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#### NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Summary report of the meeting of <b>the Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO)</b> of the European Parliament, held in Brussels on 30 May 2016

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A one-hour meeting, marked by some announcements on AFCO's future activities, a short discussion on the organisation of EP work on the implementation of the IIA, and the adoption of AFCO's opinion on the preparation of the MFF review by a clear majority. The discussion on the Council's late reply to an EP written question (item 6) was dropped from the agenda, given that the EP had in the meanwhile received the reply concerned. However, AFCO would hold a general discussion on replies to written questions at a future meeting. Chair HÜBNER also announced that AFCO coordinators had agreed to ask for a written opinion from the EP Legal Service, before deciding how to proceed with the verification of compliance by the "Alliance for Peace and Freedom" with EU fundamental values. As regards the Working Group on the Interpretation and Implementation of the IIA on Better Law-Making, she stressed that its aim was not just to facilitate cooperation between JURI and AFCO, but to provide a more general platform for ensuring consistency in the work undertaken in the different parts of the EP.

## **2. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted without item 6 "Exchange of views on the question for written answer [E-000979-16] presented by Enrique Calvet Chambon and not answered by the Council").

## **3.-4. Chair's announcements**

Chair HÜBNER (EPP, PL) announced that AFCO's opinion to AFET for the EP own-initiative report on the European Defence Union would be prepared by Mr McALLISTER (EPP, DE).

The Chair also announced the following decisions taken by the AFCO coordinators:

- Given the lack of will by the Commission to give any follow-up to the EP report on the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) and to the relevant debate with NGOs, First VP Timmermans would be invited to AFCO before summer to discuss ECI and other issues.
- Ms HÜBNER would continue to try to reverse the negative decision taken by the Conference of Presidents on the proposed AFCO trip to Canada in September.
- Given the difficulties of finding a time for AFCO's visit to Poland, which would both fall within the normal EP slots for visits and allow MEPs to meet both chambers of the Polish parliament, the visit would be organised outside the normal slots (with restrictions on interpretation).
- Item 6 would not be included on the AFCO agenda, as the written question concerned had already reached the EP. However, AFCO would discuss the issue of written questions and delayed answers in the broader sense at a forthcoming meeting (proposal by Ms SPINELLI (GUE/NGL, IT)).
- The Commission would be invited to AFCO to discuss EU accession to the European Convention of Human Rights and how to come to a successful finalisation of the process. After the debate with the Commission, the coordinators would decide how to proceed further and in particular, on whether to table an oral question with debate on the issue in plenary. A study by Professor Jean Paul Jacqué would be finalised within a week and be available to all those interested in the matter.
- As regards the letter from President Schulz regarding the verification of compliance by the "Alliance for Peace and Freedom" with EU fundamental values, the coordinators listened to the opinion of the Legal Service and decided to request a written opinion from it. On this basis, they would decide at their next meeting how to activate the procedure in AFCO.

## **7. Preparation of the post-electoral revision of the MFF 2014-2020: Parliament's input ahead of the Commission's proposal**

Rapporteur: Mr SILVA PEREIRA (S&D, PT)

- Adoption of draft opinion

The draft opinion was adopted, with 14 votes for, 4 votes against and 2 abstentions.

## **9. Joint AFCO/JURI - Working Group on the Interpretation and implementation of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making**

- Exchange of views : information about the first meeting on 10 May 2016

Ms HÜBNER gave an overview of the arrangements created in the EP for the work on the interpretation and implementation of the IIA on Better Law-Making:

- She recalled that the report on the implementation of the IIA would be prepared under Rule 55 of the EP Rules of Procedure by AFCO and JURI together. In order to facilitate the process of cooperation between the two committees, a Working Group (WG) on the Interpretation and implementation of the IIA had been set up. At its first meeting, it was agreed that the WG would serve as a platform for the co-rapporteurs CORBETT (S&D, UK) and SVOBODA (EPP, CZ) to discuss issues, but it would also monitor the initial implementation of the IIA and serve as a platform allowing other interested committees to contribute to the discussions.
- In the meantime President Schulz had convened a "Group of Four" (Mr CORBETT, Mr SVOBODA, Mr VERHOFSTADT and Ms HÜBNER), which had agreed on a proposal to the Conference of Presidents on how to proceed with the follow-up to the IIA. Major follow-up would be related to further negotiations between the three institutions on international agreements, where the group proposed that AFET and INTA should lead the negotiations. In addition, there would be negotiations on the delineation criteria for the implementing and delegated acts. The major change of relevance for AFCO would be the alignment of the EP Rules of Procedure with the IIA (for which Mr CORBETT was responsible).
- EP services were also heavily involved in the implementation work and Deputy Secretary-General Ratti and the project team were cooperating with the WG on the IIA in this regard.

Mr SCHOLZ (GUE/NGL, DE) asked how the work of the WG on IIA and the WG on the EP Rules of Procedure would be linked and stressed the importance of transparency. In reply, Ms HÜBNER pointed out that Mr CORBETT was providing the link between the two working groups. She also reiterated that the aim of the WG on IIA was to facilitate not just the cooperation between JURI and AFCO, but to provide a general platform for ensuring consistency in the work undertaken in the different parts of the EP (both across the political bodies and with the administration). Ms HÜBNER also said that the committee would be regularly informed on progress in the work of the WG on IIA.

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