



Norwegian Parliament

Date: 10 March 2011
Our ref.: 2010/561

Your ref.:

Dear Colleague,

The closure of the Western European Union and its parliamentary assembly is approaching. As an associate member of the WEU Assembly, Norway has attached great importance to participating and we have seen the Assembly as a unique inter-parliamentary forum, providing necessary scrutiny in the area of European security and defence.

We are aware that a lot of attention has recently been focused on the establishment of a new inter-parliamentary structure to replace the work of the WEU Assembly, with the objective of maintaining continued democratic control of the EU's common security and defence policy. We concur with the argument that parliamentary involvement is of particular importance in the area of security and defence, especially since the related issues concern national sovereignty.

We are closely following the debates on future parliamentary scrutiny, and share the view of many WEU Assembly Members that due attention must be paid to future participation of European non-EU NATO members in the emerging inter-parliamentary body. Norway is a contributor to security and defence in Europe through various instruments, including its participation in military operations and civilian missions within the CSDP. It is therefore our sincere wish that the necessary modalities are established for Norwegian parliamentarians to take part in the coming inter-parliamentary discussions on European security and defence.

I earnestly hope you see the same value as I do in European non-EU NATO members participating in the new body, and venture to ask for your support in advocating this view in the further deliberations on this issue. I thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Ine M. Eriksen Søreide

Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

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