EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND, ICELAND, AND NORWAY AND TO THE EEA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of the

MEETING (Iceland)

Wednesday, 5 September 2007

Strasbourg

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20 September 2007/HO/em

The meeting opened at 16.15 with Mrs Wallis, Chair in the chair

Members excused: Mrs ROTH-BEHRENDT, Mrs STIHLER

1. **Adoption of the draft agenda**

The draft agenda was adopted.

2. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2007 in Brussels**

The minutes had been distributed to the members prior to the meeting and were approved.

3. **Election of a new Delegation Chair**

Mrs Diana WALLIS (ALDE group) had been elected Vice President of the EP and would, therefore, not continue as Chair of the SINEEA Delegation.

The ALDE Group had announced that Ms Bilyana RAEVA was the candidate for the chair of the Delegation.

No other candidatures had been received.

Ms RAEVA confirmed her candidature and that her declaration of financial interests was correct.

The delegation elected Ms RAEVA by acclamation.

Ms RAEVA took over the Chair.

With a view to the 18th EU-Iceland Interparliamentary Meeting on 12 -13 September 2007 in Brussels

4. *Briefings by:*

- ***Mr Högni KRISTJÁNSSON***, Deputy Head of Mission, Icelandic Mission to the EU, on the situation in Iceland and its relations with the EU

- ***Mr Lars-Olof HOLLNER***, representing the European Commission, on EU-Iceland relations

The floor was given to Mr Kristjansson who briefed the delegation on the political situation in Iceland following the general elections in May 2007. The Independence Party, the largest party in the Parliament formed a coalition government with the

Social Democratic Alliance, which gave the government a strong position with a majority of 20 MPs.

The main concern on the economic situation in Iceland was to avoid an overheating. Mr Kristjansson also commented on Iceland's defence and security policy, where the NATO membership and the bilateral defence Agreement with the US are the cornerstones.

On Iceland's relations to the EU, it was stated that the EEA Agreement continues to be the most important co-operation with the EU including the Schengen Cooperation Agreement.
Regarding fisheries, Iceland and the EU are cooperating closely within international organisations on fisheries management. The issue on whaling was also mentioned. The policy in general towards the EU had not changed with the new government.

It was the intention to establish a standing consultative committee representing the parties in the Icelandic Parliament to monitor developments in Europe and assess changes from the perspective of Icelandic interests.

Mr Hollner gave a general briefing on Iceland-EU relations and specifically commented on the EEA enlargement with Bulgaria and Romania, the bilateral fishing agreement, emission of greenhouse gas, liberation of agriculture trade (with reference to art. 19 in the EEA Agreement) and on the EFTA's input in the decision shaping process within the EEA.

Mr Kristjansson and Mr Hollner answered to questions from Mrs Wallis, Mr Sakalas, Mr Smith on EU Iceland relations within the business environment and the role of the Euro, on the security and defence policies, on the maritime policies and on the whaling quotas.

5. Consideration of the programme and the draft agenda for the IPM

- Nomination of first EP speakers

The chair presented the programme and the draft IPM agenda.

Re programme
Due to the late arrival of the Icelandic delegation on 12 Sept., the first working session of the IPM would take place at 17.30 to 18.30 followed by the dinner hosted by the chair of the EP delegation at 20.00.

Re draft agenda:

- Mr Guido Sacconi, Chair of the Temporary Committee on Climate Change, in a letter

of 21 June 2007 to Mr Raimon Obiols i Germà, Chair of the Conference of Delegation Chairs, had proposed to strengthen the cooperation and coordination between the parliamentary bodies in the EP on the elaboration of a climate change policy.
The Chair, therefore, suggested to invite members of the CLIM to attend the IPM meeting when dealing with item 6: "Energy policies and climate change".

- The Chair also suggested to invite members of the Committee on Fisheries to participate in the debate on item 5 : "Maritime and fisheries policies of Iceland and of the EU".

The Delegation agreed to these proposals.

The Chair proposed following nomination of first EP-speakers

- EU-Iceland relations: Mrs Diana WALLIS
- Reform policies of the EU: Mr Jens- Peter BONDE
- Maritime and fisheries policies: Mr Alyn SMITH
- Energy policies and climate change: Mr Paul RÜBIG
- Security and defence policies of Iceland and of the EU: Mr Aloyzas SAKALAS

The Delegation agreed to the nominations.

Following an intervention from Mr SMITH, the order of business was established:

- Item 3 on Wednesday 12 September
- Items 6 - 5 - 4 -7 on Thursday 13 September

6. **Any other business**

No item was raised.

7. **Next meeting**

The next meetings of the SINEEA delegation is scheduled for 11 October (Brussels) and 24 October 2007 (Strasbourg) to prepare for the EEA JPC meeting on 14-15 November 2007 in Strasbourg.

The meeting closed at 17.15.

ATTENDANCE LIST

Members

WALLIS (Chair) - SAKALAS (Vice-Chair) - PANAYOTOPOULOS-CASSIOTOU - RÜBIG - RAEVA (newly elected Chair) - SCHUTH - JANOWSKI - SMITH

Substitute Members

HUDACKÝ

Political Groups

GUILLERME (PSE) - KRINGS (ALDE)

Members' Assistants

MANEV - GUEORGUIEVA

Invitees

HOLLNER (Commission) - KRISTJÁNSSON (Mission of Iceland to the EU)

Secretariat

OLSEN - d'AGOSTO - MOLLET