Relations between the European Parliament and the national parliaments in the European construction

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by its chairman, Giorgio NAPOLITANO (PES, I) on relations between the European Parliament and the national parliaments in European integration. To remedy the Community's democratic deficit, which is likely to become more acute, the committee said that it was necessary to strengthen the parliamentary component of the European institutional system, i.e. to strengthen and enhance the role of national parliaments and the European Parliament. Election to a seat in the EP should rule out the possibility of simultaneously holding a similar seat in the national or regional parliaments. Members also felt that codecision by Parliament was essential in all fields in which the Council takes decisions by majority vote. Furthermore, the national parliaments should exercise their right to vote in all cases where no provision is made for codecision. On the other hand, Members did not favour the creation, within the framework of the Community, of a chamber composed of representatives from national parliaments. This would not be a solution to the problems encountered in monitoring governments' European policy, but might make the decision-making process more cumbersome and complicated to the detriment of democracy and transparency. The committee also proposed that there should be greater - and more systematic - cooperation between the parliamentary committees of national parliaments and those of the EP in sectors affected by European integration, particularly in the fields of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the area of freedom, security and justice, the Economic and Monetary Union, and constitutional affairs. To that end it proposed the drafting of an inter-parliamentary agreement on exchanges of information and documents.