



Mr Tragakis
Mr Dermentzopoulos
Hellenic Parliament,
Megaro Voulis,
GR-10021, Athens,
Greece

The Hague, 26 March 2014

Re: Draft Rules of Procedure for the Interparliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance

Our reference: 2014D10312

Dear Mr Tragakis,
Dear Mr Dermentzopoulos,

Thank you for your letter of 27 February and for your work to facilitate the process of adopting Rules of Procedure for the Interparliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance. We appreciate your efforts to move forward with the draft prepared by the Lithuanian Presidency for adoption in the second half of this year. The proposed amendments you have circulated are a useful step in that direction and we are happy to share our views with you and our colleagues from other EU Parliaments.

As a general point, we are convinced that the Rules of Procedure (RoP) for the Interparliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance should reflect as closely as possible the letter and spirit of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG), which established this Conference, as well the conclusions of the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments of 21-23 April 2013 in Nicosia, which laid down its basic parameters. The RoP, therefore, should operationalise earlier agreements and provide practical guidelines for our meetings. We would like to draw your attention to four specific points.

First, your suggestion of changing the title of the Conference to leave out reference to "financial governance" is not in agreement with the purpose and wording of the TSCG, and Article 13 in particular. The very objective of the Fiscal Compact Treaty, as its name suggests, is to strengthen economic and monetary union through a framework of rules aimed at improving budgetary discipline. This is also reflected in Article 13 itself, specifying that the conference shall discuss "budgetary policies and other issues covered by this Treaty." As eight out of the sixteen substantive articles of the TSCG concern financial governance, reference to this aspect in the title of the Conference would be appropriate. This would also be in line with the conclusions of the EU Speakers, (see Paragraph 5 on the topic of "Article 13 of the TSCG"). A final remark on this point relates to the role of the Finance committees. The Conference replaces the meetings of the Chairpersons of the Finance committees (as agreed by the Speakers) on the presumption that their work will form an

integral part of the Conference. This also suggests that 'economic governance' alone would not adequately reflect the purpose of the Conference.

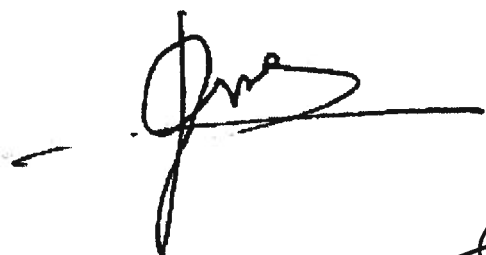
Second, we believe the proposed wording of Paragraph 1.1 could be improved. As has been raised by the Dutch delegation during the Conference on EFG in Vilnius, strengthening coordination between national parliaments and the European Parliament not only requires an exchange of views on substantive issues, but also the opportunity to learn from each other's approaches and experiences. In order to give full effect to the complementary nature of the work of national parliaments and the European Parliament in this field, we suggest that such a reference is added to Paragraph 1.1: *The Interparliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance shall provide a framework for debate **and the exchange of information and best practices** that strengthens the cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament, and that contributes to ensuring democratic accountability and legitimacy of the decisions taken in the context of a more integrated financial, budgetary and economic policy framework, without prejudicing the competences of the EU Parliaments.*

Third, we are concerned about the proposal to limit the size of delegations as this contradicts the EU Speakers' conclusions. As you are aware, the decision to leave the size of each delegation to individual parliaments reflects a careful compromise between the Speakers. Proposals that are not consistent with Paragraph 8 of said conclusions would not be prudent and would therefore not have our support.

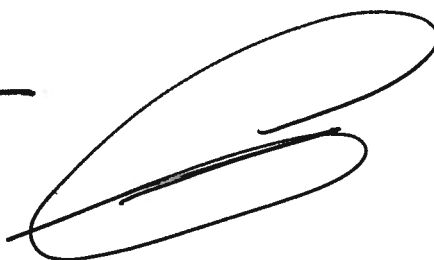
Finally, we would object to your proposal to amend Paragraph 3.1 by adding that the Conference taking place in the first Semester of each year shall be held within the framework of the European Parliamentary Week. The conclusions of the Speakers provide no basis for such a provision and we do not think it appropriate to include it in the RoP of the Conference on EFG. The RoP should merely govern how the Conference's meetings are run. It is not clear to us how stipulating the meetings' fit in to the parliamentary schedule of one of the hosting parliaments should be part of these.

We look forward to the views from other parliaments and to the Greek Presidency draft text over the coming months.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Peter Essers
Chair of the Finance Committee
Senate of the States General



Drs. Cora van Nieuwenhuizen-Wijbenga
Chair of the Finance Committee
House of Representatives of the States General

Also on behalf of the Chair of the Economic Affairs Committee of the Senate