



PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY: ANY LESSONS FOR REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS?

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents some lessons that can be drawn from the existing, but still limited, literature on parliamentary diplomacy. The latter is a recent and multi-faceted phenomenon. The paper then discusses briefly parliamentary diplomacy and conflicts, before applying it to regional parliaments (this last part is still a preliminary assessment but it shows that more academic work is required on the subject). Finally, there is a reference to the vast literature on the foreign policy of small states, simply because some regions are bigger than many small states. In the conclusion, the paper suggests the setting up of an academic network dealing with the international actions of regional parliaments in general, and their actual and potential parliamentary diplomacy role in particular.

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INTRODUCTION

Contrary to the existence of a well-developed literature on paradiplomacy², there is a rather small, limited, but hopefully emerging, literature on parliamentary diplomacy. As with paradiplomacy (‘parallel diplomacy’), the mere qualification of the term ‘diplomacy’ conveys the claim that there must be something strange, something different, something ‘weird’; something that *a priori* should not be there, should not exist. But (similarly to paradiplomacy) facts simply do not follow the expectations that past experience had created. In the past, the traditional international state system implied that *states* were the sole actors worth studying, and that there was also a dominance of the executive in foreign policy. A dominance that has been challenged by a variety of factors and actors, with regions and parliaments as two of the many such challenges (e.g. growth of economics, civil society, transnational actors à-la NGOs, multinational firms, terrorist organisations – of course, not all challenges are legitimate ones). Nowadays, parliamentary entities have emerged as international actors in their own right.

As a general introduction, it is important to point out that there is a wide range of parliamentary bodies that are engaged in ‘external activities’. What is therefore important is to consider/analyze the variety of parliamentary actors – not limited to those from the ‘regions’ as defined under the heading of the Conference – and point out the following facts:

² I will not enter this particular debate as so many other speakers are much better qualified than me. For a brief, general and interesting discussion see Kaiser (2003). In particular I would note his reference to the various forms of paradiplomacy (transborder regional paradiplomacy; transregional paradiplomacy; global paradiplomacy). He describes it as a ‘traditional’ approach to paradiplomacy and contrasts it to Hocking’s preference of the concept of ‘multi-layered diplomacy,’ in which there is a regional dimension (Kaiser 2003: 18). For the so-called ‘third level’ in EU governance, see: *inter alia.*, Bullmann (1996). For more details about the use of



- [a] there are parliamentary bodies that are specifically created to deal with international affairs, be they by their memberships (e.g. transnational, regional, interregional), their sectorial interests (e.g. environment, culture, economics, security), or their objectives (e.g. cooperation, conflict resolution);
- [b] there are activities (institutions, means) that parliamentary bodies develop in the international sphere as (1) a means to control the executive (because foreign policy is also public policy³); (2) the external dimension of internal affairs (i.e. domestic economic or social policy) have an international dimension.

In the first category [a], one could mention the EP, the OSCE PA, the EuroMed Parliamentary Assembly (note here that 'region' may mean *micro*-region or *macro*-region – see below), in the second sub-category the NAA, and in the third the IPU. Of course, these three categories can also overlap. In the second category [b], any parliament with some real political power will both try to control its respective executive branch of government, and will also deal with policies that contain an international dimension, especially in the era of globalization (see also below).

What follows consists of four parts:

1. A general discussion of the concept of parliamentary diplomacy (Part 1);
2. A discussion of parliamentary diplomacy and conflicts (Part 2);
3. A discussion of parliamentary diplomacy, conflicts and regional parliaments (Part 3);
4. A reference to the small states foreign policy literature (Part 4), because basically there are some micro regions that are bigger than small states.

terms to describe the external activities of *regions*, see also Aldecoa (2003), Brunet and Grau and Stavridis (2004: 135-139).

³ For a different view, see the so-called 'democratic incompatibility thesis'. This view has been totally rejected by International Democratic Theory. I do not enter this debate here.



PART 1:

Beyond parliamentary cooperation: the theory and practice of parliamentary diplomacy

1.1. GENERAL COMMENTS

There is a proliferation of national and transnational parliamentary bodies with an active role in international affairs. This important phenomenon represents an emerging form of public diplomacy, namely parliamentary diplomacy. As noted above, there are very few academic studies of the *problematique* of parliamentary diplomacy (for exceptions see Ghebali 1993, although he specifically dealt with the CSCE; Cutler 2001; Stavridis 2002b; see also Viola 2000 but she is more interested in the way political groupings in the European Parliament voted on foreign policy issues). The reason for showing interest in this phenomenon is double: to understand it for academic purposes, and to identify its main differences from traditional parliamentary cooperation in order to make the most of this new phenomenon. In the existing literature on parliamentary diplomacy there is a clear preference for policy-oriented studies. The objective is to make 'policy recommendations' (see Parliamentary Centre 2003: 7). There follow two general comments:

First, one should note that I am not using the term as it was used during the interwar period (the League of Nations) and in particular the role of Scandinavian parliaments role in those forums, nor in the sense of UN-inspired 'conference diplomacy' in more recent times. I am dealing with a concept that refers to a completely different world where democratisation, parliamentarisation, mass party politics, and technological advances (especially in telecommunications) have altered the way politics in general and international



politics in particular are conducted. The seminal shifts in 1989 and 2001 confirm that recent developments are of particular relevance to the emergence of such a concept (parliamentary diplomacy) because of the diffusion and proliferation of actors in the international system⁴. As Fernando Pedro Meinero reminds us, there are four traditional diplomacy functions: representation, observation and information gathering, negotiations, and protection of national interests (Meinero 2004)⁵. Without expanding here, it is important to note that new forms of diplomacy have emerged over recent decades, and in particular what has been labelled ‘economic diplomacy’, and ‘cultural diplomacy’. Given the importance of economic and cultural links in paradiplomacy (see below), I will only refer here very briefly to one of these two dimensions: Economic diplomacy (Bayne and Woolcock 2003) is also a relatively new phenomenon. Even if economic power has been a traditional instrument of International Relations/IR in general (see Keohane and Nye 1972, Gilpin 1981) and of Foreign Policy Analysis/FPA in particular for some time (see Hill 2003). I do not enter here the wider theoretical debate, nor do I address the question of its efficiency. Suffice it to say that by adding less traditional forms of diplomacy to those already available, economic diplomacy has often increased the role of Parliaments because the latter have traditionally had the ‘power of the purse’ (budgetary powers). Through economic and other financial means, parliaments have increased their international presence over recent years: This is particularly true of the European Parliament (Corbett 1989). As for cultural diplomacy, similarly one would need to discuss it in detail but sheer pressure of time does not allow me to do so at this stage. I am fully aware that this represents a serious shortcoming for the paper.

