Resolution 734 (1980)[1]

Parliamentary Assembly's relations with national parliaments

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report of its Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations on the Assembly's relations with national parliaments (Doc. 4548) ;

2. Considering that the Assembly, although having no legislative powers or means of control over the executive, remains the largest parliamentary forum of European pluralist democracies, all of whose members exercise both national and international parliamentary mandates ;

3. Considering that the Assembly has endeavoured, since 1949, to develop its relations with the national parliaments from which it emanates, particularly with a view to improving mutual communication and seeing that action is taken in member states on the recommendations and resolutions of both the organs of the Council of Europe ;

4. Believing that, in the interests of European unity and to strengthen its democratic character, co-operation between European parliamentary assemblies and national parliaments is more necessary than ever, and that to this end lessons should be drawn from methods of action that have been tried and proved successful,

5. Urges national parliaments :

5.1. to apply and elaborate, in the forms each deems most suitable, the procedures already existing in certain member countries for examining and following up the most important Parliamentary Assembly texts ;

5.2. to improve information about the Assembly's proceedings and support its activities by :

a. quoting opinions given by the Assembly on Council of Europe conventions when these are submitted for ratification to national parliaments ;

b. extending the terms of reference of European affairs committees (or sub-committees) already operational or which might be set up in the different national parliaments to include the activities of the Council of Europe ;

c. posting up (or otherwise publicising) the Assembly's agendas ;

d. inserting information about Assembly activities in the "news-in-brief" bulletins published by certain national parliaments, and by preparing reviews of press coverage of Assembly proceedings ;

e. indexing as official documents delegations' reports and the texts adopted by the Assembly which are transmitted officially to national parliaments (the latter being available in national languages where necessary) ;

1. See Doc. 4548, report of the Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 3 July 1980.

6. Calls also for closer relations to be established between national parliaments, the Parliamentary Assembly and other European assemblies :

6.1. by inviting observers from national parliaments to share in all the forms of co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament when their participation and contributions seem possible and desirable ;

6.2. through the Conference of Presidents of European Parliamentary Assemblies ;

6.3. in the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation ;

6.4. when justified by the discussion of specific subjects of mutual interest, by consultations or joint meetings between members of national parliamentary committees and of corresponding Assembly committees, with the participation of governmental experts and of representatives of any relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations with which the Council of Europe has relations ;

6.5. by the exchange of information between the secretariats of Assembly committees and the corresponding committees of national parliaments on their activities, through the secretariats of national delegations ;

6.6. by transmitting to the Office of the Clerk of the Parliamentary Assembly fuller information about the proceedings of national parliaments ;

6.7. Recommends lastly that national delegations establish or improve contacts with relevant ministerial departments in their countries, with a view to following up Assembly recommendations and resolutions ;

6.8. Points out that the Assembly's committees, which originate its recommendations and resolutions, are primarily responsible for having them followed up at national level, and accordingly invites their members, and in particular their rapporteurs, to step up their action in this matter, among other ways by co-operating more closely with the Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations.