



**European Association of former Parliamentarians  
of the member states of the Council of Europe**

**European charter of former parliamentarians**

**Draft  
presented by Mr Jacques CHAUMONT (France), rapporteur**

**Preamble**

The members of the European Association of former Parliamentarians of the member states of the Council of Europe (FP-AP) have agreed to adopt the text below entitled 'European charter of former parliamentarians'. This Charter aims at laying down all the principles and aims guiding and inspiring the work by the FP-AP and recalls the methods recommended to assure its influence and impact.

**TITLE I: PRINCIPLES**

1. The joint values, defined in the FP-AP Rome Declaration of 30 November 2002, bring together the former parliamentarians: dignity of the human person, gender equality, freedom and responsibility, democracy and the rule of law, solidarity and social justice, the protection of nature, tolerance, respect for minorities and cultural diversities, the fight against trafficking in human beings, and peace and co-operation among peoples, **the fight against the ongoing process of concentration of wealth through "tax havens", thus distorting fair competition to the detriment of the poorest, the protection of human and civil rights and the protection of the freedom of Press and Media, including the right of expression and that of intellectual, artistic, scientific and economic creations.**
2. On top of these fundamental values, new values will be added which result from the formidable challenges facing Europe and the world: regulation of international financial flows, combating of climate warming, poverty, pandemics, clandestine immigration, terrorism **as well as state detailed account and transparency** are all essential issues requiring new behaviours and appropriate policies, **the fight against irresponsible speculation endangering the economic and social balance worldwide and increasing the risk of political instability.**
3. The political system underpinning European civilisation is that of pluralistic and participatory parliamentary democracy. It is based on a legislature elected by universal suffrage, an executive accountable to parliament and on an independent judiciary. It is also based on the freedom of the media. Compliance with these criteria is a prerequisite to join the FP-AP.

**TITLE II: AIMS**

4. **Former parliamentarians elected by popular vote, participating in a European Association, have set themselves the aims of making their experience available for European construction as well**

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as the operation of all Institutions contributing to it. They also aim at a better understanding by public opinion. In that aspect is essential that the status of former parliamentarians should be recognized not only by National Parliaments but also by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe as well.

5. The strengthening of European construction is the priority goal of former European parliamentarians. Following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union must make the most of this Treaty with a view to more stable and effective institutions while complying with the subsidiarity principle which leaves a **lot of ground** for State responsibilities. The strengthening of the powers of the European parliament must be compensated by a balanced development of the new powers given to national parliaments by the Lisbon Treaty in the Community decision-making process. **First priority must be given to the defence of all European Union's frontiers protecting also the security of European citizens.**
6. Civil society is one of the essential components of European construction. Citizens must be brought to a greater extent into the drafting of collective projects at the local, regional, national and European levels. All initiatives **which reduce** the gap between European governance and the only too often negative perception European citizens have of it, **should be encouraged**. It is in these initiatives that the FP-AP intends to participate as they **are expected to contribute in** improving participation rates in European elections.
7. In all the member states of the Council of Europe and the European Union, there is a profound need for European policy skills. It cannot be met solely by national policies and official communication services. Former parliamentarians have a decisive role to play in this field, as well as in accompanying the new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty on the popular initiative. With the same in mind, former parliamentarians can provide their experience, especially within the framework of election observation missions in Europe.

Title III:                   METHODS

8. The FP-AP has a website to promote its activities, where each member association can upload information and comments on its projects and on current European events.
9. Former parliamentarians are paying great attention to the development of a partnership with the major European institutions. With this in mind, a memorandum of understanding and cooperation **has been** signed with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 7 September 2009. Under this agreement, FP-AP colloquy final declarations are distributed at the Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg. The principle of an exchange of information is moreover now established within the framework of websites.
10. To carry out their work, former parliamentarians have independent national associations which are tasked with organising events, especially in liaison with NGOs, **and other associations, such as Universities etc.**
11. The FP-AP organises every two years a colloquy on a political and societal topic.
12. The former European parliamentarians wish to broaden their activities by **welcoming** new members, especially **from** countries **of** central and eastern Europe and also from all the regions of Europe (Sweden, Andorra, for instance). **In order to facilitate the membership of these new members, interested parties are given observer status for two years.**
13. The FP-AP does not limit its action to the European sphere. It intends to develop contacts with former parliamentarians on other continents, whether North America, Latin America, Africa or Asia. **Any proposal for co-operation coming from these countries will also be considered by the**

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FP-AP, also taking into account possible financial repercussions.

#### Title IV REFERENCE TEXTS

14. The FP-AP bases its action on the following reference texts:

- FP-AP texts
  - a) Strasbourg Appeal of 10 November 2000, concluding the colloquy on the strengthening of the parliamentary dimension of the European institutions
  - b) Rome Declaration of 30 November 2002 on European Union values
  - c) Berlin Declaration of 16 October 2004 on European integration in the face of global challenges
  - d) Limassol Declaration of 10 November 2006 on Europe, the Mediterranean and the fight against international terrorism
  - e) Athens Declaration of 18 October 2008 on representative and participatory democracy
  
- Council of Europe and European Union texts
  - European convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms - Council of Europe
  - Revised social charter of the Council of Europe
  - Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union
  - Community charter of the social rights of workers

#### **Final provisions**

This charter, of which the first signatory shall be the president of the FP-AP, is open for signature by the presidents of each member association. The charter, of an evolving nature, can be amended by the general assembly of the association on proposal by the Bureau before which any amendment to this text can be brought by each member association.