

DECLARATION ON COOPERATION

**on a strategic partnership between
the House of representatives of Spain, the Senate of Spain,
the House of representatives of Belgium, the Senate of Belgium and
the National Assembly of Hungary**

The five parliamentary chambers of the countries of Spain, Belgium and Hungary (hereinafter referred to as 'Parties') hereby declare their willingness to cooperate and mutually support each other in the preparation for the three countries' EU Presidencies in 2010-2011

considering

- *the strategic importance of the EU Presidency in the life of a country both on national and international level;*
- *the common interest of the successful implementation of the trio Presidency of Spain, Belgium and Hungary,*
- *the growing importance of the national parliaments and the challenge that is raised by the Lisbon Treaty to seize these opportunities and possibilities.*

therefore Parties agree in strengthening their relations and deepening their cooperation with the present Declaration based on the following principles, objectives and tasks:

1. Parties agree to support each other's preparation to the EU Presidencies in 2010-2011 and agree to cooperate for the successful implementation of the trio presidency with meaningful discussions on substantial and practical matters as well.
2. With respect to the aim of mutual support, Parties agree to hold discussions on the priorities of Spain, Belgium and Hungary, with a view to exerting influence on the definition of those priorities and with special attention to the parliamentary aspects of those issues.
3. Parties agree to hold consultations on the exact implementation of the parliamentary parts of the trio presidency, without detriment to their consultations in the classic troika framework (current, previous and following presidencies). They will consult especially on the definition of the events to be organized and the support that can be given to each other before and during the implementation.
4. Parties agree that when bilateral discussions take place with the European Parliament on issues that touch upon the presidency trio, Parties take on board the responsibility of informing each other.
5. Should there be any bodies set up by the Parties for the successful preparation and implementation of the EU Presidency of their countries, these bodies shall cooperate with each other on an equal basis. The bodies shall exchange views and practices as well as they shall serve as basic organs for the continuous discussions between Parties. Thus, Parties will examine the possibility of exchange of professionals for short terms to get more in-depth knowledge on each other's systems.

6. In order to implement the provisions of the present Declaration, the Parties shall, if required, by mutual agreement, arrange for organizing the following events:
- the Speakers of the Parties can organize working meetings and/or informal gatherings on the occasions of EU interparliamentary meetings;
 - the Speakers of the Parties shall organize a common meeting discussing the developments on the issues regarding the EU Presidency first in the spring of 2009, which could be complemented by similar meetings upon the initiative of any of the Parties;
 - in parallel with the collaboration on the level of the Speakers, the representatives of the Parties involved in the preparation (e.g. members of EU Presidency working groups) both on political and official level shall meet as often as needed during the preparation and the implementation of the presidency to exchange views, best practices and consult on the interrelating activities of their Parliaments as regards to the EU trio presidency; the first of such meeting shall be organized in the autumn of 2008.
7. The mutual visits of the delegations shall be funded according to the customs of European interparliamentary cooperation.
8. The leading officials of the five parliamentary chambers of the countries of Spain, Belgium and Hungary shall take all necessary administrative measures for the implementation of the present Declaration. This includes the appointment of an official responsible for the cooperation provided for in the present Declaration.

Signed in Brussels on 5 November 2008 in five original copies.

Signed by

Teresa Cunillera I Mestres
Vice-President of the Congress of Deputies
of Spain

Francisco Javier Rojo García
President of the Senate of Spain

Herman Van Rompuy
President of the House of Representatives of
Belgium

Armand De Decker
President of the Senate of Belgium

Dr. Katalin Szili
President of the Hungarian National Assembly