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Dean Mr Bradauskas, and Mr Žemaitaitis

Thank you for circulating the draft Rules of Procedure relating to the Interparliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance ("IC-EFG"). As the representatives of the House of Commons and House of Lords attending the inaugural conference in Vilnius on 16-18 October, we are writing to you to provide comments on these draft Rules, as requested.

In general, we strongly support establishing Rules of Procedure for the IC-EFG, which we believe will assist in facilitating the work and efficiency of the Conference within the framework envisaged by Speakers which was agreed in Nicosia in April. In this context, we note the letter of the European Parliament President, Martin Schulz, of 8 October in which he states the opposition of the European Parliament to agreeing Rules of Procedure in Vilnius. We do not believe that the principle of having Rules of Procedure is inconsistent with the agreement reached by Speakers in Nicosia, and we would welcome our European Parliament colleagues elaborating on any concerns they have when we meet next week.

Turning specifically to the draft Rules circulated, we welcome Article 1.2, which indicates that the IC-EFG will replace the relevant meetings of chairpersons and the European Parliamentary Week of the European Semester. Such streamlining will help to avoid duplication and to keep the IC-EFG as cost-effective as possible, and it would be in keeping with the spirit of the agreement reached by Speakers.

Regarding the conduct of the meetings (Article 3.4), we would suggest that the wording of this could be supplemented to indicate that determining the "relevant committee(s)" and chairperson(s) or their designated deputies is a matter for individual Parliaments. This would reflect the provision in Article 4.1 that the composition of delegations is a matter for each Parliament, in accordance with its own organisation and structures for scrutiny.

We also welcome the encouragement of side events in Article 3.6. It has been our experience at other conferences that working groups and break-out sessions can encourage debate and allow parliamentarians to focus in on specific and detailed areas of interest. However, it is important that

such side events should be open to all participants, and the wording of this Article should be revised to reflect this.

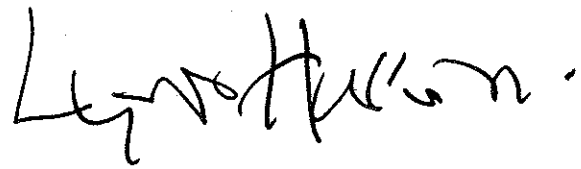
Finally, we would question the value of majority voting (Article 3.7) at the IC-EFG. We are of the view that consensus decision-making, as employed at the CFSP/CSDP conference, would be the more appropriate method, both in the context of any Conclusions of the conference and future revisions to the Rule of Procedure. A consensual approach would also be in keeping with the spirit of the agreement reached by Speakers and reflect what we hope will be the IC-EFG's focus on debate and the exchange of information and best practice.

In consideration of the above points, we attach a list of proposed amendments from the UK delegation.

We look forward to a successful conference in Vilnius later in the month and to discussing the substantive policy issues related to economic and financial governance within the EU. We are disappointed that the debate on the draft Rules that had been scheduled in the draft programme has subsequently been removed, and hope that it can be reinstated. It is important that, in the spirit of interparliamentary cooperation, there is time for a debate on the draft Rules - which does not have to be lengthy - where delegations are given the opportunity to express their views.



Mr Bill Cash MP,
Chairman, House of Commons,
European Scrutiny Committee



Lord Harrison,
Chairman, House of Lords, EU Sub-
Committee on Economic and Financial
Affairs

Proposed list of amendments - on behalf of the delegations from the UK House of Commons and House of Lords

Number	Amendment	Effect on Presidency Text	Explanation of amendment
1	Delete paragraph 4 of the preamble	<i>The Interparliamentary Conference on EFG shall be organised in the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency of the Council of the EU, undertaken by the national Parliament of the Member State holding the Presidency, hereinafter referred to as the Presidency Parliament, and the European Parliament.</i>	Linguistically, this paragraph seems disjointed. Equally, organisational responsibilities are already outlined elsewhere in the Rules of Procedure through simply importing the language of the agreement reached by Speakers. It is therefore proposed that the paragraph is simply deleted, although a drafting amendment may be another option.
2	In paragraph 1.2, line 3, delete "each Presidency Parliament" and insert "the national Parliament of the Member State holding the Presidency, hereinafter referred to as the Presidency Parliament,".	The Interparliamentary Conference on EFG replaces the meetings of the chairpersons of relevant committees organised in the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency of the Council by each Presidency Parliament the national Parliament of the Member State holding the Presidency, hereinafter referred to as the Presidency Parliament, and the European Parliamentary Week of the European Semester previously organised by the European Parliament	Consequential amendment following amendment 1 above.

		in the first semester of each year.	
3	In paragraph 3.4, line 3, replace from "of" to end with ", or the designated deputies, of the relevant committee(s) of the presiding Parliament(s). The relevant committee(s) will be determined by the presiding Parliament(s)."	At the beginning of each meeting, the presiding Parliament(s) shall set the timetable of the meeting and shall determine the order and the length of interventions. Meetings shall be chaired by the chairperson(s), or the designated deputies, of the relevant committee(s) of the presiding Parliament(s). The relevant committee(s) will be determined by the presiding Parliament(s).	Building on Article 4.1 of the Rules of Procedure and the framework set out by Speakers, this amendment makes clear that it is for the president Parliament(s) to determine the relevant committee(s). It also ensures that the language is not too prescriptive and allows for deputies to chair proceedings in cases where the chairperson is unavailable.
4	In paragraph 3.6, line 3, after "Parliament(s)."	Apart from the plenary meeting, side events, such as topical debates in smaller groups, working groups or break-out sessions, can be organised in the framework of the Interparliamentary Conference on EFG, including by Parliaments other than the presiding Parliament(s). Any delegate to the conference may attend and participate in such side events."	While the introduction of formal side events would have a positive impact on the effectiveness and functioning of the conference, it is important that all such events are in principle open to all delegates attending the conference, in keeping with the framework set out by Speakers.
5	Delete Article 3.7	Voting <i>In general the Interparliamentary Conference on EFG shall seek to take decisions, including on the adoption of the Conclusions, by consensus. If this is</i>	Consensus decision-making, as employed at the CFSP/CSDP conference, would be the more appropriate method, both in the context of any Conclusions of the

		<p><i>not possible, decisions shall be taken with a qualified majority of at least 3/4 of the votes cast. The majority of 3/4 of the votes cast must at the same time constitute at least half of all votes. Each Parliament has two votes. In the case of bicameral Parliaments, each Chamber is given one vote.</i></p>	<p>conference and future revisions to the Rule of Procedure. A consensual approach would also be in keeping with the spirit of the agreement reached by Speakers and reflect what we hope will be the IC-EFG's focus on debate and the exchange of information and best practice.</p>
6	<p>In paragraph 7.1, line 1, after "may" insert "by consensus"</p>	<p>The Interparliamentary Conference on EFG may by consensus adopt non-binding Conclusions on matters of economic and financial governance of the EU related to the agenda of the meeting.</p>	<p>See amendment 5.</p>
7	<p>In paragraph 8.2, line 2, after "decision" insert "by consensus"</p>	<p>Any amendments, which the delegations of national Parliaments or the European Parliament may propose to the Rules of Procedure, shall be subject to a decision by consensus by the Interparliamentary Conference on EFG, and must be in accordance with the framework set by the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments.</p>	<p>See amendment 5.</p>