Group.

Thereafter, it is submitted to vote the chairman of this Working Group. Clodovaldo Ruffato was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Cohesion Policy Working Group for 2015.

The CALRE's 2014 Plenary Assembly approved the establishment of these 5 Working Groups, pending to its official constitution which requires the integration of parliaments of at least three different countries. The chairmen of the CALRE's Working Groups have to communicate its official constitution.

2. APPROVAL OF THE DECLARATION OF GALICIA 2014

The President announced the debate on the Galicia Declaration amendments, considering this point of the agenda was postponed to the second part of the Plenary Assembly.

The President explained briefly the amendments as result of its debate in the CALRE's third Standing Committee.

The **Regional Council of Abruzzo** presented 3 amendments. During the celebration of the third Standing Committee, the amendment number 1 and the amendment number 3 were withdrawn. The Standing Committee accepted the inclusion of the amendment number 2 in the Declaration.

The amendment number 2 of the Abruzzo Regional Council it is submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The **Regional Council of Lombardy** presented 3 amendments. The three amendments were withdrawn and incorporated into the alternative amendments submitted by the Italian Conference.

The **Conference of the Italian Regional Parliaments** presented 4 amendments. Regarding the amendment number 1 to the Chapter 2, paragraph 2, a transactional amendment to its paragraph 3 and 4 was submitted to the vote as follows "the CALRE calls for a strengthening of measures to allow positive development and recovery in the European Union, also with view of ongoing social inequality in the countries of the EU. Moreover, CALRE calls for an effective use of the EU funds during the 2014-2020 programming period".

The amendment number 1 of the Italian conference was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The amendment number 2 of the Italian conference was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The amendment number 3 of the Italian conference was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The amendment number 4 of the Italian conference was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The **Austria and German delegation** presented 2 amendments. The Standing Committee accepted the inclusion of these amendments in the Declaration.

The amendments number 1 and number 2 of the Austria and German delegation were submitted to the vote. Amendments adopted by unanimity.

The **Walloon Parliament** presented 1 amendment. The Standing Committee rejected its inclusion to the Declaration, because it was understood it was broadly included in the amendment of the Italian delegation.

Speech by André Antoine, President of the Walloon Parliament

André Antoine stated the Italian delegation amendment does not included the same content as the Walloon Parliament amendment and he noted our regions represent the 60% of the European investments and thus, we have to reflect the need to give our regions a higher deadlines to the investments' amortization. To this extent, he explained it is needed to make difference between debt to finance investments and public deficit.

Thereafter, it is submitted to the vote the amendment number 1 of the Walloon Parliament. Amendment rejected with 3 votes in favor.

The **Aland Parliament** presented 1 amendment. The Standing Committee accepted the inclusion of this amendment in the Declaration.

The amendment number 1 of the Aland Parliament was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The **Andalusia Parliament** presented 11 amendments. The Standing Committee proposed the inclusion in the Declaration of the amendments 2, 3, 4, 9 and 11.

Speech by Reinhold Bocklet, Vice-president of the Baviera Parliament

He stated he supports the amendments 3 and 4 of the Andalusia Parliament and he rejects the other amendments.

Thereafter, the Andalusia amendments were submitted to the vote.

The Amendments number 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 of the Andalusia Parliament were withdrawn.

The amendment number 2 of the Andalusia Parliament was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted with 5 votes against.

The amendment number 3 of the Andalusia Parliament was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The amendment number 4 of the Andalusia Parliament was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

The amendment number 9 of the Andalusia Parliament was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted with 4 votes against.

The amendment number 11 of the Andalusia Parliament was submitted to the vote. Amendment adopted by unanimity.

Finally, the CALRE's President for 2014 proceed to **the vote of the "Galicia Declaration 2014"**. The Galicia Declaration is adopted by unanimity of all members present at the meeting.

