

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
The Chairman

IPOL-COM-LIBE D (2020)29828

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 with the adoption of a new initiative on 7 October 2020. In its resolution on the establishment of an EU Mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, the Parliament calls for a wide-ranging mechanism, to be governed by an interinstitutional agreement between the Parliament, the Council and the Commission. It foresees an Annual Monitoring Cycle on Union Values, covering all aspects of Article 2 TEU; in this context, it recognises the crucial role of national parliaments and encourages them to hold public debates and adopt positions on the outcome of the rule of law monitoring cycle. The resolution also foresees the organisation of annual interparliamentary debates on the findings of the Annual Report.

On 30 September 2020, the European Commission published its first annual report on the Rule of Law, where it further acknowledges the important role of national parliaments and invites them to discuss the report and its country chapters; the report also calls for a continued dialogue with Member States, the European Parliament and national parliaments. A new Strategy for the Implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and a European Democracy Action Plan will also be published in the last quarter of 2020.

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 first Annual Rule of Law Report by the Commission and the role of national Parliaments”**. The meeting is scheduled on **Tuesday, 10 November 2020, from 14.15 to 18.40**, in the European Parliament premises in Brussels.

The inter-parliamentary committee meeting will be dedicated to an assessment of the first Annual Rule of Law Report adopted by the European Commission on 30 September 2020, in the context of the Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (DRF) mechanism proposed by the Parliament. It will also provide an overview of the impact of COVID-19 measures on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, with a particular focus on the scrutiny exercised by national parliaments during this period.

This meeting will represent an opportunity for in-depth exchange of views on the role of national parliaments in the context of the EU efforts to protect and enforce the Union values. It envisages the participation of the Council of Europe and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). The relevant Commissioner and the German Presidency should also take part in the debate.

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

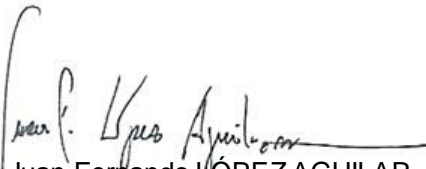
the measures related to the Covid-19 pandemic, exceptionally the meeting will take place by remote participation.

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 10 November 2020.

Yours sincerely,



Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR