

## AMENDMENT FORM

### Suggestion for amendment of Article: 16a, Part I – Title IV

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Status: Members and alternate members.

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#### Article 16a: The European Council Chair

1. The European Council shall elect its President, by ~~a qualified~~ majority of two-thirds of its members for a term of two and a half years, renewable once, based on the principle of equality between Member States. ~~The person elected must be, or have been for at least two years, a member of the European Council. In cases of serious malpractice, t~~The European Council can end his mandate according to the same procedure.

On issues concerning its common foreign and security policy he ~~shall~~ can ensure that the Union at his level is effectively represented in the wider world under due consideration to the powers of the Foreign Minister.

2. The President of the European Council shall chair it and drive forward its work, ensuring proper preparation and continuity. He shall endeavour to facilitate cohesion and consensus within the European Council. He shall execute his functions without prejudice to the powers of the Commission and the Commission President. He shall present a report to the European Parliament after each of its meetings.

- ~~3. The European Council may decide by consensus to create a board consisting of three of its members chosen according to a system of equitable rotation.~~

4. The President of the European Council may not be a member of another European institution or hold a national mandate.

5. The President of the European Council shall be assisted by the Council Secretariat.
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**Explanation:**

With regard to the Presidency function, we have the view that the present scheme with six-monthly rotating Presidencies must be adjusted and improved if it is to function in an EU of 25 Member States. We are therefore prepared to continue with the rotating, half-yearly Presidencies in a modernised form. But we are also ready to favourably consider other constructions.

We can see a number of arguments in favour of an elected President of the European Council. This, however, is conditional on a number of considerations.

Firstly, the draft at hand does not sufficiently respect the balance between large and small Member States. Each Member State should have one vote when electing the President and the election should be based on the principle of equality between Member States, possibly in the form of an equal rotation of Member States. We will also be open towards other proposals that will ensure that the balance between large and small Member States is upheld.

Secondly, we must make sure that there is a sensible division of labour between the President of the European Council, the Foreign Minister and the Commission and its President. The wording of Article 16a, par. 1 about the role of the President of the European Council with regard to the CFSP could undermine the powers of the Foreign Minister. The main rule should be that it is the Foreign Minister that handles the external representation of the EU in the field of the CFSP. The suggested new wording provides for this. It will, however, be necessary with a more detailed outline of such a division of labour.

Thirdly, we are against creating new bureaucracies. We can therefore not support the proposal of creating a board within the European Council consisting of three members. Therefore, it is also suggested that the President of the European Council is assisted by the existing structures in the Council Secretariat. Furthermore, the role of the Board vis-à-vis the President and the rest of the European Council seems unclear.

If the present Presidency rotation system is upheld possible reforms could be:

- letting the Council Secretariat chair meetings below the level of Coreper,
- re-installing the office of a Secretary General of the Council without other responsibilities than the day to day work of the Council,
- further enhanced co-operation among consecutive Presidencies to ensure coherence and

continuity.