

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

**Subject: Meeting of the Praesidium
Brussels, 5 June 2002**

POINTS SETTLED

1. Handling of the Convention session of 6-7 June

a) Debate on JAI and Role of National Parliaments

The Praesidium noted that the session was well prepared: both the background papers and the question papers had been circulated to the members of the Convention.

b) Working groups

- Composition

The Praesidium was provided with draft lists of members for the six working groups. These lists had been established by the Secretariat on the basis of the first preference and, in few cases of the second preference expressed by members of the Convention.

The number of participants in each working group was around 30 and the balance between components, nationalities and political groups was generally satisfactory. Under these conditions the Praesidium decided that a document would be issued to the Convention before the session containing these lists in alphabetical order, without any specification (doc. CONV 77/02). Should any member of the Convention express dissatisfaction, some flexibility could be shown by the Chairmen on a bilateral basis and a renewed list could then be issued.

- Working methods

The Praesidium agreed that Chairmen of working groups would not be required to report regularly to the Praesidium. However the Praesidium was responsible for ensuring the consistency of the outcome of the working groups; it would be up to each Chairperson to

assess the developments in his/her working group deserving reporting to the Praesidium.

As to the final product, it was agreed that working groups would not establish draft texts for the treaties, but would rather prepare reports to the Convention containing the main elements of the analysis carried out and the options identified to respond to the questions submitted to them.

As to practical arrangements, difficulties with availability of meeting rooms and teams of interpreters led to the conclusions that working groups would be encouraged to adopt a pragmatic approach. Active interpretation into French and English would be provided with passive interpretation according to specific needs in each working group. It would be for each Chairman to identify the arrangements needed.

Working groups may invite experts but this should not imply any cost for the Convention budget.

- Exhaustive list of working groups

The Praesidium discussed how to respond to requests for a complete master plan of working groups expressed by M. Borrel on behalf of National Parliaments and by the German members of the Convention.

The Praesidium agreed that it was desirable to stick to the working method adopted so far, which allowed the Convention itself, by its debates, to identify the specific issues to be examined in depth by the working groups. An exhaustive list was therefore impossible to provide at this stage. However, in order to meet the concerns of a large number of *conventionnels*, the Chairman could provide the Plenary with some preliminary indications about the areas in which specific questions could be identified requiring the setting up of working groups (JAI, Foreign and defence policy, Simplification of the Treaties, Institutional questions).

2. Preparation for the Convention Session on 24/25 June

The Praesidium had a further exchange of views on the role of the contact groups.

It agreed that:

- contact groups provided an opportunity to NGOs and other organisations to get directly in contact with members of the Presidium and other members of the Convention;
- participants in contact groups should be informed about the work of the Convention so far and encouraged to focus on issues that are genuinely pertinent to the Convention and could therefore usefully read the background papers forwarded to the Convention; in particular CONV 47/02 and CONV 50/02.
- they would be informed about the programme for the session of 24-25 June and invited to designate a few representatives which would take the floor; each contact group would be granted 25/30 minutes (which could be divided between the designated speakers).
Following these speeches, 15 minutes would be granted to interventions by members of the Convention, including those wishing to react and comment (blue card). Contact groups would also be informed of the facilities provided in the margins of the session in the Parliament building (meeting rooms and stands).
- As to the follow-up, while it was felt unwise to take any commitment at this stage for a second session devoted to civil society, it was agreed that Chairmen of contact groups might indicate, if necessary, that further meetings of contact groups could be organised. In any case participants in contact groups should be reminded that they may submit written contributions to the Forum web site.

Members of the Convention should be encouraged to participate both in the contact groups and in the Plenary session. They had been reminded, in doc; CONV 79/02 that they should provide the session with reports on the national debates.
