



COMMUNITY
OF DEMOCRACIES
Intergovernmental
Organization

Lithuania's Presidency of the Community of Democracies: **TOGETHER
FOR DEMOCRACY**

VILNIUS DECLARATION
SETTING UP THE COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

Convening Meeting of the parliamentarians
of the Community of Democracies

11-12 March 2010
Vilnius

We, the participants of the Convening Meeting, gathered in Vilnius on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the reestablishment of independence of Lithuania,

recognizing the Act of March 11, signed by the members of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, as a symbol of the victory of democracy over the authoritarian regime;

expressing our full support to the objectives set forth in the Warsaw Declaration establishing the Community of Democracies and its subsequent declarations and documents;

emphasizing the importance of the forthcoming 10th anniversary of the Community of Democracies;

expressing our common adherence to the fundamental values and principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Agenda for Democratization presented by the UN Secretary-General to the 51st session of the United Nations General Assembly and other relevant instruments of international law;

recognizing democracy as a broadly recognized ideal as well as a goal which is based on the common values shared or desired by people around the world;

recognizing the common and fundamental elements vital for any genuine democracy as stated in the Warsaw Declaration, though *emphasizing* that democratization must be pursued bearing in mind the diversity of historical experience and cultural background of every country;

sharing the democracy building objectives of the United Nations, the Inter-parliamentary Union, the Council of Europe, the European Union and many other regional, international and non-governmental organizations;

emphasizing our common belief that parliaments embody democracy as the central institutions which express the will of people, pass laws and to which governments are accountable,

hereby agree to establish the Parliamentary Forum that will contribute to the activities of the Community of Democracies and that will be guided by the content of this Declaration:

the Community of Democracies Parliamentary Forum is a coalition of like-minded parliamentarians from the states participants of the CoD who are determined to work together to strengthen democracy where it is weak and invigorate even where it is longstanding, to promote peace, development, human rights and freedoms, gender equality and equal opportunities in their respective countries and around the world.

Combining our experiences and practical knowledge with an unyielding commitment to the ideals of democracy, we will cooperate in strengthening democratic institutions, primarily the parliaments, in the transition and pre-transition countries. We resolve to engage in the experience and best practice sharing projects with the parliamentarians as well as pro-democracy activists from the CoD participating countries or countries where the CoD is engaged in democracy building activities.

The Parliamentary Forum will stand on the side of those who seek to bring democracy's benefits to their own people. We will engage in the activities with Civil Society by organizing round table discussions, thematic conferences or debates in different CoD countries with democratic opposition, academic youth and civil society activists.

We will encourage our governments to actively participate in democracy building actions. The Parliamentary Forum will draw up proposals on democracy development in the CoD countries as well as provide recommendations for the CoD Governments about the actions needed to support the

countries where democracy is in danger of limitation and oppression as well as the new and emerging democratic societies.

We resolve to raise awareness about the challenges and obstacles that are impeding the spread of democracy. We will develop education and awareness raising campaigns through academic engagement at universities in limited democracy or transition countries, as well as in the educational media for raising awareness of the wider society.

Recognizing that democratization and good governance are not only ends in themselves, but are also vital for poverty reduction, sustainable development, peace and stability, the Parliamentary Forum is committed to promote not only political and civil rights, but also economic, cultural and social rights towards achievement of solidarity.

We will support the activities of current institutional segments of the Community of Democracies – NGO community and governments – and will closely cooperate with all CoD national parliaments, parliamentary unions in their actions driven by the same ideals.

Founding our work on a simple idea that a parliament is the central institution of democracy, we commit to strengthen the role of national parliaments in our own countries and, in each of them, the functions of representation, legislation and oversight of the Executive. We resolve to uphold in our work the principles and goals which are stated in the guide to good practice “Parliaments and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century” published by the IPU in 2006.

We will actively participate in the upcoming CoD’s 10th anniversary meeting in Krakow and will cooperate in launching a new strategic vision for the future of the Community of Democracies, in which the Parliamentary Forum should become one of the effective tools of promotion of democracy worldwide.

We will also collaborate with and within the European Parliament in order to ensure more coherent, consistent and coordinated actions between the EU and the CoD in supporting democracy-building.

We agree upon the following mechanisms for the functioning of the Forum:

All parliamentarians participating in the Convening Meeting in Vilnius are the full-fledged members of the Forum. The membership of the Forum is open to each current or former

parliamentarian from the CoD national parliaments, the European Parliament or the countries not yet eligible for participation in the CoD who has the spirit of a democracy defender, is committed to democracy and human rights and is willing to work together to advance democracy around the world. The decision to admit a member to the Forum shall be taken upon a recommendation from any of the participants of the Convening Meeting.

The Parliamentary Forum will meet at least twice a year. The 11th of March will remain the permanent date of the annual informal meeting in Lithuania, the venue and date of other meetings will be decided by common agreement of the members of the forum on a case by case basis. During the annual meetings, the Forum will approve its work plans and strategies for the next period of action.


In order to ensure the effective functioning of the Parliamentary Forum, the President, the International Board, consisting of 2-7 Vice-Presidents, and the Secretary General of the Forum can be nominated at the Convening Meeting. A decision on selecting new personalities for these positions or prolonging the term of those in charge may be taken in any of the subsequent meetings of the Forum.


The Vilnius-based international working group will act as a nucleus secretariat which will ensure the technical support for the implementation of the activities of the Forum. The international working group may be composed of the experts of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, the Congress of the US, the European Parliament, the Eastern Europe Studies Centre in Vilnius, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies in Warsaw, or any other expert from the CoD country willing to contribute to the work of the Parliamentary Forum.