⁴ for the wider context, see Hill (2003). For a recent discussion of a practitioner’s views on the general implications of the ‘communications revolution on diplomacy’, see Jay (2006).

⁵ On traditional diplomacy, see Watson (1982), Hoffman (2003).



Second, the practice of parliamentary activities in the international system is far more developed than the theory. What also appears to be true is, as Mrs Squarcialupi of the Western European Union Assembly had argued in her 2000 Report that:

‘The need for contact among parliamentarians, which has given rise to a number of initiatives over the years, is now being addressed in a more structured and better organised manner in that *parliamentary cooperation has been superseded by “parliamentary diplomacy”*⁶.

An IPU-sponsored Report (Beetham 2006) distinguishes between three kinds of parliamentary cooperation at the international level: parliamentary diplomacy, inter-parliamentary cooperation, and technical parliamentary cooperation. Thus, parliamentary diplomacy is more than just parliamentary cooperation, partly because it is more institutionalized than (past) parliamentary cooperation. Parliamentarians are quite aware of the many possibilities that parliamentary diplomacy does and can offer. For instance a small number of practitioners have been addressing this question not only in conferences, as well as on the web, etc but also in publications. Senator Poncelet has argued that when French Senate officials asked their European counterparts about ‘parliamentary diplomacy’, none seemed to be familiar with it, except for Romania and Spain (Sénat 2001: 7). Perhaps this was simply due to the fact that this was back in 2000-2001, because now there are plenty of examples of the use of the term, including on so many parliaments’ websites.

In his 2004 book, Spanish Senator Gabriel Elorriaga offers a comprehensive, although perhaps not exhaustive, list of what parliamentary diplomacy entails. I agree that such a definition appears to be elusive, at least

⁶ point 3 of Report, emphasis added. Document A/1685 (6 June 2000) Report on *Parliamentary Diplomacy: the role of international assemblies*: www.assemblee-ueo.org/en/documents/sessions_ordinaires (accessed 22.10.01).



for the time being⁷. Yet, more important is the need to carry on with the relevant and required research work (I owe this point to Greek MP Sofia Kalantzakou, 19.07.02 interview, Athens). Elorriaga lists the following as examples of parliamentary diplomacy:

- the activities of multilateral international parliamentary organizations.
- bilateral parliamentary groups and in particular the so-called 'friendship groups'.
- international agreements between parliaments.
- the activities of parliamentary foreign affairs committees.
- plenary sessions dealing with foreign policy questions.
- parliamentary participation in elections monitoring processes ('a little known activity', p.77, also seen as part of wider democratization efforts, p.81).

Still in his book, Elorriaga also deals with related issues such as the importance of Protocol, the role of language, and the difference between bicameral and unicameral parliamentary systems. This question of bicameral and unicameral systems (see also Sénat 2000) is particularly important for the role of the regions in the international system. It is not an area that has been studied at length as far as I know.

1.2 SPECIFIC POINTS

To develop these two general points further I will use an earlier work (Stavridis 2002a) where I have identified a number of 'preliminary findings' that are worth repeating here. All those findings confirm that there are many realities of parliamentary diplomacy but that it is definitely not a myth.

⁷ For more on the difficulty of defining precisely international parliamentary institutions, see Cutler (2001).



(1) there are many **types** of parliamentary bodies engaged in parliamentary diplomacy. Just to list the various terms these bodies have adopted shows how varied these are: assemblies, associations, committees, councils, dialogues, unions, even parliaments. Their mere existence confirms that there is an institutionalization of parliamentary diplomacy. Their variety means however that more research is needed to try and make sense of what parliamentary diplomacy actually means.

(2) in parliamentary diplomacy, there are **formal and informal** means. In addition to the institutionalization of parliamentary bodies, there are also other looser forms of association, usually known as 'friendship groups'. They tend to deal mainly with the wider 'atmospherics' in international relations and appear to become more important if there is a crisis which involves two states (or groups of states). It is also possible to argue that friendship groups are set up because there is some common interest that transcends national boundaries, or more controversially, because there is a potential for a crisis situation to be therefore avoided later.

(3) in parliamentary diplomacy there is a need to distinguish between the role of **individuals** and that of **structured groups**, be they political groupings or other types of collective association (based on language, ideology, interest, history, etc). This distinction is particularly important for small parliaments, be they state parliaments or micro-regional ones, but also for the participation of parliamentarians from those parliaments in macro-regional ones or in national groupings. Limited human resources mean that there is less opportunity to influence international affairs.

(4) it is worth noting **how varied the respective memberships** of parliaments are, ranging from national parliaments representatives, to a mixture of national and transnational parliamentarians, to directly elected parliamentarians. All this



has an impact on what is expected of parliamentary diplomacy, especially on how legitimate its role is.

(5) the fifth point is that ***some such bodies are more closely related to traditional governmental forms of diplomacy than others***. Thus, from interviews with parliamentarians and parliamentary officials over the years (and in particular from small and smaller states like Greece and Cyprus), it appears that in the European context, the PACE (Council of Europe) is deemed to be more closely associated with traditional state-to-state diplomacy than are other fora. It raises the more general point of whether parliamentary diplomacy should be more closely related to governmental diplomacy. Is it (or should it be?) a supplement or an alternative to official foreign policy? One can think of arguments supporting either approach. But it seems to me that if parliamentary diplomacy represents only another channel for traditional diplomacy, it might lose some of its characteristics (as defined by empirical evidence to date) and therefore its attractiveness. In that respect, I would tend to disagree with Ahmet Tan, an MP from Istanbul in the Turkish Grand Assembly and one of the OSCE PA Vice-President's who has claimed in the past that:

'A better coordination between governmental diplomacy and parliamentary diplomacy is of paramount importance. The only way to take advantage of MPs leverages in coping with crises and conflicts is to maintain a permanent contact between the international and national governmental and parliamentary institutions, to keep each other informed, in order to achieve the optimum burden-sharing and to strictly harmonize action' (*Turkish Daily News-On Line*, www.turkishdailynews.com , 11 November 2001).

