

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING

21 June 2005

in

BRUSSELS

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Annex: Attendance list

The meeting opened at 15.00 with Mrs Diana WALLIS, chairperson, presiding.

Interpretation was available in the following languages: EN-SV-DA-DE-NL-EL +PL

Excused: Mrs DÜHRKOP-DÜHRKOP, Mr Alyn SMITH

1.  
The draft agenda was adopted.

2.  
The minutes had been distributed to the members and were approved.

### **With a view to the 22nd EU-Norway Interparliamentary Meeting on 23-24 May 2005 in Brussels**

3.  
Mr MARFURT briefed the delegation on the situation in Switzerland and on its relations with the EU. Switzerland represents 8.1% of the EU's exports, 6.6% of the EU's imports and provides three quarters of a million jobs to EU citizens. Switzerland is supporting the EU's new neighbour countries in eastern and south-eastern Europe to the extent of 135 million euros per year and the social and economic cohesion of the ten new member states with 1 billion euros over five years.

Relations between Switzerland and EU are regulated by two packages of agreements concluded in 1999 (Bilateral Agreements I) and 2004 (Bilateral Agreements II) which aim to remove barriers on both sides. From a Swiss perspective there are some disadvantages within this relationship and some of those mentioned were that Switzerland does not participate in decision-making on EU legislation and there are problems in keeping up with the evolution of the EU's *aquis communautaire*. Concerning EU membership current polls show that one third of Swiss population are in favour, one third are against and one third in between. The two main reasons why the Swiss show reluctance to an EU membership are:

- the effect on the internal political system of direct democracy and federalism;
- the adoption of a final political objective of the integration process.

On 5 June Switzerland had a referendum on the Schengen/Dublin agreement and this was adopted with a majority of 55%. The next challenge will be the referendum on 25 September on the extension of the existing agreement on the free movement of persons to the ten new member states. The Swiss government, the majority of the political parties and the trade unions all stand united behind the extension of the agreement.

Switzerland plays an important role as a transit country for electricity and as an electricity supplier and stresses the importance of a legal basis for cooperation within this field with the EU.

Mr BRINKMANN briefed the delegation on EU-Switzerland relations. He stressed that Switzerland-EU cooperation through bilateral agreements is a quite complex approach. With the latest round of bilateral agreements Switzerland has deepened their relationship with the EU however there are still

concerns about the Swiss direct taxation of companies. The European Commission considered the outcome of the referendum on 5 June as a very positive development and the process will continue with its ratification by the European Parliament and the Council.

In the negotiations on the extension of the agreement on free movement of persons to the new member states, the EU has given Switzerland the same conditions and the same transit periods as the old member states as far as employed workers and service providers are concerned.

Electricity issues will be further discussed with Switzerland and on the issue of research an agreement on the 7th framework programme is under preparation. Switzerland has also shown interest in participating in a number of European agencies such as the European Food Safety Agency, and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

Finally, the Commission has decided to set up a delegation in Berne which is likely to open later this year.

The discussion was followed by an exchange of views.

Ms WALLIS welcomed the establishment of a delegation in Bern as this would clearly aid two-way communications.

Mr KLINZ asked why there was a need for a Commission office in Berne. He also asked about whether there had been a poll about membership of the EEA. He stressed that it was wrong to point a finger at Switzerland concerning taxation of companies since this was an issue that also could be dealt with inside the EU.

Ms PATAKY raised a question about the Swiss opinion on the seven year time period concerning the agreement on free movement of persons.

Mr JANOWSKI directed a question to the Swiss ambassador on why Switzerland was only an observer in the EEA since it seemed to be very open concerning international trade.

Mr MARFURT responded to the questions raised by Mr KLINTZ and Mr JANOWSKI and stated that Switzerland with its current position, outside the EEA, had the possibility to stand back from certain EU legislation areas. Switzerland would continue to be an observer in the EEA and by this be closely involved in what was happening in this area but the prospects of a new referendum on membership was not very likely. It was also stressed that the transition period of seven years regarding the free movement of persons was seen as very important in order to avoid too much pressure on the Swiss labour market. The Swiss ambassador was positive about the establishment of a delegation in Berne.

On the question from Mr KLINZ about why there was a need for a delegation in Berne, Mr BRINKMANN responded that the Commission had delegations in many countries. Due to the complex relationship and the fact that Switzerland was a very important trading partner it was especially important that EU should have these close links with Switzerland.

#### 4.

The chair asked the members to look at the draft programme and the draft agenda in the dossier. Members participating in the IPM in Morat were invited to indicate their interest in being first EP-speakers by notifying the secretariat.