3. ELECTION OF THE NEW CALRE PRESIDENT FOR 2015

The CALRE's President for 2014 announced the only official candidacy received was from Mr. Raffaele Cattaneo, President of the Regional Council of Lombardy. During the first part of the Plenary Assembly, Raffaele Cattaneo had the opportunity to present his candidacy and thus, it is submitted to the vote.

The new CALRE's President for 2015 it is submitted to the vote. Mr. Raffaele Cattaneo was elected President of the CALRE 2015 by unanimity.

4. LECTURE OF DECLARATION OF GALICIA 2014

The President announced she is going to summarize the Galicia Declaration because it is a very lengthy document.

She explained the CALRE is positioned on important topics in the Declaration. First of all the CALRE is focused on the legitimacy of European integration. Second, the specific challenges of the regional parliaments in the new mandate of the European Union. Third, institutional dynamics in the European integration process; regional parliaments in the European Union. Fourth, the

European strategies addressed and the Future of Europe. Five, boosting the CALRE. Finally, a brief reference to Saint James' Way in the European building process.

5. SPEECHES: OUTGOING PRESIDENT AND ELECTED PRESIDENT

To sum up the CALRE's President for 2014, Pilar Rojo Noguera, makes a brief summary of the significance of the CALRE's Presidency 2014.

The undertaken activities by the CALRE presidency all along this year have been large and extensive and are published in the CALRE website. This information was also given in printed files to all Plenary Assembly attendees. In this context, she highlighted the following questions.

Firstly, the CALRE has intended to **reinforce the collaboration with the European institutions**, increasing significantly our association's visibility at European level. Notably, it is highlighted the CALRE's approach to the **Committee of the Regions (CoR)**, whose president, Michel Lebrun, takes part in the CALRE's Plenary Assembly 2014. The CALRE has held many meetings with the Committee of the Regions; especially the CALRE took part in the annual meeting of the CoR organized with the President of the European Commission and representative regional associations at European level.

The CALRE has taken a step forward in the **reinforcement of the Subsidiarity principle**, organizing different meetings to promote the participation of the regional parliaments in the EU law making process. The networking done by the CALRE and the commendable efforts of the Working Group on subsidiarity chaired by Raffaele Cattaneo, have served to maintain at the frontline the exercise of legislative powers of our parliaments.

The works undertaken by the CALRE 2014 also was close to another European regional democratic organization, **the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities of the Council of Europe** with which we have shared important working sessions and we will create mixed working groups on important matters for our parliaments.

The CALRE all along this year also has developed **works beyond the European borders**. In this line of works, the CALRE has held jointly meetings with representatives of the United Nations aiming to reinforce parliamentary fields as

the strengthening of fundamental rights, and boost the interchange of information and best practices with our homologues beyond European borders. Particularly, the CALRE 2014 took part in the NCSL – National Conference of State Legislatures' annual meeting (U.S.), notably, in the panels focused on education and energy. It is worth to highlight the NCSL's President is taking part in the CALRE 2014 Plenary Assembly. The CALRE has also participated in the Taiwan Local Councils Representatives Community Forum (TCF) annual meeting in which the CALRE gave known its functioning and main goals aiming to share information with associations we share common goals. In this Forum have also took part our homologues from Japan and from the U.S.

The mandate 2014 has also helped to **make credible our Association**, not only at external level, but also internally, thus, the CALRE's 2014 President has participated at least in one meeting of all CALRE working groups'. This experience served to demonstrate, the vast majority of our parliaments seeing the association as an **useful and needed tool for their external activity**. In this context, the CALRE have to go further in the establishment of partnerships within our parliaments and also with other associations towards the defense of a real and effective regional democracy for citizens' benefit and to consolidate the building of an European identity which the city of Santiago and its "Way" have already shown in the western civilization history.

The President closes her intervention congratulating the new President from the Lombardy region for his election. His work capacity, already known by all of us through the Working Group on subsidiarity he chaired (comprising 17 members), his organizational performance and his capacity to dealing with different persons and organisms will have a positive impact for the CALRE.

