

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Subject: Meeting of the Praesidium
Brussels, 10 July 2002

POINTS SETTLED

1. Preparation of the Convention session of 11-12 July and Working groups

- External Action and Defence

The Praesidium noted that the descriptive document on EU External Action had been circulated to members of the Convention (CONV 161/02) and that the questions contained in it should assist in structuring the debate.

- Working groups

As to working groups, the Praesidium confirmed its agreement on the setting up of four new working groups, the first on 'security and justice' (for which the mandate had already been circulated in doc 179/02), the second on 'external relations', the third on 'defence policy' and the fourth on 'simplification of legislative procedures'. Two suggestions for further working groups were put forward by members of the Praesidium : one on 'culture and linguistic differences' and the other one on 'good governance' : it was concluded that the former, and perhaps the latter, subject would be covered in working group V, chaired by Mr. Christophersen.

- Introductory statement

The Praesidium agreed that the Chairman should make an introductory statement before the start of the debate on External Action. The purpose of this statement would be to ensure that the Convention understood the Praesidium's thinking on working groups, and the Praesidium's "building block" approach, together with their plan to prepare, in the light of reports from the working groups on legal personality and the Charter, a framework for a constitutional Treaty, which would be put forward at the end of October.

This framework would then be fleshed out with the contributions emerging from the second wave of working groups and would then constitute the basis for the work on the Convention from the beginning of next year.

- Proposal by certain members of the Convention

As to the proposal put forward by certain members of the Convention to invite the Commission to prepare a draft constitutional treaty (item 4 of the session's agenda), the Praesidium unanimously agreed that the proposal was unacceptable since it would imply that the Convention would shirk its own responsibilities.

2. Mr. Avgerinos' letter to the Chairman and revised draft reply

The Praesidium approved the draft reply (circulated then in doc. 185/02).

3. Autumn Plenary Debates

The Praesidium agreed that the subjects for the first autumn Convention Plenary debates should be "simplification" (of the legislative procedure) on 12-13 September, and "subsidiarity" on 3-4 October. Mr Mendez de Vigo agreed to give the Convention on 12-13 September an oral preview of the likely recommendations of the subsidiarity working group, and confirmed that the groups report would be available before 3-4 October. In addition, Vice-president Amato agreed to give a similar oral preview on the issue of legal personality on 12-13 September, and Mr Vitorino agreed to give a similar presentation on the Charter on 3-4 October.

II. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

4. Working groups Chairs

Since Ms Palacio was not present, the Praesidium agreed to postpone to its next meeting decisions on the chairs of the four new working groups.

5. Strategy discussion

The Praesidium had a preliminary exchange of views on the implications of the various options for the simplification of Treaties. It agreed to revert to this issue; some members mentioned the usefulness of hearing legal opinion on this subject.

6. Secretariat paper on public relations and visibility

The Praesidium agreed to discuss this issue at its next meeting.

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The next Praesidium meeting will take place on 18 July, at 15h00
in Palais d'Egmont and will last until 22h00.
