

Courtesy Translation

His Excellency
Dr Andrej Danko
Speaker of the National Council
of the Slovak Republic
BRATISLAVA
SLOVAKIA

Dear colleague,

Following the European Parliament's Interparliamentary Meeting on 28 November 2016 concerning the modalities of joint parliamentary scrutiny of Europol, I would like to thank you, on behalf of the German Bundestag, for your initiative to move forward with the JPSPG's establishment. By consulting the national parliaments on key issues and putting forward its own proposal, the Slovak Parliament, in the framework of the Troika, made an important initial contribution to reaching agreement on the functioning of the future JPSPG and laid the foundations for the constructive dialogue at the conference.

From what I have heard, the meeting showed that there is still a need for interparliamentary discussion. The reflections put forward by my colleagues from the German Bundestag met with great interest, and various aspects were taken up during the discussion. I would like to follow up on this by underlining several issues where I believe it would be desirable for clarification to take place and a consensus to be reached before the Conference of Speakers is held in April 2017.

One fundamental question is the JPSPG's numerical composition. The national parliaments' responses to the Troika's questionnaire already showed a majority in favour of at least four members per national parliament. The greater the extent to which the composition of the national parliaments and the European Parliament is taken into account, the greater the democratic scrutiny and legitimacy. Particularly in the case of bicameral parliaments, there are therefore some grounds for having more than one representative per chamber. If there is support for increasing the number of members from the national parliaments, which I would warmly welcome, a proportional increase in the number of European Parliament representatives would also be logical.

In light of the scrutiny and hearing rights to be exercised, the German Bundestag also favours at least two meetings being held each year.

We expressly welcome the Troika's aim of attaching high importance to the JPSPG's workability and efficiency. Efficiency depends, in particular, on workable structures being in place from the outset. Like a number of other national parliaments, the German Bundestag is therefore calling for further modalities relating to the functioning of the

JPSG to be clarified at an early stage. The issues which should be examined include, in particular, the establishment of subcommittees on specific subjects, voting procedures and quorums for decisions, the possibility of a right to put questions to the Europol Management Board, and the establishment of a secretariat. My colleagues would be willing to submit some thoughts on these issues to the Troika as an initial basis for discussion.

We are all keen for the JPSG to be able to fulfil its function as soon as possible after the Europol Regulation's entry into force in May 2017. It would therefore seem useful for a further interparliamentary meeting to be held at expert level before the Conference of Speakers, so that we can reach as broad a consensus as possible there on all of the main modalities of the JPSG's functioning. Should you decide to move in this direction, please allow me to underline, on behalf of the German Bundestag, our willingness to play an active part.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd. Professor Norbert Lammert
President of the German Bundestag