

Thursday, June 9, 2005

**UN Reform: EU Lawmakers call for Democratization
Proposal to establish a UN Parliamentary Assembly**

Strasbourg. Following statements of the EU Council and Commission the day before the European Parliament called for the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) in a resolution adopted on Thursday. According to the resolution, the new assembly “would increase the democratic profile and internal democratic process” of the United Nations and should be embedded into the UN system. The resolution states, “the Parliamentary Assembly should be vested with genuine rights of information, participation and control, and should be able to adopt recommendations directed at the UN General Assembly.” The motion was introduced by EU lawmaker Armin Laschet on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

„In 1945 the UN was designed as a purely intergovernmental organization. Up to today the populations are only represented in its bodies by government executives. The time is ripe to open up the world organization and the UN system for increased participation. The best way to achieve this is through a Parliamentary Assembly”, said Laschet. A Parliamentary Assembly would increase transparency, legitimacy and efficiency of the UN system. “A Parliamentary Assembly at the UN should be authorized to establish inquiry commissions and to question staff and officials of the United Nations“, claimed the chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the European Parliament, Jo Leinen.

Laschet and Leinen belong to a group of lawmakers of the European Parliament, the German Bundestag and the Swiss National Council who are affiliated with the Committee for a Democratic UN (KDUN) which was founded in 2004. „ The EU countries could resume a leading role to establish a UN parliament, similar to their leadership in the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The decision of the European Parliament is an important step in this direction“, said Andreas Bummel, chairman of the Committee.

The proposal to establish a Parliamentary Assembly at the UN was also supported in February by the majority of the Swiss National Council in an open letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

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Resolution text:

Internet: www.uno-komitee.de/en/documents/B6-0328-2005-EP-EN.pdf