A similar argument was put forward by then French Senate President, Christian Poncelet when he argued that 'L'activité internationale des parlements complete l'action diplomatique des gouvernements.' He also



presented the role of parliamentary diplomacy as one of ‘exploratory nature’, i.e. to reach peoples and institutions that official channels cannot reach, at least not formally or openly (Poncelet mentioned the links that three French MPs and MEP General Morillon had had in 2000 with Commandant Massoud in Afghanistan). He also considered parliamentary diplomacy to be a diplomacy of ‘influence’, in the sense that through a variety of networks, parliamentarians may promote more subtly the national interests of their respective member states (Sénat 2001: 5).

On the contrary, an alternative view would argue that what is needed in parliamentary diplomacy is not another ‘parliamentary mouthpiece of official policies’, but rather ‘real dialogue among parliamentarians’. This raises a very important point here. Thus, as the IPU Report mentions, it is assumed that:

‘A diplomat is an envoy of the executive branch and represents the positions of the State. Members of parliament, however, are politicians who hold political beliefs which may or may not coincide with their respective country's official position on any given issue. This allows parliamentarians *a margin of flexibility* that is denied to the diplomat. They tend to bring a moral dimension to international politics that transcends narrow definitions of the national interest, particularly in their principled support for democracy and human rights. Time and again we have seen that this flexibility allows parliamentarians to debate more openly with their counterparts from other countries and to advance innovative solutions to what may seem to be intractable problems’ (Beetham 2006, emphasis added).

Of course, this is not necessarily a view held by other practitioners, especially diplomats, who often see parliamentary diplomacy as ‘un parasitage



dans les négociations⁸. Some parliamentarians agree that they also need to ‘respecter un devoir de réserve’, to use the words of Xavier de Villepin, then President of the French Senate’s Foreign Affairs, Defence and Armies Committee (Sénat 2001: 16).

(6) Thus, point six refers to parliaments as **‘moral tribunes’** on foreign affairs. There has been a surge in the number of public apologies for past mistakes (slavery, colonization, genocides), usually in parliamentary declarations or votes, but also a more active parliamentary involvement in difficult enquiries on issues dealing with ethnic cleansing or other past atrocities. Thus, both the French and the Dutch parliaments produced reports on the actions of their soldiers at the time of the massacres in Srebrenica in July 1995. *Le Monde* called the report ‘the conscience of the MPs’ (29 November 2001). As for the Dutch case, it brought down the whole government following the principle of collective Cabinet responsibility in the spring of 2002. A similar claim could be made with regard to the way the European Parliament reacted to the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s. It adopted a more ‘moralistic’ stance than the other EC/EU institutions throughout the tragic and violent events in the region (see Stavridis 1996). Yet another case would be that of the EP during the many bloody conflicts in Central America in the 1980s. Again, because of the way the two dominant political groupings (Socialists and Christian Democrats) interact in the Parliament in Strasbourg/Brussels, there existed a much clearer ‘human rights’ stance towards that part of the world than in any of the other European institutions (see Stavridis 1991: 248-257).

(7) The seventh point refers to the **level** of parliamentary diplomacy. Practice can involve only national (and subnational?) parliaments, or (macro-)regional parliamentary representatives, or a combination of both. The international dimension can therefore be better institutionalized in some cases than others.

⁸ Gérard Davet and Pascal Ceaux, ‘Le cas Julia’, *Le Monde*, 09.03.05: www.lemonde.fr.



But, the opposite may also be true in that national parliaments do possess overall more legitimacy than transnational parliaments, especially among their respective public opinions/electorates. This is particularly true if the non-national macroregional bodies are not directly elected, although the poor turn-outs to EP elections could also be interpreted in a more negative manner.⁹

(8) The eighth point is that there is a clear evidence of **‘communicating vessels’** among many international activities of national, transnational and other parliamentary bodies. This is often simply due to the fact that any given parliamentarian may be a member of more than one of these bodies. But it is also a result of concerted efforts by the respective parliamentarians and parliament secretariat officials involved to try and make the most of limited ‘numbers’, as well as of any given opportunity¹⁰. To a certain extent, this situation represents a division of labour at the international parliamentary level. This is particularly important for small parliaments because their human resources are often stretched to the limit. The proliferation of such parliamentary bodies also adds to such an overload. More research is needed on the differences that exist between the parliamentary diplomacy of small(er) and big(ger) parliaments.

(9) The ninth point relates to the **range of topics** discussed by these bodies. Some parliamentary bodies cover all international issues, whereas others are more specifically focused (human rights, defence). Others still are mainly interested in a specific aspect of politics known as ‘integration’. This is not the same as traditional diplomacy but such bodies also cover diplomatic issues

⁹ There is also the need to address the wider question of how popular the whole EU integration process is, especially in light of the recent French and Dutch referenda results in 2005. On the wider issue of the EU’s democratic deficit, see Stavridis and Verdun (2001).

¹⁰ For instance, during the 2002 Cyprus-EU JPC (Joint Parliamentary Committee) meeting in Nicosia, MEP Pere Esteve had been invited to attend in order to organize a meeting between Israeli and Palestinian parliamentarians on its fringe. Due to unforeseen circumstances (the ‘Bethlehem Church’ siege), the event did not take place, despite Esteve’s presence in Nicosia. But it shows how the communicating vessels principle might work in parliamentary diplomacy.



extensively, thus making a typology of these institutions all the more complex. The 'best' example in this case would be the European Parliament which possesses extensive international links which can be described as parliamentary diplomacy. Thus (see Zenon 2005), the EP adopts often a foreign policy line that is different from that of the other EU institutions (Commission, Council, Presidency), let alone those of individual member states. But at the same time one of its *raison d'être* is to try and develop a common European stance on international affairs. Other similar, though less developed, examples can be found in the Andean Parliament or the SADC Parliamentary Forum.

(10) The tenth point (which relates to point 8 above) draws from the IPU Report (Beetham 2006): 'There is a host of regional and subregional parliamentary assemblies. (...) One problem also noted is the **duplication and overlapping** between different regional parliamentary organisations' (emphasis added). Examples include the Andean Pact Parliament, the Latin American Parliament and the Inter-American Parliamentary Assembly on the one hand; on the other, the Consultative Council of the Maghreb Union, the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, the African Parliamentary Union, the Francophone Parliamentary Assembly and the Pan-African Parliament. This might be a particular problem for small and smaller states or organs (see below).

