

Contribution of dr. Dimitrij Rupel, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Representative of the Prime minister of the Republic of Slovenia to the Convention on Future of Europe, Brussels, July 10 2003

Mr President, dear Colleagues!

I must admit that my feelings for the Convention, Presidium and the President evolved from initial scepticism to respect and finally to admiration. This is meant particularly doe the Triumvirat and the President Giscard D'Estaing.

I must admit another matter. When I started to get involved in Slovenian politics back in 1990, I did not expect that I myself and Slovenia would be as lucky as to become in 2003 a part of this important event, called the Convention on Future of Europe.

In Slovenia, people ask me whether I am happy, and whether we should all be happy about the result of the Convention. I answer that we may all be entirely happy about this, that we can live with the result - i.e. the Constitutional Treaty.

The Convention actually was not about happiness, but about the productive coexistence, solidarity and synergy - of old and new, of small and large countries.

As Foreign Minister of Slovenia I am particularly satisfied with the achievements of the Convention in the field of foreign policy, and I am not unhappy about the regulations regarding cultural and linguistic diversity.

Not only that we managed to overcome the difficulties or the big hurdles of the past IGC's, but we also proved that future and enlarged EU could and will live and work successfully. The fact that the representatives of present and future member states took part on the equal footing in the deliberations on our common future again proved that Europe can, should be and already is united.

The Convention is a good basis for the next IGC. I do expect that all the positive Acquis of the Convention will be preserved while concentrating on those issues that need a bit of further deliberations and fine tuning.

