



II CALRE AWARD “Stars of Europe”

Participation form

Regional legislative assembly: Legislative Assembly of Azores, Legislative Assembly of Madeira and Parliament of the Canary Islands.

Country: Portugal and Spain

President: Ana Luís, José Lino Tranquada Gomes y Carolina Darias San Sebastián

Contact person for the project:

Name: Carlos

Surname: Padilla Marrero

Position: Head of Press of the Parliament of the Canary Islands

Tel: +34 628643474 / +34 922473316

E- mail: cpadilla@parcan.es

Technical and operational contact:

Name:

Surname:

Position:

Tel:

E- mail:

Type of project:

- a) Regional law:
- b) Administrative act:
- c) Procedure:



d) Other: VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences

Date of issuing of the initiative: From June 20 to June 22, 2016
Reference period

Short description of the initiative

The Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences are a forum that brings together representatives of the Legislative Assemblies of the outermost regions (RUP, by its acronym in Spanish) of Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands plus the Republic of Cape Verde, with four basic objectives: to deepen the issues of mutual interest for the region, tackle the difficulties, take advantage of common opportunities, support development projects for the Macaronesia region, especially those related to their integration into the European Union (EU) and contribute, from the RUP, to do more and better Europe. After ten years without being celebrated (the last one edition had being celebrated in 2006), the Canary Islands returned to host, in June 2016, this meeting. From this meeting emanated a document, “The Declaration of Canary Islands”, which contains the main claims of the participating assemblies. This declaration was introduced in Brussels to the President of the Commission on Regional Development of the European Parliament, Iskra Mihaylova, in a meeting that was an important milestone in interparliamentary relations with the EU.

Role of the regional Assembly:

The Parliament of the Canary Islands was the responsible for hosting and organizing the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences, which are held on a rotating basis at the headquarters of the four participating assemblies. Deputies from Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands and Cape Verde take part of the four conferences working groups, from whose work resulted four conclusions papers. The Presidents of the Assemblies signed a final document, the “Declaration of the Canary Islands”, which collect their claims to the European Union and open, in the Macaronesia, a window of geo-strategic opportunities for Europe, Africa and America.

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Main features of the initiative

The Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences are a forum that brings together, periodically, representatives of the Legislative Assemblies of Madeira, Azores, the Canary Islands and Cape Verde. The works which results from these conferences are collected in a final declaration with the purpose of being spread to the highest level, specially, in the european communitarian institutions field. To date, eight meetings have been organized, the last of them in the Canary Islands, in June 2016.

| AÑO | JORNADAS | LUGAR DE CELEBRACIÓN |
|------|----------|------------------------------|
| 1990 | I | Canarias |
| 1994 | II | Isla de Faial, Azores |
| 1996 | III | Funchal, Madeira |
| 1998 | IV | Canarias |
| 2001 | V | Horta, isla de Faial, Azores |
| 2003 | VI | Praia, Cabo Verde |
| 2006 | VII | Porto Santo, isla de Madeira |
| 2016 | VIII | Canarias |

On September 2015, the Presidents of the Parliaments of Canay Islands, Madeira, Azores and Cape Verde, got together in the Faial Island, in the portuguese archipiélago of Azores, to resume the organization of the VIII edition of the Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences, which should have been celebrated in Canary Islands in 2008. The meeting highlighted the importance of the conferences to deepen issues of mutual interest, to face difficulties, to take advantage of common opportunities and to underpin development projects for these regions of the Atlantic.



At the meeting of Faial were the President of the Parliament of the Canary Islands, Carolina Darias; the Presidents of the Parliaments of Cape Verde, Basílio Mosso Ramos; of Madeira, José Lino Tranquada Gomes and the President of the Legislative Assembly of Azores, Ana Luís, the meeting host.

At the meeting was approved the General Regulation of the Conferences and the date was set for its celebration on June 20 to June 22, of the next year, 2016. In addition, was placed to the meeting the Contact Group (Group of Ligaçao), composed by two representatives of each legislative, to start with the content of the Conferences. This groups kept permanent contact until the Conferences celebration.

On January 2016, the Parliament of the Canary Islands formed its working group for the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences organization. The team, composed of one representative of each parliamentary group, was formed by José Miguel Ruano (Nationalist Group), Iñaki Álvaro Lavandera (Socialist Group), Emilio Moreno (Popular Group), Juan Márquez (Podemos Group) y Casimiro Curbelo (Mixed Group).