1.3 CRITICISMS

Finally, I need to mention some **criticisms** that have been leveled at parliamentary diplomacy over time. A common criticism is that parliamentary diplomacy, as many other international contacts, amount to political tourism where 'la langue de bois' dominates. Each delegation only reproduces the already known official lines and no much debate takes place (see Michel Vauzelle, then French MP and former *Garde des Sceaux*/Justice Minister in Sénat 2001: 18). This question is particularly relevant to whether or not parliamentary dialogue can take place without a real democratic context. I have



addressed this question elsewhere, within the specific context of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum/Assembly (2002a). But those issues are relevant here too. The key issue is whether or not one should engage in a parliamentary dialogue in the absence of democratic interlocutors? Some argue that 'on ne bâtit pas la démocratie avec le déni de démocratie'¹¹; others say that 'a condition for [its] success is that [any parliamentary forum] consists of elected representatives'¹². In other words, the real issue is whether the parliaments involved are 'de "vrais" parlements' (French Senator Jacques Legendre as cited in Sénat 2001: 55).

Another criticism is that the real problem of parliamentary diplomacy is that it works in a 'sporadic manner' (Prof Guy Carcassone, as cited in Sénat 2001: 33). There is no continuous effort as diplomacy is not the main realm of 'normal' parliamentary activity. This is a critique that is also found in a Canadian study. It is seen as an important obstacle to the strengthening of parliamentary diplomacy (Parliamentary Centre 2003). The real question is to find out whether it is an inherent weakness of the system.

Finally, there is the overall question mark about whether parliaments really are moral tribunes. In some cases, it is argued that they are not acting in the same *Realpolitik* way as governments and states executives. Thus, Flavia Zenon has expressed the following view about the reasons why the European Parliament and the EU states have divergent positions on many international issues:

'Council foreign policy tends to reflect the sensitivities of Heads of State and Governments to economic and commercial matters, such Realpolitik

¹¹ Belgian MP Patrick Moriau during the second EMP Parliamentary Forum held in Brussels, February 2001.

¹² Professor Fulvio Attinà (University of Catania) in comments made during the 15-22 September 2002 Workshop/Summer School on EU Enlargement and Euro-Mediterranean Relations, organised by the University of Crete and the Standing Group on the EU of the ECPR, Rethymno, Crete.



concerns are of less interest for the representatives of the European peoples sitting in the European Parliament' (Zenon 2005: no page given).

Hers is not an isolated view. Several (French, British, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Luxembourg, Cypriot, Catalan, European Parliament) parliamentarians have made this point in the past over the international role of parliaments (Stavridis 2002a; 2003; 2006a, 2006b). But recent analyses of mine of the EP stance on Cyprus and Turkey tend to point to a strong dose of *Realpolitik* instead, of course at the expense of morality, therefore contradicting clearly Zenon's claim in that particular instance (see Stavridis 2006a; 2006b; 2006c).

PART 2:

Parliamentary diplomacy and conflicts

As reported in a recent IPU study (Beetham 2006: 11), '[t]he cessation of regional conflict is the first imperative for regional parliamentary dialogue'. Here, regional refers to macro-regional and not to micro-regional, but its overall relevance to my paper remains the same. The IPU paper (Beetham 2006) also refers to other areas of parliamentary diplomacy, such as human rights, gender equality, development, or trade. But, it seems to me that from the IR perspective, international and national conflicts are particularly important. As for conflicts, it is worth reproducing what the Report's author identifies as important parliamentary initiatives to try and solve some of the many conflicts that take place in the world.

'In the IPU study *Parliamentary Involvement in International Affairs* (2005), examples of such initiatives are given from many regions of the world:



- *At the invitation of the IPU, the Speakers of the countries neighbouring Iraq met in Amman in May 2004 to discuss how to assist in supporting democracy in Iraq and in bringing stability to the region;*
- *The National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the Iranian Majlis has held talks with its counterparts in different parliaments on the crises in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine;*
- *The Speaker of the House of Representatives of Morocco hosted a meeting of the Speakers of Parliaments of the Mediterranean countries in the wake of the 2001 terrorist bombings to formulate a parliamentary response;*
- *The Speakers of the Parliaments of Cape Verde and Mozambique undertook a mission to Guinea-Bissau on behalf of the Speakers of the Parliaments of the Portuguese-speaking countries, and helped establish a political dialogue there in early 2003;*
- *The Speakers of the Parliaments of the three Caucasian States – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – met at the invitation of the President of the French Senate to discuss the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region;*
- *The Parliaments of Mali and Sierra Leone decided to institutionalize encounters between parliamentarians of the subregion (including parliamentarians from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea); three meetings have taken place so far;*
- *The Parliament of Pakistan notes that exchanges of delegations with the Parliament of India had the beneficial effect of reducing tension between the two countries;*

- *The Speakers of the Parliaments of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Mali recently met with the Speaker of the Parliament of Cote d'Ivoire – first in Cotonou and later in Abidjan – and helped to establish a political dialogue in that country;*
- *The Speakers of the Parliaments of the Member Countries of the Southern African Development Community have visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a part of efforts to promote peace and stability in the region;*
- *The British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body, which, in addition to representatives from the Parliaments of the United Kingdom and of Ireland, consists of representatives from the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Tynwald of the Isle of Man and the Assemblies of the States of Guernsey and Jersey, has provided support to the peace process in Northern Ireland;*
- *The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has recently developed initiatives addressing the conflicts in Chechnya, Cyprus and Nagorno-Karabak;*
- *The Italian Chamber of Deputies has a separate Committee for Parliamentary Diplomacy, which is "responsible for harmonizing the international activities of permanent committees and parliamentary delegations to international assemblies as well as the activities of bilateral cooperation groups and other organs of the Chamber."*

A Canadian study mentions the following international conflicts as areas of interest for Canadian parliamentary diplomacy: Vietnam, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Sudan, and North Korea (Parliamentary Centre 2003: 13-14). The study also



stresses the importance of specific MPs' personal interests in those issues, mainly due to their expertise but also very often because of the presence of foreign communities from the conflict areas in their respective constituencies.

