

NOTE

Subject : Summary report of the Plenary Session
 – Brussels, 11 and 13 June 2003

Reaching consensus

1. On 13 June the Convention reached broad consensus on texts to be presented by the President of the Convention on its behalf to the European Council of Thessaloniki, of the Preamble, Part I on the constitutional provisions, Part II on the Charter of fundamental rights, and the Protocols on the role of national parliaments and the application of the subsidiarity and proportionality principles (CONV 797/1/03). The President recalled the mandate from the Laeken European Council and commended members of the Convention for reaching "un résultat inespéré" (a result unhoped-for).
2. After two days of debates in plenary, as well as intense negotiations within and between the different components of the Convention and political groups, the President of the Convention presented on 13 June the text as revised by the Praesidium in the light of the outcome of these discussions, introducing changes to the Preamble, to the chapter on institutions in Part I, and to Part II on the Charter; and including a new provision for a "citizens initiative" (CONV 811/03). The President highlighted that the text was the result of a collective effort to progressively identify a balance between the different expectations and sensibilities of Convention members.

3. In their interventions, members of the Convention expressed their appreciation for the final outcome and considered that it represented a fair and balanced result. Many spoke of a historic achievement. While maintaining the balance between Member States and between the Institutions, the Convention has succeeded in re-designing the Union to be more transparent and closer to the citizens, with clearer competences, and more effective and democratic decision-making. All welcomed the fact that the Convention method had succeeded in producing a single text, without options, and that improvements had been made in areas where successive IGCs had failed to produce results. Among the achievements of the Convention, speakers praised in particular the abolition of the pillar structure, the attribution of a single legal personality, the integration of the Charter, the simplification of instruments and procedures, the major strengthening of the roles of the European Parliament and national Parliaments, the extension of decision-making by QMV and lawmaking by codecision, and the creation of the post of EU Minister of Foreign Affairs.
4. Members of the Convention called on Member States not to reopen the text in the IGC as this could undermine the delicate balance reached by the Convention.
5. Notwithstanding the positive assessment of the general outcome, some speakers felt that the Convention should have reduced further the use of unanimity, in particular on taxes and CFSP issues, or were disappointed that Part I failed to mention services of general interest. Others considered that on some issues the Convention went too far, for example on structural cooperation in defence or trade in cultural services, while some expressed reservations on the definition of qualified majority.

Issues raised during the discussions

6. In addition to the issues covered above, a number of other issues were raised during the discussions in the plenary.

7. Some members felt that a clear reference to Christianity or Christian values should be included in the preamble. Others opposed this, saying that the current wording on "religious heritage" was sufficient and that they could not accept a reference to a specific religion.
8. Some considered the "passerelle" transition on QMV an infringement of the rights of national parliaments as use of it would not require ratification by Member States. Others feared that in practice it would never be used, and that continuing national vetoes would reduce the Union's capacity to act effectively. In general, members agreed on the usefulness of such a clause, given that the time was not ripe for abolition of the right of veto.
9. With regard to the Charter, a number of members expressed their surprise and reservations as to the sentence on the explanations relating to the Charter which the Praesidium had decided to insert into the Preamble to the Charter (at the beginning of Part II). The Chairman of Working Group II nevertheless defended this as a solution, which he termed a reasonable compromise, and which would not mean that the explanations as such would be accorded full legal status. Other members rallied round this position, pointing out that it was a compromise which was needed by at least five Member States so that inclusion of the Charter in the Constitution as proposed by the Praesidium could be ratified. Other members commented that, although it was a very painful concession, they were prepared to put up with this wording in the Preamble if it enabled inclusion of the Charter, but that they would nonetheless be opposed to the drafting of an article in the Constitution referring to the explanations.
10. A number of speakers argued that the Union needed a lighter treaty revision procedure which moved away from unanimity and national ratification. While highlighting the sensitivity of this issue and the need of maintaining a role for national parliaments, the President indicated that this issue could be further discussed in the context of Part IV.