Based on the CALRE's internal rules, Pilar Rojo Noguera will be the next Vice-president, a collaborative Vice-president who believes in a positive future for our organization and thus, in a stronger Europe, more balanced and closer to its citizens.

The outgoing President, Pilar Rojo Noguera, gives the floor to the new elected president, **Raffaele Cattaneo, President of the Regional Council of Lombardy**.

Firstly, he thanked President Rojo Noguera for the good work undertaken during her presidency as well as for the excellent Plenary Assembly she organized.

Further to this, he also thanked all present presidents for the trust bestowed on him.

He explained, during the "Saint James' Way" the Italian delegation have done on the occasion to their visit to Santiago, he lived the idea of an united Europe in diversity from its deepest meaning, pilgrims from all European regions arriving towards a common origin. This is reflected in the CALRE, we are all together but we have to go further in the "Way", under the respect of all our differences. The CALRE represents citizens and therefore, we have to ask for a bigger role in Europe, aiming to be heard the voice of territories and thus, the citizens' voice, wherever they are from. This is Europe, a common destiny despite the existent diversity.

Currently, we are facing many challenges affecting our citizens and this involves the need to develop an improved policy. We are facing a cultural and educational emergence, the frame of Europe is in danger and the value of its diversity is in crisis. Nowadays 26 million people are unemployed and one third of the population is at poverty and social exclusion risk.

Citizens are not any longer the protagonist of a common project, this involves the need to promote citizens' participation as a political opportunity, and the CALRE has to create it. Citizens have to be protagonist of our policies and not be mere recipients. To this purpose it is needed the EU will be a multilevel and polycentric system; Europe has to be opened to its citizens and not just to its territories.

The CALRE represents parliaments, as the Galicia regional government President, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, stated our parliaments are the protagonist of democratic European history, we represent pluralism and freedoms. For this reason, we have the challenge to place the parliaments at the core of the European integration process.

Thereafter, he presented the annual working program for the CALRE 2015. Notably, he appoints the next CALRE meeting could be on 11th February 2015, on the occasion of the first plenary session of the Committee of the Regions 2015 on which its composition will be renewed.

He noted the CALRE annual working program for 2015 will be the result of all CALRE's parliaments' commitment thus; his wish is to get a program for all.

In general, the program is based on 10 points.

1. Reinforcing the CALRE visibility aiming to increase the CALRE's representation strength.
2. Getting inside the European Commission contents program. Notably, on cohesion policy matters and in the European macro regional strategies.
3. Encouraging and promoting working groups' works aiming to increase CALRE quality works.
4. The Subsidiarity, main CALRE's goal.
5. Sharing the CALRE's parliaments' best practices, elaborating a paper on common good practices.
6. Building a marriage between the CALRE and the Committee of the Regions. Our target is to get the premises of the Committee of the Regions will be our house.
7. Boosting the inter-parliamentary dialogue as well as the dialogue with the COSAC, a real and effective dialogue. In this context, could be useful the CALRE drafts an agreement involving national and regional parliaments as well as the European Parliament.
8. Collaborating with civil society. The CALRE strength will be proportional to its capacity to encourage its participation with regional actors at European level, public and private, actors present at our territories. In this regard, he pointed out the CALRE's Working Groups are also opened to this kind of actors.
9. Strengthening relations with other regional associations at European level.
10. Developing a close cooperation with international associations. Regarding the TCF President proposal, Lin Chin-chang, aiming to create a Global Forum, this could be organized in Milan on the occasion of the Universal EXPO which is taking place in Milan in October 2015. This would be the first global forum with regional and local legislative associations, a global cooperation to look forward democratic solutions.

He concluded, reiterating his wish is to get a shared program by all, and thanked the CALRE 2014 General Secretary for his work and to all Galicia collaborators. Moreover, he presented Lombardy collaborators for 2015, they will also develop a good work.

