



Staten-Generaal

# STATEMENTS

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## **Statements of the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives of The Netherlands - Signing of the trio declaration**

President of the Senate, mrs. Ankie Broekers-Knol

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for joining us today at the signing of the declaration of cooperation between the houses of the Parliaments of the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta. Let me first of all thank the Italian Parliament for providing us, the incoming Trio Parliaments, with the opportunity to sign and present our Declaration of Cooperation. I am sure I am also speaking on behalf of my colleagues when I express our sincere gratitude for the facilities you have provided us with.

The signing of this document marks the start of a period of active cooperation between our three parliaments. Also on behalf of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, I would like to thank our colleagues from the parliaments of Slovakia and Malta for the smooth and pleasant cooperation in drafting this Declaration. I daresay there is a certain synergy between our four houses. For us this is a forebode of a valuable cooperation and a productive partnership between our three countries. This declaration is an important and valuable contribution to our cooperation and we are looking forward to working together during our Presidencies.

Incidentally, the subject of today's meeting - cooperation - is in line with the overarching goal of the parliamentary dimension of the Dutch EU-Presidency which will take place from January until July 2016. But because in the Netherlands the House of Representatives has the political primacy, I will now yield the floor to my colleague who will inform you all on that we have in store.

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mrs. Anouchka van Miltenburg.

Thank you. The overarching goal of the parliamentary dimension of our Presidency, as my colleague just mentioned, is 'working towards more parliamentary engagement in EU-decision-making'.

During our EU-presidency, we will host four predetermined inter-parliamentary conferences, being:

- the plenary meeting of the COSAC;
- the meeting of the COSAC-Chairpersons;
- the inter-parliamentary Conference on Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy;
- and the Conference under Article 13 of the Fiscal Compact.

Beside these predetermined conferences, we decided to organise two additional conferences. The first one focuses on the issue of human trafficking, the second one on energy including 'innovation' and 'circular economy'.

Furthermore, we may or may not host a 7<sup>th</sup> conference, depending on the need to respond to unforeseen political developments.

Of course, the European Parliament also plays an important role in the parliamentary dimension of the EU-Presidency. So it is of great importance that we work closely together, not only as national parliaments but also between national parliaments and the European Parliament.

As for the declaration: I am proud that our three countries are taking their first step on a journey that will end a little over two years from now. Hosting the parliamentary dimension of a EU-Presidency is an important task that requires a great deal of effort and commitment from the organising parties. Cooperation can help streamline this process and will ensure that all three parliamentary dimensions run smoothly.