



Bilbao, 21 March 2011

Conclusions

5th Subsidiarity Conference

We, the participants of the 5th Subsidiarity Conference organised by the Committee of the Regions and the Regional Government and Parliament of the Basque Country in Bilbao on 21 March 2011, while the Lisbon Treaty has been enforced for more than one year ,

- **recall** that the Treaty has reinforced the subsidiarity principle and that the principle's new definition contains explicitly the local and regional dimensions;
- **stress** therefore our joint commitment to create and spread a common culture of subsidiarity by promoting the application of the subsidiarity principle at all levels of governance in the European Union, its Member States and regions and municipalities;
- **support** the role of the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network as a pool of expertise and forum of exchange on subsidiarity issues contributing to such a common culture of subsidiarity;
- **underline** the importance of ensuring compliance with the subsidiarity principle as soon as possible in the EU decision making process, starting in the pre-legislative phase notably by the consultation of local and regional authorities, inter alia through the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network;
- **believe** that the territorial impact of EU initiatives shall be assessed systematically in all those cases where the competencies of local and regional authorities could be affected;
- **believe** that the Early Warning System (EWS) put in place by the Lisbon Treaty represents an excellent opportunity to bring the EU closer to the citizens and that parliaments and governments from regions with legislative powers are called to enhance their cooperation in subsidiarity monitoring in this framework with the support of CALRE and REGLEG;
- **believe** that the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network and its future database REGPEX can help all institutions concerned to better monitor the respect of the subsidiarity principle and respond to the opportunities and responsibilities derived from the EWS;
- **underline** our community of values and our commitment to enhancing effective multi-level governance by placing the interests of citizens at the heart of EU action and by recognising the crucial role of civil society organisations in this context;
- **are convinced** that the changes brought by the Lisbon Treaty in terms of subsidiarity strengthen democratic legitimacy in the EU, in the spirit of truly effective multi-level governance and in the interest of better regulation;
- **are therefore committed** to work towards the enhancement of cooperation between institutions as well as with civil society organisations at all levels within the EU – European, national, regional and local.