

MINUTES OF THE 1ST MEETING OF CALRE 2012 STANDING COMMITTEE

Brussels, 20 March 2012

In the city of Brussels, at 14.30 hours on 20th March 2012, the CALRE Standing Committee, met at the venue of the Committee of the Regions, under the presidency of Mr. Fernando Jesús Manzano Pedrera, CALRE 2012 President, and with the assistance of the participants mentioned below, previously called for this purpose, in order to discuss the following:

AGENDA

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE CALRE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN L'AQUILA ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2011
2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON THE PRIORITIES FOR CALRE 2012 PRESIDENCY
3. PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY REPORT
4. PRESENTATION OF CALRE 2012 AGENDA
5. AGENDA OF CALRE 2012 WORKING GROUPS
6. PROJECT OF THE FLEMISH PARLIAMENT ON THE EXCHANGE OF INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUTUAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG THE CALRE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES
7. PROJECT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ABRUZZO ON THE COORDINATION OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE REGIONAL PARLIAMENT'S COMMISSIONS COMPETENT FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN CALRE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES
8. COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: THE SUBSIDIARITY NETWORK AND THE REGPEX PLATFORM
9. OTHER SUBJECTS

PARTICIPANTS

As members of the Standing Committee:

- **Mr. Fernando Jesús Manzano Pedrera**, President of the Parliament of Extremadura and CALRE President
- **Mr. Nazario Pagano**, President of Abruzzo Regional Council and CALRE Vice-President
- For Belgium, **Mr. Ferdel Schröder**, President of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community of Belgium
- For Germany, **Mrs. Manuela Göbbel**, on behalf of the Parliament of Baden-Wurtemberg
- For Finland, **Mrs. Britt Lundberg**, President of the Parliament of the Åland Islands
- For the United Kingdom, **Mr. Gregg Jones**, on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales
- For Austria, **Mr. Hans Penz**, President of the Parliament of Lower Austria
- For Spain, **Mrs. Arantza Quiroga Cía**, President of the Basque Country
- For Portugal, **Mr. Francisco Coelho Cabral**, President of the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of Azores
- For the Working Group on Regional Democracy, **Mrs. Pilar Rojo Noguera**, President of the Parliament of Galicia (Spain)
- For the Working Group on Subsidiarity, **Mr. José Ignacio Navarro Méndez**, Legal Advisor, on behalf of the Parliament of the Canary Islands (Spain)
- For the Working Group on Financial Federalism, **Mr. Matteo Toscani**, Vice-President of the Regional Council of Veneto (Italy)

- For the Working Group on Rural and Urban Areas, **Mr. Eros Brega**, President of the Regional Council of Umbria (Italy)
- For the Working Group on Equality and Equal Gender Opportunities, **Mrs. Rosa Zelger Thaler**, President of the Regional Council of Trentino (Italy)

As guests:

- The Secretary-General of the Committee of the Regions, **Mr. Gerhard Stahl**
- The President of the Regional Assembly of Murcia (Spain), **Mr. Francisco Celdrán Vidal**
- **Mr. Dries Bergen**, on behalf of the Flemish Parliament (Belgium)
- The Subsidiarity Monitoring Network team of the Committee of the Regions, attending the Director of the Horizontal Policies and Networks Directorate, **Mr. Thomas Wobben**, Deputy Director of the Directorate, **Mrs. Béatrice Taulegne** and the technical expert **Mrs. Celine Château**.

Mr. Francisco Javier Ciriero Soletó —CALRE Secretary-General and Secretary-General of the Parliament of Extremadura— also attends the meeting.

CALRE President opens the session at 14.30. He welcomes all the attendants and thanks them for their attendance. He particularly thanks the Secretary-General of the Committee of the Regions for the warm welcome and support that the CALRE Presidency has received from the institution he represents when organizing this Standing Committee, and then he gives the floor to him.

Mr. Gerhard Stahl —Secretary-General of the Committee of the Regions— welcomes all the attendants and thanks CALRE President for the invitation to participate in this meeting. He wishes him a fruitful work leading the organization and also addresses him the best wishes from the President of the Committee of the Regions, Mrs. Mercedes Bresso, who can not attend the event. He also mentions the good collaboration relations between both institutions, which are particularly important when analysing the results and the current repercussions of the European policies at the regional level. Finally, he announces that when discussing agenda item #8 there will be an opportunity to

deepen even more on the reciprocity within the framework of the monitoring of the application of the subsidiarity principle, which is one of the elements that make up the joint interests of both organisations.

Then, the first item of the agenda is discussed.

AGENDA ITEM #1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE CALRE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN L'AQUILA ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2011

In accordance with Article 10 of CALRE'S Rules, the President presents the minutes of the previous Standing Committee meeting held in L'Aquila on 24th November 2011.

Since there are no objections to its contents, it is unanimously approved by consent by the members of the Standing Committee who are present.

Finally, CALRE President proposes to the Committee a modification of the agenda, which is unanimously accepted by its members, who start to discuss agenda item #6, related to the project of the Flemish Parliament on the exchange of institutional information for the improvement of mutual knowledge among the CALRE legislative assemblies. He then gives the floor to Mr. Bergen on behalf of the Flemish Parliament.