Interpretation would be available in: EN-DE active  
FR passive

**5.**  
No item was raised.

**6.**  
The next meeting would take place in Strasbourg 6 July 2005.

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\* \*

The meeting closed at 16.05

**DELTAGERLISTE/ANWESENHEITSLISTE/ΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD  
OF ATTENDANCE/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/LISTE DE PRESENCE/ELENCO DEI  
PRESENTI/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Til stede  | Formandskabet/Vorstand/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Ufficio di Presidenza/Mesa/Puhemiehisto/J.L. Presidium: (*)<br>WALLIS (P)<br>Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Μέλη/Members/Diputados/Deputés/Deputati/Leden/Deputados/jäsenet/<br>BARSİ-PATAKY, JANOWSKI, PANAYOTOPOULOS, RÜBIG |
| Anwesend   | Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suplentes/Suppleants/<br>Membri supplenti/Plaatsvervangers/Membros suplentes/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter:<br>KLINZ  |
| Παρόντες   | Apologies: DÜHRKOP-DÜHRKOP, Alyn SMITH  |
| Present    |   |
| Presentes  |   |
| Présents   |   |
| Presenti   |   |
| Aanwezig   |   |
| Läsnä      |   |
| Närvarande |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Art. 147,7   |   |
| Art. 166,3   |   |
| Art. 162.6<br>Endv. Deltog/Weitere Teiln./<br>Συμμετείχαν επίσηζ/Also present<br>Participaron igualmente/<br>Participaient également/<br>Hanno partecipato altresì/<br>Andere deelnemers/<br>Outros participantes/<br>Muut osallistujat/ Dessutom deltog | 3 |
| (Dagsorden/Tagesordnung Pkt/Ημερήσια Διάταξη Σημε<br>í/Point OJ/Punto OG/Agenda Punt/Ordem do dia-<br>punto/punto orden del dia/<br>Esityslista Kohta/Föredragningslista punkt):   |   |

\* (P) =Formand/Vorsitzender/Πρόεδρος/Chairman/President/Presidente/Voorzitter/Presidente/Puhemies/Ordförande  
(VP) =Næstform./Stellv. Vorsitz./?ντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chairman/Vice-President/Vicepresidente/Varapuhemies  
Ondervoorz./Vice-Pres./Vicepres/Vice ordförande.

Til stede den/Anwesend am/Παρόν στις/Present on/Present le/Presente il/Aanwezig op/Presente em/Presente el/Läsnä/Närvarande den.

(1) 21 June 2005

(2)

(3)

Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung d. Vorsitzenden/Με πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chairman/Por invitacion del presidente/Sur l'invitation du président/Su invito del presidente/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/A convite do presidente/Puhemiehen kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan:

Radet/Rat/Συμβούλιο/Council/Consejo/Conseil/Consiglio/Raad/Conselho/Neuvosto/Radet: (\*)

KRITIKOS

Kommissionen/Kommission/Επιτροπή/Commission/Comision/Commissione/Commissie/Comissão/Komissio/

Kommissionen: (\*)

BRINKMANN, TRAUTMANN

Mission Switzerland: Ambassador MARFURT, FILLIEZ

|  |   |                               |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Andre deltagere/Andere Teilnehmer<br>Επίσης Παρόντες/Also present<br>Otros participantes/Autres participants/Altri partecipanti<br>Andere aanwezigen/Outros participantes<br>Muut osallistajat/Övriga deltagare  |   |                               |
| Gruppernes sekretariat<br>Sekretariat der Fraktionen<br>Γραμματεία των Πολ. Ομάδων<br>Secretariat political groups<br>Secr. de los grupos politicos<br>Secr. groupes politiques<br>Segr. dei gruppi politici<br>Secr. van de fracties<br>Secr. dos grupos politicos<br>Puolueyhymien sihteeristö<br>Gruppernas sekretariat | PPE-DE<br>PSE<br>ALDE<br>Verts/ALE<br>GUE/NGL<br>UEN<br>EDD<br>NI | HEISTER<br>ESDERS<br>KAMMITSI |
| Cab. du Président  |   |                               |
| Cab. du Secrétaire Général   |   |                               |
| Generaldirektorat<br>Generaldirektion<br>Γενική Διεύθυνση<br>Directorate-General<br>Dirección general<br>Direction générale<br>Direzione generale<br>Directoraat-generaal<br>Direcção general<br>Contrôle financier<br>Service juridique<br>Pääosasto<br>Generaldirektorat   | I<br>II<br>III<br>IV<br>V<br>VI<br>VII<br>VIII                    | SCHULZ                        |
| Udvalgssekretariatet<br>Ausschusssekretariat<br>Γραμματεία επιτροπής<br>Committee secretariat<br>Secretaria de la comisión<br>Secrétariat de la commission<br>Segretariato della commissione<br>Commissiesecretariaat<br>Secretaria de comissão<br>Valiokunnan sihteeristö<br>Utskottssekretariatet                        |   | OLSEN                         |
| Assist./Βοηθός   |   | D'AGOSTO, TUXEN, EKSTRAND     |

\* (P) =Formand/Pres./Πρόεδρος/Chairman/President/Voorzitter/Puhemies/Ordförande

(VP) =Næstform./Vize-Pres./?ντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chairman/Vice-President/Ondervoorz./Vice-pres/Varapuhemies/Vice ordförande.

(M) =Medlem./Mitglied/Μέλος/Member/Miembro/Membre/Membro/Lid/Membro/Jäsen/Ledamot

(F) =Tjenestemand/Beamter/Υπάλληλος/Official/Funcionario/Fonctionnaire/Funzionario/Ambtenaar/ Funcionario/Virkamies/Tjänsteman