



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

Strasbourg, 1st February 2001

Press release

**The architecture of tomorrow's Europe -
the Regions of Europe prepare**

Chaired by Liese Prokop, First Vice-Minister of Niederösterreich (A) and President of the Assembly of European Regions (AER), the new AER Presidium, elected last December, held its first meeting on 31st January 2001 in Strasbourg – where the Assembly of European Regions has had its headquarters since its creation in 1985 – in the aim of fixing the organisation's priorities for the coming two years.

Bearing in mind the decisions taken at the Intergovernmental Conference in Nice (8th – 9th December 2000): to continue the debate on architecture and consider the ambitions of an enlarged Union in view of a further Intergovernmental Conference in 2004, the AER Presidium established its main aim as the mobilisation of all member Regions and interregional organisations concerning these important stakes in the future of Europe. "*The political representatives of the Regions of the European Union and applicant countries must make their position clear and be considered as a source of proposals for this important debate for the future of Europe*" stated Mrs Prokop. "*In order for the enlarged Europe to be governable and governed, whilst remaining at grass roots level, competences must be clearly distributed between the various levels of government and the concept of subsidiarity must be given a more concrete and clear meaning in the European Treaties and the role of the Regions must be better defined in the construction of Europe*" she added.

The institutional affairs Committee of the AER, chaired by Willi Stächele, Secretary of State for European affairs of Baden-Württemberg, received the mandate of preparing a draft AER position both for the next IGC and the White paper on governance in the Union which will be published next July by the European Commission. This Committee will meet on 8th – 9th February 2001 in Berlin. Over 70 European Regions (EU and non-EU) have already confirmed their participation.

In addition, the Presidium approved the Action programmes of the three other AER Committees for the period 2001- 2002:

- The Social Affairs Committee: Social protection and wellbeing in Europe post enlargement – Economic and social policy in the EU concerning the Regions post 2004 – Health, pensioners, equal opportunities
- The Regional policy Committee: Enlargement and future European regional policy – Report and forum on cohesion in Europe– 6th European environmental action programme – Trans-European Networks – and, of course, considering the current agricultural crisis, Sustainable agriculture and consumer protection.
- The culture Committee: Involvement of young people in public affairs at regional level – Adult education and training – Regional and Minority languages within the year of languages – Sport in the Regions.

The Presidium introduced the idea of organising two Conferences of Ministers and regional representatives in the field of environment and culture in 2002.

The Presidium also decided to give a more political dimension to the AER training programmes such as Centurio and the Summer School which aim at training regional elected representatives and managers of the CEEC as well as Eurodyssey which allows young Europeans to gain experience abroad for the first time.

The AER is the political movement of the Regions of Europe, committed since 1985 to the promotion of regionalism in Europe and the development of interregional cooperation

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