AGENDA ITEM #6. PROJECT OF THE FLEMISH PARLIAMENT ON THE EXCHANGE OF INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUTUAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG THE CALRE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

Mr. Bergen —member of the European Service of the Flemish Parliament— takes the floor to explain the project promoted by the institution he represents and that was approved by the Plenary Assembly of L'Aquila. In a nutshell, he explains that the project consists of the elaboration of informative sheets containing information about the organisation and structure of every Assembly that are part of CALRE, and of their publication in the website in order to improve the mutual knowledge among the members of the Conference. Finally, he informs that several informative sheets of other Parliaments —such as Hamburg, Navarra, Cantabria, Schleswig-Holstein, Abruzzo or Galicia, have been received.

Then, Mr. Schröder —President of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community of Belgium— asks for the floor to speak and emphasizes the importance of the initiative of the Flemish Parliament, and also proposes the

elaboration of a template-form, that is, a model to be followed, in order to be fulfilled with the information of every CALRE Legislative Assembly and then be published on the website.

Then, Mrs. Lundberg —President of the Parliament of the Åland Islands— takes the floor. She also thinks this initiative is excellent, since the collected information can be extremely useful when searching partners or collaborators on different common interest matters.

Mr. Brega —President of the Regional Council of Umbria— informs that the Italian Parliaments are also in favour of the presented project. Mr. Penz —President of the Parliament of the Lower Austria— declares he also agrees with the initiative and proposes that the project should be coordinated from the CALRE Presidency or Secretary.

Finally, CALRE President shows his satisfaction for the agreement achieved in this project, and collecting the proposals done by other speakers, suggests that from CALRE General Secretariat, in coordination with the author of this initiative —the Flemish Parliament— and with the Parliaments that have already created their informative sheets, a template-model —agreed by all CALRE members— should be created and approved in the next Standing Committee meeting, before its publication in the official website of the Conference.

The President's proposal is unanimously approved by consent by those present.

AGENDA ITEM #2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON THE PRIORITIES FOR CALRE 2012 PRESIDENCY

The President itemizes the priorities of his program for CALRE 2012, which are the following:

- Strengthening links among the CALRE members
- Continuing and extending the relationships between CALRE and the institutions of the European Union
- Implementing links with other regional associations
- Establishing links with other institutions and regions that are not members of CALRE
- Developing mechanisms that involve the regional authorities in the political process of the EU

- Deepening in the mechanisms that promote the participation of the citizenship in parliamentary institutions
- Commitment to new technologies, and dynamic and modern layout for the CALRE website

Then, the President starts the round of discussions. The first President who speaks is Mrs. Lundberg —President of the Åland Islands— who congratulates the President for the program he has just presented, for this being active, interesting and ambitious, and later she raises some questions on organisation and running that are answered by the President.

Mr. Penz —President of the Parliament of Lower Austria— takes the floor and says he is pleased with the explained program. He stresses some of its items. Furthermore, he states that, in his opinion, it will be positive for the Conference to draw conclusions from the works carried out every year.

CALRE President reflects on the results that have been achieved by the working groups and shares the considerations done by President Mr. Penz, proposing that conclusions should be drawn from the tasks carried out by the CALRE bodies. He ends his speech by speaking on the usefulness and risks of use of the new technologies and social networks when trying to open the legislative bodies to the society in general.

Then, Mr. Brega —President of the Regional Council of Umbria— takes the floor to show his agreement with the former interventions and stresses the importance of the activity of the CALRE working groups. He mentions, as an example, the importance of the topic of the group he himself coordinates —which is rural development— particularly bearing in mind the current debate on the future of the CAP in the European Union.

CALRE President insists on the importance of knowing and sharing the results of the activities of the working groups. Mrs. Quiroga Cía —President of the Parliament of the Basque Country— ends the round of discussions and claims a greater collaboration among all the members of the Conference in the tasks proposed by the working groups in order to achieve the objectives set by them.

AGENDA ITEM #3. PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY REPORT

CALRE President informs about the activities carried out since he assumed the Presidency. Among these activities, it is necessary to highlight the meeting with the European MPs, the meeting with the President of the European Parliament, and the attendance to the 5th Summit of Cities and Regions in Europe to be

held in Copenhagen on 22nd and 23rd March, and where he will make a brief speech in order to express the CALRE's position on the object for analysis in the mentioned Summit.

Then, he hands the floor over to Mr. Stahl —Secretary-General of the Committee of the Regions— who gives more information to the attendants on the event to be held in Copenhagen and the Copenhagen Declaration that will be approved.

Finally, CALRE President closes this agenda item announcing those present that, while attending the above-mentioned Summit, he will have meetings with the President of the Committee of the Regions, Mrs. Bresso and the President of the European Commission, Mr. Barroso, whom he will inform on the aims of the institution he represents this year.

AGENDA ITEM #4. PRESENTATION OF CALRE 2012 AGENDA

The President explains the dates and places of the proposed meetings for the various CALRE's bodies, in accordance with the agenda draft that all those present have been provided.