We have an urgent work to do, and this is to reduce the distance between citizens and the institutions, we have to fight against the lack of citizens' confidence promoting an united Europe.

The new elected President for the CALRE, Raffaele Cattaneo, President of the Regional Council of Lombardy, gives the floor to the **Committee of the Regions President, Michel Lebrun, to close up the CALRE 2014 Plenary Assembly.**

Firstly, he thanked the outgoing President, Pilar Rojo, for the hospitality received in Santiago de Compostela, as well as for the role she developed as CALRE President. The quality of works on subsidiarity, e-democracy, immigration and cohesion policy has been remarkable, and this demonstrates the encouragement given to the CALRE in 2014 by its President.

Moreover, he wished the new CALRE's President a successful mandate. His report on subsidiarity reflects the work he has already done.

The Committee of the Regions works with regional parliaments and the CALRE to make progress in the EU democracy. This institutional cooperation with the CALRE was already been emphasized many times. Notably, he noted the conference held in the Committee of the Regions in July 2014, on the role of regional parliaments in the EU. During this meeting the President of the Committee of the Regions and the CALRE President agreed the need to reinforce their institutional cooperation in order to improve the regional entities impact at European level. Develop this mutual cooperation is essential to achieve a real and effective multilevel governance. To this extent, the Committee allows all parliaments have direct access to the European institutions and its participation in the EU legislative process through the REGPEX network, which allows the interchange of information between the regional and local entities in the Early Warning System.

He pointed out it is important to further strength the cooperation between the CALRE and the Committee of the Regions, notably in the follow up of the subsidiarity principle. For this reason, the Committee invited the CALRE to make contributions to its annual working program on subsidiarity for 2015.

Moreover, he announced in 2015 will take place the 17th meeting on subsidiarity and invited all attendees to take part on it.

The CALRE and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) have a common goal, to promote multilevel governance in Europe and meet citizens' participation for a real European integration process. In this regard, the development of a common work between both institutions is presented as a key element aiming to defend the subsidiarity and the proportionality principles. To this extent, he encourages all attendees to contribute to CoR works.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The President, Pilar Rojo, stated the Italian Conference wants to intervene regarding the Italian Conference Declaration proposal against the Russian sanctions to the European Union products import.

The President gives the floor to **Clodovaldo Ruffato, President of the Veneto Regional Council.**

He advocated this Declaration is only a demand to the European Commission, to the European Council and to the European Parliament to assess its position with Russia, considering the consequences of this embargo for the EU member states, a sanction to trade's exports and internal damages.

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

He noted we cannot question the Russia sanctions as a mean of International policy. To sum up, he says this is not acceptable and thus, he cannot support this Declaration.

Speech by Raffaele Cattaneo, President of Lombardy Regional Council

He stressed the Italian proposal represents in a very detailed and extensive way a judgment on a sensitive matter as the Russia embargo which motivates the European sanctions.

This position, he acknowledges cannot be shared by all Presidents present at the meeting. For this reason, the Italian delegation have been elaborated an alternative draft proposal to the declaration initially submitted, aiming to get the approval of all because this is an important issue for the CALRE.

Speech by Franz Majcen, President of the Styria Parliament

He highlighted this is a complex matter and we have a short deadline to debate about it. He insisted on the need of accomplishing with the CALRE's internal rules in order to proceed to the vote of an important document as in this case.

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

He presented his doubts regarding this Declaration submitted by the Italian Conference.

Speech by Pilar Rojo Noguera, President of the Galician Parliame del Parlamento de Galicia y de la CALRE 2014

The President noted, the Italian Conference is presenting an alternative document to the initial Declaration proposal and gives them the floor to its lecture, and just in case, to its vote. Further to this, in case all presidents participating in the Assembly will not be agreeing on this document, this Declaration will not be voted.

Due to the lack of consensus, the Italian Declaration on Russian sanctions to the European Union products import is withdrawn.

The President, Pilar Rojo, thanked all attendees and without any further delay the meeting is closed at 11h40.