At the first meeting, directed by the President of the Parliament of the Canary Islands, Carolina Darias, the working group appointed the two representatives of the Regional Chamber (each Assembly chooses two), who formed the Contact Group, work that fell on José Miguel Ruano and Iñaki Álvaro Lavandera.

Previously, it is customary that the Contact Group, meeting in a one-day sesión, and formed by a reduced representation of each Assembly, prepare the meeting main lines. Specifically, the date and the program, as well as the working groups composition, their thematic and presidency.

The Contact Group counts with a internal Regulation of operation, approved in Porto Santo, 2006. This Regulation establishes the following precepts:

1. It is made up of two representatives from each of the Atlantic parliaments, each of whom may appoint two holders and two substitutes.
2. The Parliament that organizes a conference corresponds the coordination of the corresponding Contact Group.
3. The Contact Group meets ordinarily once a year, at a place designated by its coordination.



The last meeting of the Contact Group was in Lisbon (Portugal) on February 2016. The meeting was attended by Jose Carlos Gomes San-Bento de Sousa and Humberto Trindade Borges de Melo, representing the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of Azores; Jose Filomeno de Carvalho Dis Monteiro and Graça Maria Sanchez, representing the National Assembly of Cape Verde; Antonio Manuel Lopez de Fonseca, representing the Legislative Assembly of Autonomous Region of Madeira and José Miguel Ruano León and Iñaki Álvaro Lavandera, representing the Parliament of the Canary Islands.

At this meeting was fixed the four working groups constitution of the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences:

- Group I, directed by Azores and with the rapporteur of Madeira: **The insular economies of the Macaronesia in the global economy context: special incidence on the tourism, trade and the primary sector.**
- Group II, directed by Canary Islands and with the rapporteur of Cape Verde: **Sustainability energy, environment and natural resources.**
- Group III, directed by Madeira and with the rapporteur of Azores: **Transport, communications, new technologies and knowledge.**
- Group IV, directed by Cape Verde and with the rapporteur of the Canary Islands: **The Macaronesia as natural common natural space.**



The Contact Group also decided that the participating delegations should be composed of a maximum of 10 deputies, not including the presidents, as established in the conferences Regulation. It was also agreed that two representatives of each Parliament should be in each one of the four working groups, so those to whom it is necessary to hold the presidency or the rapporteurship would have a total of 3 members.

Finally, it was recorded the order of celebration of the future Conferences, corresponding to organize the 2018 Conference to the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of the Azores; the 2020 to the National Assembly of Cape Verde and, in 2022, to the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of Madeira

The VIII Conference celebration.



The participating delegations in the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences arrived in the Canary Islands during the evening on **June 19**, and were received by the President of the Parliament and the President of the Government of the Canary Islands, Fernando Clavijo, in en Santa Cruz of Tenerife. The Conferences works were

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concentrated between June 20 and June 22. The two first days in Tenerife and the third one in Gran Canaria

On **June 20** the opening ceremony of the meeting took place in the Autonomic Chamber, and the four working groups began their work. At the opening ceremony, Carolina Darias explained that the Canary Islands, Azores, Madeira and Cape Verde constitute a “window of geo-strategic opportunities for Europe, Africa and America”. The President of the Legislative Assembly of the Azores pointed out that since the first Atlantic Parliamentary Conference, in 1990, there has been a change and now different challenges and circumstances are raised. She called for guiding the work of the conference to a statement “Including the confirmation of the economic challenges and contexts and the recognition of the outermost regions”.

For its part, the President of the National Assembly of Cape Verde, Jorge Santos, established the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences can be an important tool to build the develop procedure and pointed the regions “should do everything possible, with governments support, to create a good atmosphere for the business generation in tourism, fishing, agriculture, industry and blue economy”. The holder of the Legislative Assembly of Madeira, José Lino Tranquada Gomes, appreciated the sessions were resumed after about ten years suspended and added: “will be translate in common projects, in addition to the exchange of experiences and collaboration on issues presenting common challenges to the EU”.

The Presidents of the Assemblies participated in a working visit to the complex of the Institute of Astrophysics of the Canary Islands (IAC) at the Observatory of El Teide. In the visit was also present the director of the IAC, Rafael Rebolo, who accompanied them on a tour of the Terrestrial Optical Station and the Project Quijote CMB, among other installations. The representatives of the Legislatives Assemblies analyzed the potential of the Macaronesian region in terms of sky observation, in their scientific and leisure aspects.

