



### Press release

## **The AER welcomes the European Parliament decision in favour of cultural diversity**

*Strasbourg, the 26th January 2004*

The Presidium of the Assembly of European Regions welcomed today during its meeting in Strasbourg the adoption by the European Parliament of the “*Report on preserving and promoting cultural diversity: the role of the European regions and international organizations such as Unesco and the Council of Europe (2002/2269 (INI))*” which strongly supports the AER campaign in favour of cultural diversity. The AER Presidium has also paid homage to Christa Prets (SPÖ, Austria), Rapporteur, and her efficient work, based on good sense and convictions.

The AER is especially satisfied with the EP decision to call upon the Intergovernmental Conference to consolidate in the draft Constitution, the rule of unanimous voting within the Council for the negotiation and conclusion of international agreements in the field of culture and of the media (such as the GATS), the AER major point of contention since the adoption of the “Brixen/Bressanone Declaration” (Oct. 2002), which has been the reference document for the EP Report.

*“Our campaign in favour of cultural diversity supported by many European regions and NGOs is showing signs of institutional success”* said Liese Prokop, the AER President. *We won the support of Unesco in October 2003 with the launch of works for a draft International Convention on cultural diversity and now we have a new powerful ally, the European Parliament itself. Its decision has significant implications and offers the opportunity to modify provisions of the draft Constitution concerning European decision making processes in the field of culture and of the media; currently, these open the way towards liberalization and further commercialization in cultural and audiovisual services and are likely to jeopardize cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe”* she added.

The AER is currently campaigning for amendment of the provisions of the draft European Constitution concerning the field of culture, education, health and social policies aiming to reintroduce the principle of unanimous voting under Article I-16 and the shared competencies with the obligation of unanimity under Article III-217 relating to the common commercial policy.

#### **AER Contact:**

Dr Franz J. Stummann., Secrétaire de la Commission Culture, Education & Formation, Médias ou Doris Materne, Assistante.. Tél : +33 3 88 22 74 47/43, E-mail [f.stummann@a-e-r.org](mailto:f.stummann@a-e-r.org), [d.materne@a-e-r.org](mailto:d.materne@a-e-r.org)  
Barbara Skoczylas Thauront, Responsable Presse & Communication ou Francine Huhardeaux, Assistante,  
Tél : +33 3 88 22 74 46/49, E-mail [b.thauront@a-e-r.org](mailto:b.thauront@a-e-r.org), [f.huhardeaux@a-e-r.org](mailto:f.huhardeaux@a-e-r.org),