He also announces that there is also another Standing Committee meeting —still pending of being scheduled in Germany at the end of September or at the beginning of October— currently under negotiation. All the members of the Conference will be informed of the results of this negotiation.

Finally, the agenda proposal described before is submitted to the body's consideration and it is unanimously approved by those present.

AGENDA ITEM #5. AGENDA OF CALRE 2012 WORKING GROUPS

Firstly, Mrs. Rojo Noguera —President of the Parliament of Galicia and coordinator of the working group on Regional Democracy— speaks to inform about the current members of her working group and the projects they have designed, stressing the one that they have in collaboration with the Congress, called Twin a Region, for which, in order to carry it out, and joining to the explanation by the President of the Basque Countries, requests the support of all the CALRE members.

Secondly, Mr. Navarro Méndez, Legal Advisor —on behalf of the Parliament of the Canary Islands which leads the Working Group on Subsidiarity— speaks. He itemizes the working group's priorities, particularly those related to the beginning of a deep reflection on the future of the subsidiarity principle and

explains the working schedule for the current year, as well as the composition of the working group.

CALRE President takes the floor. He makes some clarifications and asks Mr. Navarro Méndez to transmit them to Mr. Castro —President of the Parliament of the Canary Islands.

Thirdly, Mr. Toscani —Vice-President of the Regional Council of Veneto— speaks on behalf of President Mr. Ruffato —coordinator of the Working Group on Financial Federalism— and explains the composition of his group and the specific actions proposed for the current year, its objectives and the schedule of activities.

Then, Mr. Brega —President of the Regional Council of Umbria and coordinator of the Working Group on Rural and Urban Areas— explains the activities proposed by his group and the objectives to be achieved in the present year.

CALRE President explains there have been some technical difficulties in the reception of the documentation related to the working groups and that, therefore, it has not been possible to include it in the dossiers the attendants have been provided.

Finally Mrs. Zelger, President of the Regional Council of Trentino-Alto Adige and coordinator of the Working Group on Equality and Equal Gender Opportunities, explains the topic her group will be working on and the proposed project timeline.

She ends her speech by asking the CALRE President for a change of the dates scheduled for the celebration of the Plenary Assembly of the Conference in November. The President replies that the CALRE agenda has already been submitted for its approval and later approved in a previous agenda item by the Standing Committee, thus regretting not being able to consent President Mrs. Zelger's request.

AGENDA ITEM #7. PROJECT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ABRUZZO ON THE COORDINATION OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE REGIONAL PARLIAMENT'S COMMISSIONS COMPETENT FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN CALRE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

Mr. Pagano —CALRE Vice-President and President of the Regional Council of Abruzzo— firstly speaks in order to explain the project he is leading on the creation within CALRE of a coordination body of the bodies with competence in

European affairs in the legislative assemblies that are part of the Conference, defending the strategic role of those bodies in the early-warning system and pointing out the celebration of a first meeting at the venue of the Committee of the Regions at the beginning of May.

CALRE President makes a series of reflections on the project presented by Mr. Pagano and transmits them to the rest of the members of the Standing Committee.

Mrs. Quiroga Cía, President of the Basque Countries takes the floor and shows her opinion on the issue.

Mr. Pagano then replies to the previous speeches in order to clarify some of the raised questions and the benefit of his initiative.

Once again, CALRE President and the President of the Parliament of the Basque Countries speak. CALRE President proposes that this initiative should be carefully considered. The President of the Basque Countries clarifies her previous speech, encouraging President Pagano to continue his project, although she proposes to find a more effective formula that avoids any organisation issue within CALRE and within the assemblies themselves that are part of the Conference.

Finally, CALRE President proposes the Standing Committee to elaborate from his Presidency, in coordination with the Regional Council of Abruzzo, a questionnaire to be sent to all the members of the Conference and that allows collecting clear and concise information of the bodies in charge of European Affairs in each of the Parliaments that are part of CALRE. This proposal is accepted by all those present.

AGENDA ITEM #8. COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: THE SUBSIDIARITY NETWORK AND THE REGPEX PLATFORM

Mr. Stahl —Secretary-General of the Committee of the Regions— takes the floor, and due to the lack of time, proposes the CALRE Standing Committee members to inform them by writing on the ideas, conclusions and proposals from the body they represent for reinforcing the collaboration between that body and CALRE.

Thus, he gives the floor to the representatives of the monitoring team. They carry out a presentation of the REGPEX instrument, which can be accessed online in the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network website. They explain their tasks

and a running example. As a conclusion, they ask the Standing Committee to let them know all the comments they think are appropriate for improving the running of the platform since it is still under development.

AGENDA ITEM 9. OTHER SUBJECTS

CALRE President thanks the Secretary General of the Committee of the Regions and the Subsidiarity Network that accompanies him, their attendance to the Standing Committee and the presentation made of the REGPEX platform.

Finally, he asks if there are any other subjects to be discussed.

Since there are no more issues to discuss, CALRE President adjourns the meeting when it is 17.30 on 20th March 2012.

CALRE President

Fernando Jesús Manzano Pedrera