Seeking the support for our vision we intend to form the Donor Committee in the future. The body will serve as an organized form of communication with different democracy support organizations and foundations. It will advise and assist the work of the Parliamentary Forum by consulting and contributing to the financial side of the activities of the Forum.

Signatures of the participants of the Convening Meeting:

1. Teona Dzepelienė
2. Mihai Chiriac
3. Kálmán Kelemen
4. Ján Džur
5. Alexander Vondra
6. Dennis Hastert (Former Speaker U.S. House of Rep USA)

 (David BAKRADZE, CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA)

 (ALEXANDR VONDRA, SENATOR, CZECH REPUBLIC)

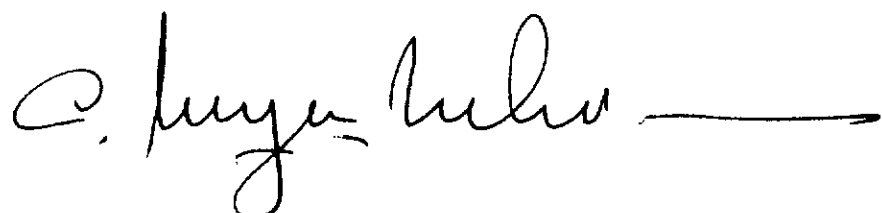
Adriana González Carrillo. Senator. MEXICO.

Vytautas Landsbergis
Ešlovas Vytautas Stankevičius
Jonhădărcă, Republica Moldova +
Schwarzenberg

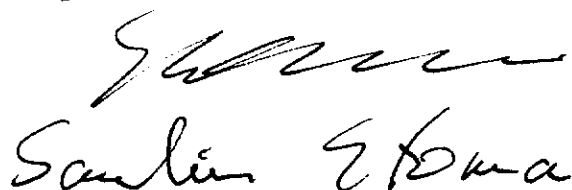
Signatures of the participants of the Convening Meeting:

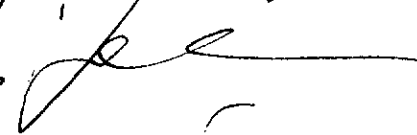
En. Zingers, G. B.
Nelya Steklovskaya Abramovskaya (M. Steklovskaya)
Petras Antanas
Renja Auszra Parlovici N. Bui
Aukute Romanuskaitė-Skokauskienė
Petras Luomanas
Vladimir Dy
Pat Breen, T.D. IRELAND.
Mantas Adomius
David Darchiashvili, Georgian Parliament. (D. D.)
Olga Bogdan, ^{genyrovam (D. D.)} ^{Богдан} ^{Богдан} ^{Богдан}
Borys Tarasyuk, UKRAINE, Verkhovna Rada
Michael Jahler, Member of the European Parliament
Ingvor Solal former member of
the Norwegian Parli-
ament.
Taru Wollwend (Vice-speaker of the
Lendtag (Liechtenstein)
privately, not for
the Lendtag

Signatures of the participants of the Convening Meeting:

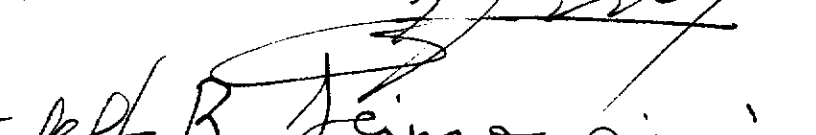


(Председател на парламента
Републики Бенин 1991-94г.)


Saulin Ebo

Павел Шопов . Зам. председател
на Народното събрание на Репуб-
лика България 

Giorgi Akhvelidze - Georgia M.P.
Christian - Democrats.

Algis Keičius 
Lietuvos Respublikos
parlamentas pirmininkas

Signatures of the participants of the Convening Meeting:

Jón Baldvin Hannibálsson

Üneyt Yüksel, member of Turkish
Parliament

Anatol Liabedzka Belarus

Egidijus Varkėnas, LITHUANIA

Belassol CHAOUI Maroc.

Député depuis 1998
constitutionnel.

chef du groupe

Alvydas MEDAČIUS

Former Chairman
of Foreign Affairs Committee
Seimas of LITHUANIA

Zorbi Kandelaki

8

Member of European
Parliament
Member of Parliament - of Georgia

Zorbi Kandelaki

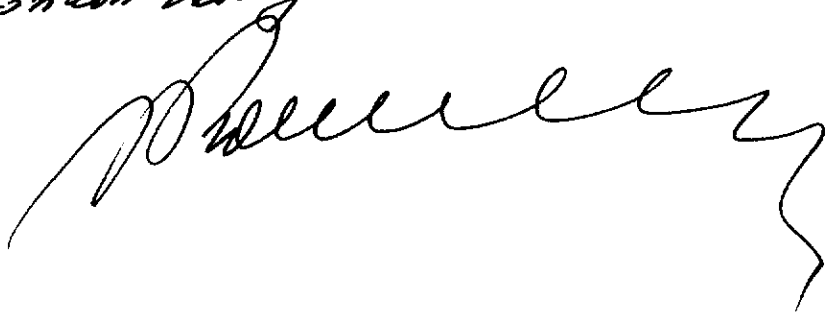
Signatures of the participants of the Convening Meeting:

Don Kuey , Canada

Hidro 12.03.2009

Leignier Romaszewski
r.e. marciak Senata PT

Uprzejmie proszę o wyrażenie opinii
do projektu uchwały w sprawie
demokracji

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke.