



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

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Press Release

**The Regions of Europe present their own ideas concerning a  
European constitutional system**

Willi Stächele: "In the future, We, the Regions, will play a even greater role in discussions within Europe"

The Regions of Europe request a delimitation of competences based on the principle of subsidiarity within the European Union which does not affect the foundations of the autonomy of member States and Regions, declared Willi Stächele, Secretary of State, President of Committee A "Policies and Institutional Affairs" of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2001 in Berlin.

With the "Declaration on the future of the Union", the European Council in Nice opened the debate on the European Constitution, stressed Willi Stächele, who is also AER Vice-President. Representatives from over 40 European Regions explained, when speaking during the meeting, how the European constitutional system should meet the future demands of regional autonomy, he added.

At the centre of the Regions' calls also comes the nomination of an independent authority which would ensure that the respective competences were respected and that the Regions could sue directly. Finally, the Committee of the Regions should be strengthened as the representative of the Regions' interests, maintained Mr Stächele.

These are the main points for an AER position on the Intergovernmental Conference in 2004, formulated by Committee A "Policies and Institutional Affairs" on 8 and 9 February at the premises of the representation of Baden-Württemberg in Berlin. The German and Austrian Länder were present as well as the Spanish autonomous Communities, the Belgian Regions and linguistic Communities and Regions from all over Europe: Denmark, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Committee A presented other draft resolutions which must be adopted in March by the AER Bureau, added Willi Stächele. The Committee dealt with the European Commission's draft White paper on "new governance": the approach to the concept of governance, according to which new forms of cooperation between the various levels of activity and decision within the EU must be found, was well received.

The danger of networking decision-making was also stressed, as this would allow European bodies to be influential outside of their areas of competences. The concept of governance could be in contradiction with the objective of Nice, i.e. to strictly specify the competences within the EU. The representatives of the Regions in Berlin proposed, in this light, to reduce the complexity of the regulations.

*The AER is the political movement of the regions of Europe, committed since 1985 to the promotion of regionalism and the development of interregional cooperation.*

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