

Saturday, September 4, 2004

Committee launches proposal for UN Reform

Call for better representation of the populations in the UN

Berlin. Together with a strategy paper on the reform of the United Nations (UN) the „Committee for a Democratic UN“ (CDUN) presented itself to the public on Friday in Berlin. The all-party initiative was founded earlier this year in Germany. The paper titled “Developing international democracy” notes a democracy deficit on the international level. “Foreign policy processes are exclusively in the hands of government executives and their officials”, said CDUN-Chairman Andreas Bummel.

Challenges such as climate protection, fight against terrorism or the surmounting of unequal distribution of resources and prosperity in the world could not be solved any more “without taking into account the will, ideas and initiatives of the people of the world”, said German parliamentarian Josef Winkler from the Green Party. „The participation of the people is not only needed for the planning of lasting solutions of the world’s problems, but also to transform the UN into an effective instrument of global governance”, added Ursula Lietz, MP from the Christian-Democratic Union.

The CDUN campaigns for the establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly at the United Nations (UNPA). In a first step such an institution could be brought into being as consultative body of the UN General Assembly. Initially a change of the UN Charter, which is only possible under difficult conditions, would not be necessary. Once established, the UNPA may be transformed into a main body of the UN in the frame of a future charter reform.

In the first step the new UN assembly would be composed by national parliamentarians. Later on direct election of the UNPA delegates would be conceivable. Within further steps of development the assembly “step by step shall be vested with genuine rights of information, participation and control”. Even in the first step the assembly would be “an important hinge between the UN, the organizations of the UN system, governments, national parliaments and civil society”, said CDUN-Vice-Chairperson Claudia Kissling.

The Social Democratic parliamentarian Petra Ernstberger explained that the Committee initially strives for resolutions of the German Bundestag and the European Parliament which endorse the establishment of a UNPA. Additionally, the strategy paper would be introduced „into the reform debate at the UN“. The initiative seamlessly builds upon the proposal of the Cardoso-Report on United Nations-Civil Society Relations.

Besides of scientists and NGO-representatives parliamentarians from all groups in the German Bundestag as well as parliamentarians from the European and Swiss Parliament belong to the Committee, among them the German MPs Winkler, Lietz und Ernstberger. The CDUN is under the patronage of the prestigious Club of Budapest.

Further Information:

Internet: www.uno-komitee.de/

Phone: Andreas Bummel, +49 (0) 6152-9613117

The strategy paper can be downloaded on the website.

