



Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
The Chairman

IPOL-COM-LIBE D (2021) 23662

To the Chairperson(s) of the committee(s) concerned

Honourable Chairperson,

Since 2016, the European Parliament has called for a comprehensive and preventive mechanism in the field of Rule of Law, via an EU mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (EU DRF Pact).

This position was reinforced by the Parliament resolution of 7 October 2020 on the establishment of an EU mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, that called for a wide-ranging mechanism, to be governed by an interinstitutional agreement between the Parliament, the Council and the Commission. This resolution foresees an Annual Monitoring Cycle on Union Values, covering all aspects of Article 2 TEU and in this context, it recognises the indispensable role of national parliaments and calls on them to hold public debates and adopt positions on the outcome of the rule of law monitoring cycles. The resolution also provides for the organisation of annual interparliamentary debates on the findings of the Annual Report.

In July 2021, the Commission published its second annual Rule of Law Report that presents the state of play of the situation in Member States as regards the rule of law. Further engagement of national parliaments to develop and promote awareness on rule of law challenges is also raised in this Communication.

Against this background, and considering the importance of this issue, the LIBE Committee would like to **invite Members of national parliaments to an inter-parliamentary committee meeting on “The situation of the Rule of Law in the EU”.** The meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, 9 December 2021, from 9.00 to 12.00**, in the European Parliament premises in Brussels.

The interparliamentary committee meeting will be dedicated to an assessment of the second Commission’s rule of law report¹ in the context of the Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (DRF) mechanism and in the light of the Parliament’s resolution of 24 June 2021 on the Commission’s 2020 Rule of Law Report and would serve as input into the ongoing work on the second monitoring report within LIBE. It is also a follow up of the interparliamentary meeting organised in November last year on the first annual rule of law report of the Commission.

In view of the above, this meeting would provide the occasion for in-depth exchange of views on the rule of law situation in the EU and on the role of national parliaments in the context of the EU efforts to protect and enforce the Union values. The participation of the Commission and Council Presidency should also be envisaged to bring the inter-institutional perspective into the discussions, in line with our institution’s approach for an EU mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights.

¹ COM(2021)700.

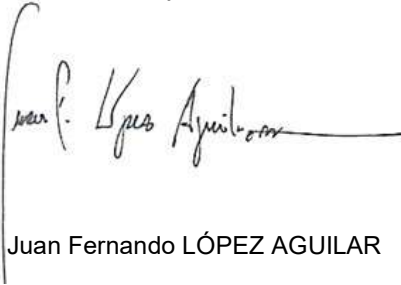
I am therefore pleased to invite up to four Members of the relevant committee(s) from each national Parliament (two from each Chamber in the case of bi-cameral Parliaments) to attend this meeting. Due to the current restrictions on physical presence in the premises of the EP, introduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting will also take place via videoconference, so that Members of EU national parliaments, National Parliaments Representatives as well as officials, are invited to participate in the meeting remotely.

Should you be unable to attend, I would welcome any written contribution, which would be distributed to our respective Members and other participants.

Practical and technical details concerning the connection regarding the meeting will be forwarded in due course to your Parliament's services for relations with the European Parliament.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to accept this invitation and I am looking forward to your participation in this event on 9 December 2021.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Juan F. López Aguilar", followed by a horizontal line. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR