



European Conference of Presidents of Parliament

Oslo, 11-12 September 2014



Oslo, Norway, 11-12 September 2014

59 Presidents of Parliament met in Oslo on the occasion of the conference organised by the Storting and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. They discussed three major topical issues which go to the heart of the challenges facing European democracies today. Presentations on the themes of the conference were made by the Presidents of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Laura Boldrini, the Danish Folketing, Mogens Lykketoft, the Parliament of Georgia, David Usupashvili, and the Dutch Senate, Ankie Broekers-Knol, as well as by the First Vice-President of the Venice Commission, Jan Helgesen.

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Theme 1

- [Fundamental constitutional rights and freedoms - Participation, trust and public debate as conditions for democracy](#) PDF
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Reference Documents for Theme 1

- Parliamentary Assembly [Resolution 1547 \(2007\)](#) on the state of human rights and democracy in Europe.
- [CDL-STD\(1994\)010](#), Introductory statement by President Antonio La Pergola and [CDL-STD\(1995\)015](#), Rights suitable for protection by constitutional appeal procedures, Professor J.L. Cascajo Castro.
- Parliamentary Assembly [Resolution 1836 \(2011\)](#) on The impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe and [Resolution 1610 \(2008\)](#) on The accession of the European Union/European Community to the European Convention on Human Rights, with further references.
- [Doc. 12279](#), as well as [Resolution 1746 \(2010\)](#) and [Recommendation 1928 \(2010\)](#) on Democracy in Europe: crisis and perspectives.
- [Website of the 2014 World Forum for Democracy](#).

Theme 2

- [Democracy, Sovereignty and Security in Europe](#) PDF
- [List of speakers](#) PDF

Theme 3

- [Majority and opposition – striking a balance in democracy](#) PDF
- [List of speakers](#) PDF

Reference Documents for Theme 3

- [CDL-AD\(2010\)025](#)
- [Doc. 11465](#) rev, as well as [Resolution 1601 \(2008\)](#) on procedural guidelines on the rights and responsibilities of the opposition in a democratic parliament.
- [Doc. 12278](#) on Extra-institutional actors in the democratic system.
- [Report of the Venice Commission on the Role of Extra-Institutional Actors in the Democratic System \(Study 590/2010, document CDL-AD\(2013\)011, March 2013\)](#).
- [Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process drafted by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe in 2009](#).
- [Doc. 12279](#), as well as [Resolution 1746 \(2010\)](#) on "Democracy in Europe: crisis and perspectives"

- [Website of the 2013 World Forum for Democracy.](#)
- [Doc. 13386](#) on Internet and politics: the impact of new information and communication technology on democracy.

Opening speeches

Olemic Thommessen

President of the Storting



"This year Norway commemorates the bicentenary of its constitution – one of the world's oldest still to be in use – which was adopted on 17 May 1814. This year we are celebrating not just an important historic text but 200 years of democratic development. I would like to share some thoughts with you in that respect. What have we learned, and what challenges are we facing?"

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Anne Brasseur

President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe



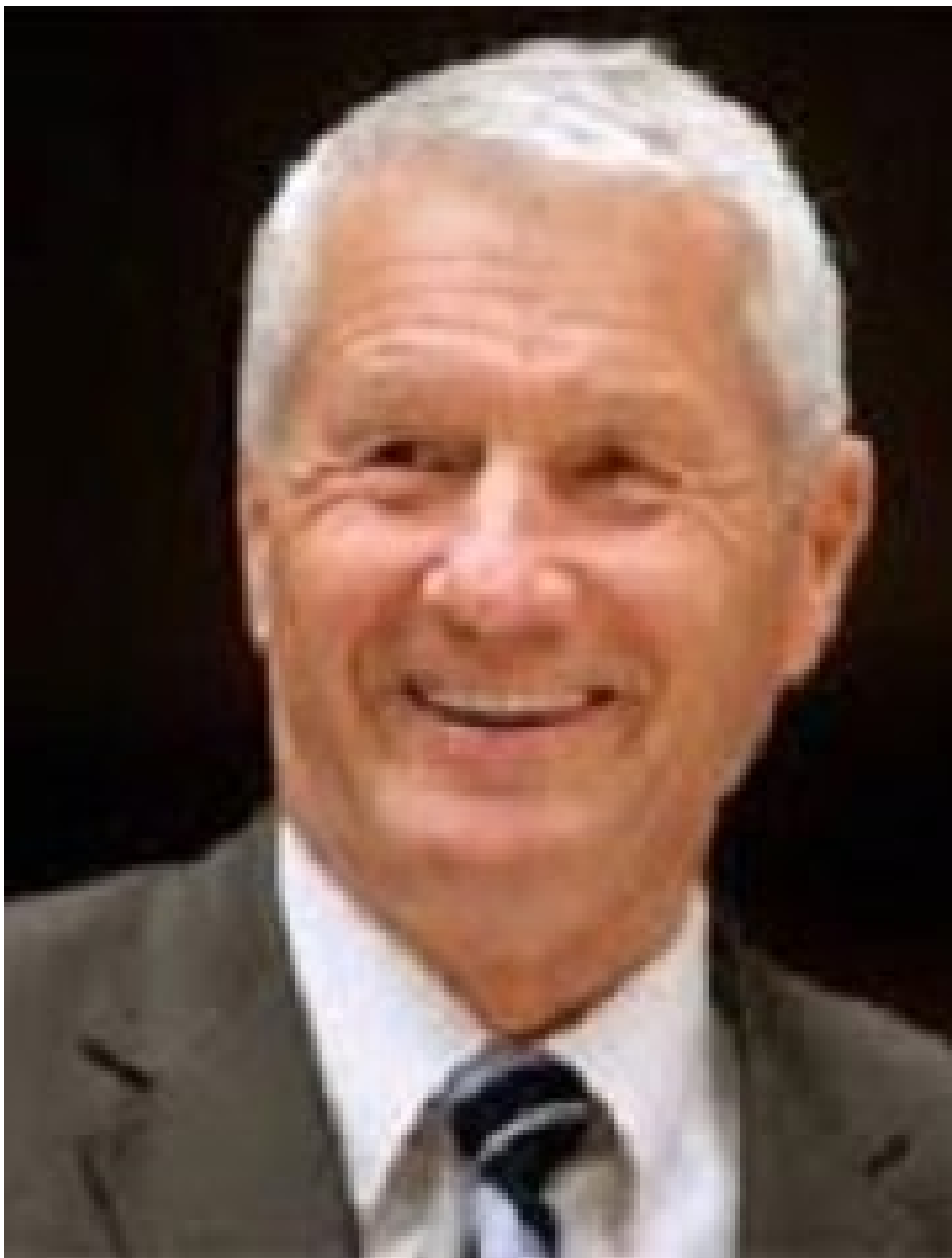
"We can debate the issues on the programme and we can come forward with standards and mechanisms for implementation, but all of this will not guarantee success. We must not lose sight of our responsibility, not just to those who elected us but to those who did not vote for us. We need to exercise judgment in all things we do, and an ability to listen to voices we do not want to hear. We

have to have large doses of good will and patience, and one thing that I believe to be crucial: intellectual honesty to do the right thing when decisions are difficult."

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Thorbjørn Jagland

Secretary General of the Council of Europe



"We speak in the Council of Europe about democratic security. What is it? It is that human rights, the rule of law and democratic principles are important parts of a European security concept. Believe me: there is similar potential for conflicts and instability elsewhere in Europe, which is why the European Convention on Human Rights is so important. Without independent institutions and separation of powers people take to the streets in revolutions and create instability and conflict."

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Vidar Helgesen

Norwegian Minister of European Economic Area and European Union Affairs



"The European experience – the fact that integration in Europe is a matter of integration between not only governments but legislatures and political parties – is a critical part of the fabric of European peace and prosperity, and this conference is one piece of the fabric. Parliaments are also bearers of

democratic values and principles, and the themes of the conference fully reflect that Europe has followed a painful but often proud path to arrive at today's shared institutions to uphold the rule of law, democracy and human rights."

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Links

- ▶ [Photo gallery](#)
- ▶ [Video of the opening of the Conference](#)
- ▶ [Link to website of the Storting](#)

Meeting of the Secretaries General

46 Secretaries General of the participating parliaments and assemblies met on the margin of the conference.

Documents

- ▶ [ECPRD Agenda](#) [PDF](#)
- ▶ [ECPRD Activity report](#) [PDF](#)
- ▶ [ECPRD Priorities and programme](#) [PDF](#)
- ▶ [ECPRD Draft minutes](#) [PDF](#)

Meeting of Secretaries of national delegations

[Agenda](#) [PDF](#)

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