Others, like French MP Yves Tavernier, have pointed out that: 'Dans les contextes difficiles, les parlementaires peuvent jouer un rôle et décrier une situation tendue'. He went on by mentioning examples in Iran, the Middle East and Cuba (Sénat 2001: 43). French Senator Guy Penne mentions the examples of Burundi over the liberation of imprisoned local MP Alpha Condé (Sénat 2001: 51).

On the EP and conflicts, the following findings can be drawn from Donatella Viola's extensive research on its role in the 1991 Gulf War and the Balkans conflict during the 1990s. Her conclusions in both cases bring depressing reading: on the Gulf, she concludes that 'the EP's stance carried little weight'; she continues that '[in] fact, the European Parliament "cut a sorry figure" over the Gulf War' (Viola 2000: 71). As for the conflict in former Yugoslavia, her assessment is as damning: 'public declamation appeared to be the only instrument at the disposal of Parliament: an open admission that it was powerless to determine or influence a concrete outcome' (Viola 2000: 177).¹³

The above list of examples confirms the primary role in conflict-resolution that parliamentary bodies *could* engage in. In fact, they should do so for all the reasons mentioned above, especially the relative flexibility that parliamentarians enjoy (over diplomats) and the claim that parliaments act as moral tribunes on foreign affairs.

PART 3:



Parliamentary diplomacy, conflicts and regional parliaments

Which international conflicts have attracted the attention of which (micro-)regional parliaments? This exercise would produce a first draft of an ELENCO (list, catalogue) that will eventually produce a comprehensive list of what, why, and how: which conflicts, what reasons, which actors? Further analysis will require for instance a study of the way the various political groups, parties or coalitions have behaved over those issues (in particular, regional groups that are not present in the central parliament could be of particular interest). An analysis of the role of individuals could also be carried out (I think in particular of Jordi Pujol as the longest-serving leader of the Catalan executive and how this affected the international role of the *Parlament de Catalunya*. The case of Chávez in Andalusia would also be relevant). There is a clear dominance of the Mediterranean¹⁴ in this dimension but one should not underestimate other regions.

A priori it seems that two conflicts are prominent on the agenda of Spain's regional parliaments: the Western Sahara and the Palestine issue. I have used four phases to identify this first draft ELENCO. First, what are the general international interests of a given regional parliament? Second, which conflicts have topped its agenda? Third, what are the particular interests that can be identified from debates, resolutions, and other documents on those conflicts? Fourth, from interest to action, what have been the actions that those parliaments have engaged in vis-à-vis those conflicts in the world? What follows draws from a number of publications I have read (Lecours 2002; Arrufat 2005; Beetham 2006), as well as several recent press clippings. It represents still the result of only *very basic preliminary* research. I have yet to carry out the really

¹³ Similar conclusions could also be drawn from a cursory analysis of the EP's stance on the 2003 Iraq war.

¹⁴ I do not enter the problems that the term 'Mediterranean' brings itself: see Willa (1999)



important methodological and comparative work (i.e. suggestions are welcomed!).

3.1. most active regions and regional parliaments:

On the question of the more active regions in international affairs, André Lecours mentions Quebec, Flanders, Wallonia, Catalonia, the Basque Country (2002: 4) and therefore, Catalonia and the Basque Country appear like strong candidates for the Spanish case. Lecours mentions that Flanders' paradiplomacy has focused 'on the Netherlands, Surinam and South Africa where there exists a cultural kinship' (2002: 6). But it has also 'signed cooperation agreements with Canada, the United States, South Africa, Russia and Japan' (2002: 9).

As for Wallonia (Lecours 2002: 9), the list is even longer:

'Western Europe (France, the Netherlands, Italy, Austria); Central and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Russia); North America (Québec); Latin America (Bolivia, Chile, Haiti, Cuba); Maghreb (Morocco, Tunisia); Sub-saharian Africa (Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea, South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo); the Middle East (Lebanon and the Palestinian authority); and Asia (Vietnam).'

To which, he also adds the EU institutions and other regional organizations, and, in particular UN agencies and *La Francophonie* (2002: 9-10). But on the whole, for Lecours, 'Québec arguably exhibits the most developed paradiplomacy of any regional government' (2002: 12).



In Spain, Freres and Sanz mention 'the Basque country, Catalonia and Galicia', as well as 'Andalusia (the largest and also one of the poorest [region] in Spain) and Madrid (the richest and one of the most internationally active regions)' as important internationally speaking vis-à-vis Latin America (Freres and Sanz 2002: 8).

Francisco Aldecoa (2003) also mentions Quebec but he also differentiates between 'paradiplomacy' and 'protodiplomacy'. The latter refers to the objective of achieving independence and therefore replacing the diplomacy of the current state within which that entity is trying to develop its external relations (Quebec and Canada). Aldecoa makes it quite clear that, especially during the years of a pro-independence nationalist government in Quebec, we are talking of protodiplomacy and not of paradiplomacy (Aldecoa 2003: 259). He also considers Europe (i.e. the EU) to be one of the most developed (macro-)regions in the world where (micro-)regions are active internationally. The European integration process is in his view the main reason for such a situation. He does refer to other parts of the world where there is paradiplomacy, be it in Asia-Pacific, Australia or Latin America (and especially the federal states of Argentina and Brazil). He refers to Mexico as a special case for being a federation on the one hand but for being both Latin American and North American on the other. Aldecoa also stresses that there is no much of this kind of diplomacy in Africa. He also argues that part of the Indian-Pakistani conflict results from the absence of paradiplomacy (Aldecoa 2003: 260-261). As for the causes of paradiplomacy, he agrees that they mainly have to do with culture, migration, economic links and development aid (2003: 266).¹⁵

Still for Spain, Catalonia has been very active, especially in Europe and the Mediterranean. In terms of the international role of the Catalan Parliament



this is also the case as confirmed by a recent study to which the current author has participated (Brunet and Grau and Stavridis 2004). Although one of the main conclusions is that, so far, the *Parlament* has favoured the EU and also that even its Mediterranean Policy has been channelled through European means. For Catalonia, Morocco represents the key Mediterranean partner. In that respect Pujol has argued that Catalonia's interest is even older than that of Spain (Brunet and Grau and Stavridis 2004: 145)

For the Valencian Region (*Comunidad Valenciana*), Arrufat (2005) notes that Morocco is its first commercial partner in the Mediterranean, and Turkey, its second (there is no reference to the global dimension and that is a clear minus in his analysis although he does say that the Mediterranean represents 5.2% of total exports and 6.9% of total imports). He also notes that since the beginning of Turkey's accession negotiations, there has been a 80% increase in Valencian products exports to Turkey¹⁶. In terms of development aid cooperation, the priorities in the North Africa and the Middle East are as follows: Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, Jordan, the Saharai people, and the Palestinian territories. Arrufat also suggests that geographical proximity, geo-strategic interests (security, immigration) should be the guiding criteria for a Valencian Community external strategy. In the short term he lists Morocco, Algeria, Turkey and Tunisia as the main beneficiaries of such a policy. In the longer term, he claims that the list order should be Turkey, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

¹⁵ Aldecoa also makes a reference (p. 261) to the 'Islamic Republic of Sahara' that remains unclear to me.

¹⁶ This increase in exports towards Turkey is not specific to Spain but represents a European-wide phenomenon. It is important to note that there might be a slowdown in Turkey's rapid growth in economic and financial relations with EU states, following recent problems with the EU accession criteria and its continued non-recognition of Cyprus. See Fernando Cano, 'Manteniendo el tipo-La economía turca se resiente a pesar de su elevado crecimiento', *El País*,



The above has implications as to the reasons why regional actors become involved in international disputes. Further work is of course required on it.

3.2. Which conflicts?:

In the Catalan Parliament, judging from hearings that took place in the previous legislature (to the one that ended with the October 2006 early elections), the Western Sahara, the Kurds and Iraq were high on the agenda. In the *Comisión Permanente de Legislatura sobre la Unión Europea y de Actuaciones Exteriores, Cooperación y Solidaridad*, the following individuals appeared: the representative of the Polisario Front in Catalonia, a high-level representative of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, and the ex-coordinator of the UN humanitarian aid programme in Iraq (Brunet and Grau and Stavridis 2004: 148). There were several resolutions on the Western Sahara, Kurdistan, the Middle East, and the Western Balkans (Brunet, Grau, Stavridis 2004: 151). As for institutional declarations, they included the 1991 Gulf War, the Western Sahara, the Bosnia War, and the Kosovo conflict. As for individuals, some attention was given to Ocalan and to a female Egyptian writer, Nawal al Sadawi (Brunet and Grau and Stavridis 2004: 151). Again, these findings should be put within their wider context in a more general geographically-based analysis. That particular article was interested in the Mediterranean (as noted above, in spite of the many problems of definition about the term 'Mediterranean' itself).

In Andalusia, I will mention that Morocco's authorities prevented the visit of a 2005 delegation to the Saharai city of El Aaiun. That delegation included regional Andalusian MPs (*El País*, 27.06.05). The Western Sahara issue appears to be a dominant one in Andalusia. For

09.07.06. On the slowdown see also 'L' économie turque est fragilisé par l' année noire que vit



instance, Richard Gillespie refers to the mock referendum organized in September 2001 at the behest of pro-Saharawi Spanish NGOs. It is an important example for this paper because 'the event was held in the regional parliament building' (Gillespie 2006: 126). This event also raises the wider issue of what happens in cases where there are divergent agendas between the central government and certain regional governments (Gillespie 2006: 116). It is important to bear in mind this possible tension between national and sub-national priorities. Parliaments are obviously the forums where such discrepancies would materialize.

Still with Andalusia, I will only refer to a recent article in the Spanish press about the Basque Regional Parliament having just 'apologized' to the Andalusian Regional Parliament about the Andalusian victims of terrorism. The Basque Parliament *rapporteur*, Iñigo Urkullu, offered a self-critique and claimed that those victims had been forgotten by the relevant public authorities. But he insisted he could offer an apology for terrorist acts that his party (PNV) had not carried out (*El País*, 14.07.06). I do not discuss the details of this situation, partly because it refers to an internal Spanish case. I only use it as an illustration of the 'moral tribune' argument that is made in the parliamentary diplomacy practice and theory. It seems that parliaments are better fora for asking for forgiveness (see also parliamentary resolutions condemning past colonialism or slavery in the US Congress or the French Parliament as noted above).

In the Canary Islands, as José-Ignacio Navarro (2003) argues, at least in the case of the Canary Islands Regional Parliament, there is a 'proper external action', or what he clearly calls later an 'autonomous Canary Islands

le tourisme', *Le Monde*, 03/04.09.06.



parliamentary diplomacy' (2003: 214). He says that out of 17 regional parliaments, only 9 have a committee on European and International Affairs, and three of them (Canary Islands¹⁷, La Rioja, and the Basque Country) use the term 'international' or 'external'. This point must be double-checked and more importantly updated with the adoption of new 'Statutes' throughout Spain in the past few months. In terms of what constitutes paradiplomacy, Navarro lists international declarations, visits abroad, foreign visitors to the Parliament's seat, and a 'actividad de impulso a la acción exterior' of the regional government (Navarro 2003: 218-219). The last of them is particularly interesting as it would mean that in a regional parliament, the parliamentary accountability function might be less important in that particular field than its intent to guide foreign policy (external relations). Navarro (2003: 220) also claims that 'contrary to other regional parliaments', there is no mechanism in the Canary Islands case for making sure that parliamentary resolutions have been fulfilled. I wonder if this is so unique a situation. How often do other regional parliaments do that? Or for that matter other parliaments (I am particularly thinking of the thousands of EP resolutions)?

Navarro also claims that overall EU policies and priorities far outweigh international affairs *per se*. This is not only due to the impact of EU membership but also to the regionalization effect that the EU is strengthening¹⁸. As for conflicts, in his richly documented empirical data, it is possible to identify the Western Sahara, the Middle East, Latin America (especially Central America, Cuba and Venezuela), and the Balkans as of particular interest. The Western Sahara stems directly from its geographic proximity and that of Venezuela because of the presence of many Canary Islands migrants. There is no doubt

¹⁷ Although he claims it is not working properly (Navarro 2003: 208).

¹⁸ I always maintained that the only realistic way of understanding the European integration process is to visualize it as both a trend towards supranationalism and one towards decentralization.



that more work is needed on this valuable raw data. Finally, one needs to add that if we follow Navarro then Aldecoa's claim that 'classical diplomacy and defence' belong to the state¹⁹ (2003: 255) is simply not *totally* correct. More research is needed, and in particular more comparative research should be carried out.