On **June 21**, the working groups presented their final reports (see **ANEX 1**). In addition, the Presidents of the Legislative Assemblies made public the “Declaration of the Canary Islands”, document which cointains the main claims and propursals of the Regional Parliaments of the Macaronesia and the National Assembly of Cape Verde. (see **ANEX 2**).

On **June 22**, the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences were transferred to Gran Canaria. The participants delegations, in a visit to the Taliarte Marine Science and Technology Park and to the Spanish Bank of Algae, a reference center in the world of



microalgae and cyanobacteria, were received by the rector of the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, José Regidor García.

The ‘Declaration of the Canary Islands’ arrives in Brussels



On **January 25**, 2017, the ‘Declaration of the Canary Islands’ was introduced in Brussels by the Presidents of Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands, to the President of the Comission on Regional Development, Iskra Mihaylova. After the meeting, the President of the Parliament of the Canary Islands, called to the European Parliament to establish new “synergies” with the Canary Islands to “take into account the claims” of the Macaronesian islands in Europe and that these become “a bridge of union with Africa”. “We have called for efforts and synergies to make our demands visible in Europe and at the same time become a window of opportunity for Europe as a bridge to Africa”, said the President.

Description of the consequences on the regions pointing out the positive European implications

The Atlantic Parlamientary Conferences act as a driving force for the three outermost European regions of Macaronesia, plus the Republic of Cape Verde, and

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contribute to the consolidation of a strong and influential Atlantic group in the EU, which reinforces the effective recognition of its geostrategic situation and such as their active participation in the framework of the European institutions.

The autonomic parliaments are the closest to the citizenship, those contribute, at first instance, to promoting a democracy of proximity in the European Union. The participating regions in this meeting share, in addition, the fact of being islands, with a similar geography and a cultural common space, which contribute to facilitating joint initiatives to advance their social and economic dynamism. At the same time, its characteristics offers a privileged position for international relations to the rest of Europe.

The Conferences have been a decisive milestone in the relationship of these regions, as has managed to put on the table not only those issues that unite them and those that distance them, but, especially since the 2016 edition, have set a series of goals and a common path to follow. The “Declaration of the Canary Islands” have collected the main needs and challenges of these regions for the future.

The Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences, as it is expressed in this document and transferred by the Assemblies of Madeira, Azores and the Canary Island to the President of the Committee on Regional Development, have found that Macaronesia represents a window of geo-strategic opportunities for Europe, Africa and America, as well as building bridges of understanding, investment, security and freedom for all peoples.

In this way, these meeting conclusions are not just a set of claims, but above all offer Europe a hub between three continents and an opportunity for development, offering added value to continental contexts.

The Macaronesian regions have ratified the need of keep together to face the old challenges and the coming ones, as the preservation of the environment, the tourism based in the excellence, the employment, connectivity, sustainability, climate change, innovation, insularity and remoteness.

Biodiversity, especially the marine, is of crucial importance in these regions. The creation of a solid legal figure for the defense and conservation of the Atlantic species from the Azores to Cape Verde has been proposed. In addition, the Institutional Declaration emanated by the VIII Atlantic Parliamentary Conferences promote the conservation of the night skies, at the same time the Macaronesian



regions commit to collaborate in the promotion of the scientific, cultural and touristic active of the islands as a good that contributes to its social development

The Parliaments commit in the need of make changes in the General Exception by Categories Regulation, on State aids, in order to strengthen the regional aid schemes operating in the RUP. In addition, defend the relevance of maintain the Program of Specific Options for the Distance and Insularity (POSEI), being an essential tool for the agricultural and fishing development of these regions

The monitoring of the European programs, currently underway, such as the MAC Program (Madeira, Azores, Canary Islands), in which Senegal and Cape Verde are partners, and the proper development of Article 349 of the Treaty of European Union (EU), in order to ensure that the outermost regions have effectively differentiated treatment in social and economic cohesion policies, were other aspects addressed.

Forms with the description of the initiative must be sent by 2 June 2017 to the CALRE General Secretariat, at the following e-mail:

calre2017@parlamentodeandalucia.es

Tel. +34 606 54 29 83