



ASSEMBLÉE DES RÉGIONS D'EUROPE
ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS
VERSAMMLUNG DER REGIONEN EUROPAS
ASAMBLEA DE LAS REGIONES DE EUROPA
ASSEMBLEA DELLE REGIONI D'EUROPA

Bruxelles, 13th June 2001

Press Release

**Full recognition for the role of the Regions
in the future structure of Europe**

"Organisations representing the Regions such as the AER - which brings together both EU Regions and those in applicant countries - must be included in the activities of the future group responsible for preparing the Intergovernmental Conference in 2004" declared Liese Prokop, President of the Assembly of European Regions, at the press conference in Brussels on 13th June.

Whilst welcoming the initiative of the future Belgian Presidency to include the consideration of the role of constitutional Regions in decision-making at Community level in its programme, Mrs Prokop insisted, during her interviews with Mr Van Cauwenberghe, Minister-President of Wallonia, in particular, that this consideration must be more general and lead towards increased participation of all the Regions in European decision-making. *"The Regions are the carriers of democratic legitimacy based on proximity and their opinions must be acted on at European level. On this condition, we can fight the current democratic deficit and construct a Europe close to the citizens".*

The AER President also stressed that *"it was essential to keep the principle of subsidiarity as the structural element in the current debate on the future and the architecture of the enlarged Europe. This principle will allow us to return to the roots of democracy and ensure proximity with the citizen. It helps to clarify the competences and responsibilities of the various levels of decision making and to apply good governance which satisfies, not only the intellectual elite, but the citizens in general."*

Founded in 1985, the AER is a political organisations of the Regions of Europe and the speaker for their interests at European and international level. Its mission: to bring together the Regions of Europe and allow them to be, together, actors in European integration and in the construction of Europe. The AER currently has 250 member Regions from 26 European countries alongside of 12 interregional organisations.

For further information:

- AER Press and Communications Service: Barbara Skoczylas-Thauront and Francine Huhardeaux,
Tel: +33 3 88 22 07 07, Fax: +33 3 88 75 67 19, Email: infopresse@are-regions-europe.org
 - AER office in Brussels: Stéphane Cools and Hinde Youssef,
Tel: +32 2 421 85 12, Fax: +32 2 421 87 75, Email: s.cools@mrw.wallonie.be
- You can also try the AER Web site: <http://www.are-regions-europe.org>

Immeuble Europe, 20 place des Halles, F – 67054 STRASBOURG Cedex (France)
Téléphone (+33) 3 88 22 07 07 – Téléfax (+33) 3 88 75 67 19
E-mail : secretariat@are-regions-europe.org ou infopresse@are-regions-europe.org