3.3. Why? What are the reasons?

What are the reasons for regions' international involvement? What follows reviews very briefly a number of reasons put forward in the existing literature.

André Lecours thinks that it has to do mainly with 'nationalism': 'Nationalism is the single most important variable conditioning paradiplomacy' (2002: 7). Here we need to refer back to the distinction between protodiplomacy and paradiplomacy (Aldecoa 2003). How relevant this analysis is for conflicts remains at this stage an open question? Is the 'moral tribune thesis' more relevant? Is it simply 'constituency politics', or even the existence of legal or illegal migration?

Christian Freres and Antonio Sanz (2002: 20) list the following motivations for the international actions of the Spanish regions: search for domestic and international legitimacy, ties with emigration, economic reasons (search for markets), but also geographic proximity (in the case of Andalusia as the so-called 'frontier' with North Africa). To those reasons, one could add immigration in recent years where there has been an acute increase with now over 10% of the Spanish population being migrants mainly from North Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and China.

¹⁹ 'en ningún caso al alcance de las regiones'.



Freres and Sanz and mention 'strong historical, cultural and even family links' in their study of Spanish regions and Latin America (Freres and Sanz 2002: 6). They also point out that Andalusia 'has not shown a nationalist tendency' yet (Freres and Sanz 2002: 18). Equally, they stress the importance of migrants in order to explain the international role of some Spanish regions in Latin America (especially Galicia and the Basque Country; 'Manuel Fraga has made numerous trips to countries with a large Galician population, such as Argentina').

It is however important to note that in their study Freres and Sanz do not mention regional parliaments as actors in the international relations of the regions (Freres and Sanz 2002: 21-25). But they tend to agree with the general view that 'the European Union is the main foreign policy priority for the autonomous communities' (Freres and Sanz 2002: 45). This is important for our Conference as it fits well with its multi-level dimension. Perhaps one important conclusion may be that as with EU policy, which is no longer considered to be foreign policy as such, it would be equally important to clarify our concepts and differentiate between the regions' activities within the EU context from those links or policies with the rest of the world.

It is also important to note at this stage that civil society actors are also relevant to this particular dimension. I will refer to other contributions to the Conference but also to the important link between parliaments and civil societies (for such an approach in the Euro-Mediterranean context, see Pace and Stavridis and Xenakis 2004).

3.4. from interest to action



But what is actually being done in that particular respect? In other words, one needs to assess not only the rhetoric but also the practice. There is plenty of academic research to carry out in that respect. This sub-section is simply not developed *at all* and needs obviously further work in the future.

PART 4:

And ... what about small states and big micro-regions?

It is important to spend some time on small states and big micro-regions. On the one hand, there are micro-regions and macro-regions. On the other, there are big states and small states. In this paper, because of the focus of the Conference I have focused on micro-regions. But one should not forget that we are also dealing with multi-level governance (i.e. the relationship between a micro-region and a macro-region, for instance the Committee of the Regions within the EU set up). What matters here is to point out that some micro-regions are (much) bigger than many existing states (within or without the EU). Therefore, *a priori* the parliamentary diplomacy of a (micro) regional parliament may be more important than the parliamentary diplomacy of a 'small state' (let alone that of a parliament of a 'micro-state', i.e. states with less than 1 million inhabitants – see below). This does not have to do necessarily with the diplomatic skills of any particular regional parliament but simply because of the relative power of that region (by 'power', I mean all its many dimensions: political, economic, demographic, etc.).

Thus, the relative power of a given micro-region may explain better why a given regional parliament has more influence or power than a given small(er) state. This may sound obvious. But, theoretically speaking at least (in the positive sense of the word 'theory'), it means that we need to bring in a rather well-developed academic literature in IR/FP: that on the foreign policy of 'small

states'. I will not expand much on this subject here. Suffice it to say that this literature has mainly dealt with post-decolonization and Commonwealth examples²⁰. More recently, there is interest in small states within the EU, especially since its latest enlargement in 2004 (where out of ten new members, only Poland is a big state and two are micro states, Cyprus and Malta). Thus, Baldur Thorhallson (2006), not surprisingly of the *Centre for Small States Studies* in Reykjavik, has attempted to present a new conceptual framework on the implications of the size of states in the Union. To the four traditional variables (population, territory, GDP, military capacity) used in IR/FPA (international relations, foreign policy analysis), he has added new ones. To 'population, territory, GDP and military capacity', he has combined new dimensions and come up with the following six categories:

- fixed size;
- sovereignty size;
- political size;
- economic size;
- perceptual size;
- preference size.²¹

All these categories need further discussion but such a debate falls beyond the scope of this paper. It only shows that it is difficult to come up with 'neat definitions'. One obvious remark is that it is questionable that a state has a fixed size if defined as 'population and territory' at the time of such massive

²⁰ For a specific case study of the foreign policy of a small state in a conflictual situation (Cyprus), see *inter alia*, Nugent (2003; 2006: 61).

²¹ Thorhallsson refers to the other five categories as follows: *sovereignty size* deals with 'whether the state can maintain effective sovereignty on its territory; its ability to maintain a minimum state structure and presence at the international level'; as for *political size*, it means 'military and administrative capabilities and the degree of domestic cohesion, combined with the degree to which the state maintains an external united front'; *perceptual size* refers to 'how domestic and external actors regard the state'; *preference size* means 'ambitions and prioritizations of the governing elite and its ideas about the international system'. *Economic size*



migratory fluxes throughout the world (I seem to recall Spain had about 39 million inhabitants and recently the figure has grown to over 44 million!)²². He also concludes that:

The conceptual framework emphasizes the importance of domestic and international actors' assessments of a state's action competence and vulnerability, internally and externally. Domestic actors' notions of the size of a state and its internal and external capacity shape the behaviour of the state' (Thorhallson 2006: 27).

In short, size does matter and if it does so for states, then there is *a priori* nothing wrong in extending this finding to regions. In addition to its general findings (and also it confirming that comparative studies do add a lot to our understanding of world politics), what the 'FP small states' literature does is to tell those of us who work on the international relations of parliaments (regional or not) that there is a developed literature on the international relations of the regions, and an under-developed literature on the international relations of parliamentary bodies. But, when dealing with 'parliamentary para-diplomacy' (assuming that such a term exists), there is a third, rather vast, existing literature on the foreign policy of small states that could and should also be explored.