11. The President finally informed the Convention that his report to the European Council would mention "areas of disagreement" where these had been expressed collectively, as was the case for the "minority report" by five members of the Convention. He would deliver their text to the President of the European Council.

Further examination of Part III and Part IV

12. The President confirmed that he would ask the European Council to extend the mandate of the Convention to allow it to finalise Parts III and IV. Members of the Convention could send amendments on these parts to the Secretariat up to Monday 23 June 13h00. Without prejudging European Council decisions, the President announced provisional plans for Plenary meetings of the Convention on 4 July and on 9-10 July.

List of speakers following order of intervention.

Plenary meeting 11, 12 and 13 June 2003**LIST OF SPEAKERS****Wednesday 11 June**

1. Mr Andrew DUFF - European Parliament
2. Mr Elmar BROK - European Parliament
3. Mr Jens-Peter BONDE - European Parliament
4. Ms Hildegard PUWAK - Romania (Government)
5. Mr Michel BARNIER - Commission
6. Mr René van der LINDEN - Netherlands (Parliament)
7. Mr Jürgen MEYER - Germany (Parliament)
8. Mr Dick ROCHE - Ireland (Government)
9. Mr Antonio TAJANI - European Parliament
10. Mr Josep BORRELL FONTELLES - Spain (Parliament)
11. Ms Pascale ANDREANI - France (Government)
12. Ms Marietta GIANNAKOU - Greece (Parliament)
13. Mr Gijs de VRIES - Netherlands (Government)
14. Mr Hubert HAENEL - France (Parliament)
15. Mr Erwin TEUFEL - Germany (Parliament)
16. Mr Alain LAMASSOURE - European Parliament
17. Mr Proinsias de ROSSA - Ireland (Parliament)
18. Mr Pierre LEQUILLER - France (Parliament)
19. Mr Joschka FISCHER - Germany (Government)
20. Ms Lena HJELM-WALLÉN - Sweden (Government)
21. Mr Peter HAIN - United Kingdom (Government)
22. Mr Alojz PETERLE - Slovenia (Parliament)
23. Ms Ana PALACIO - Spain (Government)
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24. Mr Iñigo MENDEZ DE VIGO - European Parliament
25. Ms Marietta GIANNAKOU - Greece (Parliament)
26. Mr Johannes VOGGENHUBER - European Parliament
27. Mr Jacques SANTER - Luxembourg (Government)
28. Mr Tunne KELAM - Estonia (Parliament)
29. Mr Georgios KATIFORIS - Greece (Government)
30. Mr Elmar BROK - European Parliament
31. Mr Michel BARNIER - Commission
32. Mr Paraskevas AVGERINOS - Greece (Parliament)
33. Mr Vytenis ANDRIUKAITIS - Lithuania (Parliament)
34. Mr Adrian SEVERIN - Romania (Parliament)
35. Ms Hanja MAIJ-WEGGEN - European Parliament
36. Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN - Finland (Parliament)
37. Mr Andrew DUFF - European Parliament
38. Mr Olivier DUHAMEL - European Parliament
39. Mr Peter HAIN - United Kingdom (Government)
40. Mr Jan ZHRADIL - Czech Republic (Parliament)
41. Mr Valdo SPINI - Italy (Parliament)

42. Ms Cristiana MUSCARDINI - European Parliament
43. Mr Josep BORRELL FONTELLES - Spain (Parliament)
44. Mr René van der LINDEN - Netherlands (Parliament)
45. Mr Göran LENNMARKER - Sweden (Parliament)
46. Mr Panayotis DEMETRIOU - Cyprus (Parliament)
47. Ms Sylvia-Yvonne KAUFMANN - European Parliament
48. Mr Pierre LEQUILLER - France (Parliament)
49. Mr Ben FAYOT - Luxembourg (Parliament)
50. Mr Gijds de VRIES - Netherlands (Government)
51. Lord TOMLINSON - United Kingdom (Parliament)
52. Mr William ABITBOL - European Parliament
53. Ms Renée WAGENER - Luxembourg (Parliament)
54. Lord MACLENNAN OF ROGART - United Kingdom (Parliament)
55. Ms. Elena PACIOTTI - European Parliament
56. Mr Manfred DAMMEYER - (Committee of the Regions) Observer
57. Ms Claude DU GRANDRUT - (Committee of the Regions) Observer
58. Mr Elmar BROK - European Parliament
59. Mr Iñigo MENDEZ DE VIGO - European Parliament

