

The Conference of the Speakers of the EU Parliaments Bratislava, 25 May 2007

INTERPARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

**Speech by Mr. Manuel dos Santos,
Vice-President of the European Parliament
(Transcript)**

Thank you for your efforts to set up an institutional framework, which will make interparliamentary cooperation more interesting. We all know how difficult it is to achieve a consensus, because positions at the outset are very different coming from different national parliaments. Therefore, it is obvious that we should continue our common efforts during this and future Conferences of Speakers so that we can develop a new phase of interparliamentary cooperation. This is more important than ever and should become increasingly intensive, more so in the past.

The European Parliament would like to share with different all types of possible cooperation. In our institution, there is a considerable consensus in order to strengthen the parliamentary dimension in drafting policies, whether they come from Brussels or from national parliaments. The correct exercising of subsidiarity and proportionality is a key element for interparliamentary cooperation. It means there is an increased democratic control and it also means that there must be a constant rebalancing of competences. Therefore, our cooperation with national parliaments is beneficial for all. We should update our framework of cooperation making it more flexible, more useful, and do away with any outstanding steps; this means also on a technical level, on exchange of views, which I fully subscribe to; we have made considerable progress in this respect, but also from a political and institutional point of view. The European Parliament defends that progressively the leadership of the Speakers' Conference should develop and follow the presidencies of the European Council and COSAC.

Strengthening interparliamentary cooperation is something, which regards the way we are optimistic and we believe that good results can be obtained; it is in the interest of all parliaments that this cooperation be successful. The key to this is ambition in order to find a solution that may be beneficial for all our citizens and for democracy. I think that all the parliaments will be united in this aim, which of course makes our task easier.

Thank you for your attention.