Conclusions ... and a concrete proposal

refers to 'GDP, market size and development success', and *fixed sized*, as already noted to 'population and territory' (2006: 8).

²² In this particular special issue, the numbers for defining a 'small state' vary from 1.5 to 20 million. It is important to bear in mind that in the EU the demographic weight of a state is gaining importance in its decision-making process. See also the debate during the European Convention and the Constitutional Treaty over the relative importance of small and big states (especially a debate over Giscard d'Estaing's comments denying such an importance). See also Chrysochoou and Tsinisizelis and Stavridis and Ifantis (2003: 154-156).



In general terms, it is important to assess, ten years on, the validity of Charlie Jeffery's claim that 'little evidence would seem to exist for a North American-style paradiplomacy within the EU' (1996: 214). This is a general conclusion that I will leave for the Conference as a whole to answer. From my own perspective of parliamentary paradiplomacy, there seems to be nowadays plenty of evidence to contradict Jeffery's claim (although I would gladly accept that I am not that familiar with 'North-American style paradiplomacy').

Suffice it to say that parliamentary diplomacy is a fact of life nowadays. There are many realities and further research is needed. One of the lessons that parliamentary diplomacy can 'teach' regional governments is simply that International Relations today is no longer the exclusive prerogative of the Executive. In a globalized world there are opportunities for many actors, including regions and their respective parliaments. There is also a clear element of democratization in such a development that should not be missed.

Here perhaps it is possible to argue that new forms of diplomacy have emerged over the years but also that paradiplomacy has strengthened them because it remains distinct from more traditional diplomacy. Economic and Cultural diplomacies appear to top the list. It would be interesting to find out if traditional state diplomacy is reacting to paradiplomacy in economic and cultural affairs. The same should be looked at for the international relations of the regional parliaments. In particular, over cultural (language) diplomacy. I am particularly thinking of the growing importance of public diplomacy (culture being included in it), now that there seems to be a big clash, if not of civilizations, at least of lifestyles. The USA is greatly expanding its public diplomacy following disastrous opinion polls about its 'image' in third countries. More positively, Spain has now engaged in a massive cultural diplomacy effort



in China with the opening of a *Instituto Cervantes* in Beijing (a recent article I saw mentioned that there are 6000 languages in the world today).

A final two comments on possible ‘lessons’ for regional parliaments: one is about whether or not we should think more and more about parliamentary diplomacy of regional parliaments (micro ones) only for relations outside the EU framework. All of us who are familiar with EU politics and policies know that the European context is no longer IR per se but something new, dubbed conveniently ‘European *intermestic* relations’ (after the domestication of FP has led to the use of the term *intermestic* – ‘inter’national + do’mestic’ - in FPA since the 1970s). If this is so, it would be logical to expect different parliamentary relations between regional parliaments, and especially those of EU member states, within the EU context, and outside it. I only mention this point here briefly but it should be taken into consideration. The other final comment has to do with conflict resolution. As unfortunately there are more and more conflicts in the world (be they of an internal type or of an external type), any additional means that can help try and solve them should be welcome. Therefore, *a priori*, regional parliaments should be used if possible in such a search for conflict resolutions.

Now let me turn to the concrete proposal I would like to present here. Poncelet (Sénat 2001: 8) mentions the March 2000 Paris meeting of the *Forum des Sénats du Monde*²³. He also adds the first meeting in February 2001 of the African and Arab World Senates organized at the initiative of the Mauritius Senate President in Nouakchoot (where Poncelet participated), and his subsequent initiative to set up an *Association des Sénats d’Europe* (Sénat 2001: 9). No doubt more time and attention should be spent on these initiatives but it clearly represents an important parliamentary side to paradiplomacy.

²³ See also Sénat (2000).



If I link the above to the CRPM Secretary General proposal (to be presented in the Conference to set up a global network of world regions, I would like to return to a proposal I made last year during the FÒRUM UNIVERSITARI DE LA MEDITERRÀNIA that was held in Tarragona (Stavridis 2005) of setting up *an academic monitoring network on international parliamentary activities in general, and parliamentary diplomacy in particular*. I would add another dimension here considering the JORNADAS' overall topic: **a network of regional universities** to monitor the international parliamentary activities of the regions. Beyond the mere benefit of linking academics to practitioners (and as we all know, generally-speaking, the parliamentary branch of government, at whatever level, has always been more open to contacts with academics than its executive part), such a network could act both as a processor of the relevant work on parliamentary diplomacy, and on the international role of the regions of existing generic networks²⁴ or of sectorial ones²⁵. Thus, some universities could concentrate on one of the following list, which is by no means exclusive nor necessarily complete:

- conflict resolution
- election monitoring
- cultural dialogue
- democracy and human rights
- migration
- economic and social matters.

²⁴ such as Euromesco or Femise in the Euro-Mediterranean area, respectively at: www.euromesco.net and www.femise.org.

²⁵ on immigration, see the Odysseus Academic Network based in ULB Brussels, or the CARIM/Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration exclusively dealing with the EuroMed based at the EUI in Florence, respectively www.ulb.ac.be/assoc/odysseus and www.carim.org.



A key element would also be to include one university in more than one of these issue-area networks, thus facilitating links across sectors as much as across nationalities and disciplines. The use of modern technology and in particular the internet should be encouraged²⁶. Here, allow me to mention the *Compostela Group*, not only because it is collaborating in the organization of this event, but also because it already possess an important network, so perhaps instead of creating a new network, my proposal is more to *adapt* such a group within it. The originality of this new network would also be to set up links between academics and parliamentary practitioners, as well as other civil society actors, in a structured manner. It would also reflect academia reacting to emerging new forms of diplomacy. Thus, it would link theory to practice, and practice could in turn learn from theory.

In the current presentation I have only been able to sketch out some possible pathways for future research. What remains beyond doubt is the need to research further this particular dimension of paradiplomacy. Today's event is an example of what needs to be done. I very much hope this paper brings a small contribution to the Conference's overall, much bigger, contribution to the academic study of the concept.

Zaragoza, 5 de octubre de 2006.

²⁶ See EarthAction's e-Parliament – www.earthaction.org – which claims 'to link up to 25000 democratically elected legislators ... representing 60% of humanity' (as accessed 3.03.02), or WILL/Women in Legislation League, itself part of PGA/Parliamentarians for Global Action – www.pgaction.org.



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