Thursday 12 June

1. Mr Elmar BROK - European Parliament
2. Mr Andrew DUFF - European Parliament
3. Ms Marietta GIANNAKOU - Greece (Parliament)
4. Mr Johannes VOGGENHUBER - European Parliament
5. Mr Jens-Peter BONDE - European Parliament
6. Mr Antonio VITORINO - Commission
7. Ms Hildegard PUWAK - Romania (Government)
8. Mr Josep BORRELL FONTELLES - Spain (Parliament)
9. Mr Dick ROCHE - Ireland (Government)
10. Mr René van der LINDEN - Netherlands (Parliament)
11. Mr Peter SKAARUP - Denmark (Parliament)
12. Mr Joschka FISCHER - Germany (Government)
13. Mr Jan FIGEL - Slovakia (Parliament)
14. Mr Ben FAYOT - Luxembourg (Parliament)
15. Ms Sylvia-Yvonne KAUFMANN - European Parliament
16. Mr Peter HAIN - United Kingdom (Government)
17. Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN - Finland (Parliament)
18. Mr Jürgen MEYER - Germany (Parliament)
19. Mr Caspar EINEM - Austria (Parliament)
20. Mr Michel BARNIER - Commission
21. Mr Lamberto DINI - Italy (Parliament)
22. Ms Hanja MAIJ-WEGGEN - European Parliament
23. Mr Edmund WITTBRODT - Poland (Parliament)
24. Ms Lena HJELM-WALLÉN - Sweden (Government)
25. Mr Robert BADINTER - France (Parliament)

Friday 13 June

1. Mr Iñigo MENDEZ DE VIGO - European Parliament
2. Mr René van der LINDEN - Netherlands (Parliament)
3. Ms Ana PALACIO - Spain (Government)
4. Mr Michel BARNIER - Commission
5. Mr Henning CHRISTOPHERSEN - Denmark (Government)
6. Ms Hildegard PUWAK - Romania (Government)
7. Mr Elmar BROK - European Parliament
8. Mr Alojz PETERLE - Slovenia (Parliament)
9. Mr Andrew DUFF - European Parliament
10. Mr Johannes VOGGENHUBER - European Parliament
11. Ms Sylvia-Yvonne KAUFMANN - European Parliament
12. Mr Gianfranco FINI - Italy (Government)
13. Mr Josef ZIELENIEC - Czech Republic (Parliament)
14. Mr Erwin TEUFEL - Germany (Parliament)
15. Mr Jens-Peter BONDE - European Parliament
16. Ms Anne VAN LANCKER - European Parliament
17. Mr Olivier DUHAMEL - European Parliament
18. Ms Danuta HÜBNER - Poland (Government)
19. Mr Antonio VITORINO - Commission
20. Mr Dominique de VILLEPIN - France (Government)
21. Mr Péter BALAZS - Hungary (Government)
22. Mr Gijs de VRIES - Netherlands (Government)
23. Mr Joschka FISCHER - Germany (Government)
24. Mr Louis MICHEL - Belgium (Government)
25. Mr Rytis MARTIKONIS - Lithuania (Government)
26. Ms Hanja MAIJ-WEGGEN - European Parliament
27. Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN - Finland (Parliament)
28. Mr Alain LAMASSOURE - European Parliament
29. Mr Frans TIMMERMANS - Netherlands (Parliament)
30. Mr Hannes FARNLEITNER - Austria (Government)
31. Mr Göran LENNMARKER - Sweden (Parliament)

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