

**BULLETIN 10**  
*Brussels, 18th July, 2003*

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**EDITORIAL - TIME TO ACT4EUROPE**

Dear Friends

Now the Convention has come to a final end and NGOs' hopes were up and down until the last minute watching substantial changes being made. Even our most reliable sources of prediction ceased to be able to judge the outcome. You can find the final draft on the website of the Convention and on our website under Background information> Convention of future Europe> Draft Treaty.

It is now time to start preparing for the IGC. We have included some information below, but expect to see many changes, the Italian Presidency is not going to be the most reliable planner. Watch our website for any changes in the itinerary. We will be preparing a toolkit on lobbying cross-sectorally around the IGC over the summer and hope to have it finished by the end of September. We are also going to hold another coordination event in Brussels early October for NGOs to meet

and decide on the way ahead. We will post a call as soon as we have a better overview of the timing of the IGC.

The IGC is the crucial stage for our rights in this Constitution, the draft is by no means meeting our demands, but if we are not very vocal, we might lose what we have secured and gained. Please spread the call for NGOs to join the campaign included below and for national civil society events around the Constitution. We have to pull our strength together now.

We will certainly keep monitoring the Brussels level and accompany the Commission and EP opinions on the draft due to be issued by mid September. The Civil Society Contact Group has written to the EP Committee, the Council, and the Commission calling for them to assure transparency and a dialogue with civil society during the IGC. You can find the letter on our webpage ([www.act4europe.org](http://www.act4europe.org)). We will try to have meetings with as many key people at the EU level (Presidency, Commission, Governments, Parliament) as we can over the summer and keep you informed.

Have a wonderful summer  
Nico Beger  
act4europe campaign coordinator

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## **ACT4EUROPE**

### **Call for coordinators and events at national level**

Act4europe is the only cross-sectoral campaign around the Constitution supported by 4 NGO families and the ETUC. The network established in the campaign is growing constantly, yet to be more successful in actually achieving substantial goals, the campaign needs contact points in all Member States and Accession Countries. Please join us in the effort to find large NGOs or NGO networks willing to coordinate national efforts during the IGC, including the spread of information from the EU level, coordination of civil society's input into the national debate, lobbying the government and parliament, and organising appropriate public input through hearings, events, or actions. "National coordinators" can come from all NGO sectors and there can be more than one per country if that is helpful in the national context. We will provide support from the campaign office through information or attendance at national events. Please spread this call in all your networks and encourage people to put their organisation forward.

**For further information contact the coordinator**

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## **THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE**

By Lea Slokar and Nico Beger

After announcing the beginning of the IGC to be held on 15 October, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi changed his mind and moved it to 4 October. In his speech to reporters in Rome on Friday 11, Berlusconi promised to follow the Convention's footsteps and 'use violence to ensure the IGC's success', copying the Convention's President Giscard d'Estaing. The IGC will focus on 'pending issues only' states Berlusconi, without challenging the agreement reached by the Convention, and should finish its work by the end of this year. Despite all of these statements, Berlusconi is unpredictable, and has also announced the discussion of his alternative constitutional idea (that was already presented at the summit in Thessaloniki), which would undo the whole compromise reached in the Convention.

Berlusconi explained to the press that since the Italian Presidency is short of time in achieving political agreement on the EU's future Constitution, he was considering 'using the conclave format' and locking foreign ministers up at the General Affairs Council in December. The Italian Foreign Minister, Franco Frattini, expressed his interest in finishing the IGC by the end of this year, so it can be signed in Rome on 1 May 2004, on the day of the enlarged membership.

Even though this IGC will likely be different than previous IGCs, more transparent hopefully and a different nature of the treaty to be signed, there are still some steps and timings that are fairly certain already:

- At the General Affairs and External Affairs Council on 21-22 July the procedure of the IGC will be discussed;
- EP Committee on Constitutional Affairs and the Commission are obliged to present their reports before the inauguration of the IGC (next EP CCA meeting on 25-26 August), i.e. by mid September;
- Two European Councils in Brussels are to be held: 16-17 October and 12-13 December;
- The end of the IGC is planned for late December;
- The Treaty shall be signed on 1 May 2004;
- A Referendum across Europe is not unlikely, together with the European Parliament elections (Alain Lamassoure, Jürgen Meyer, David Heathcoat-Amory and Jens-Peter Bonde have launched a petition on Member States to organise a referendum for ratification of the future constitutional treaty; petition already signed by 97 Convention members);
- Ratification of the Treaty by the end of 2005.

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## **CONVENTION ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE**

By Lea Slokar and Nico Beger (quotes from Agence Europe July 2003)

The last round of the sessions, discussing the most substantial Part III on policies of the draft Constitution, began on Friday 4 July with its Chairman Giscard

d'Estaing recalling the 'comforting' welcome given by the Thessaloniki Summit to the Convention's draft. The Convention's majority message on Friday was in favour of extending qualified majority voting (QMV) particularly on indirect taxation, CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy) upon a proposal by the Foreign Minister and the Commission, anti-discrimination, and some aspects of social policy (dismissal of workers). There were also demands for inclusion of the open method of coordination, an improvement of health protection, animal rights, and another strong call to at least give the Euratom Treaty its own legal personality, so it can be changed at a later point. The addition on services of general interest laws was applauded by many. There were calls to include European symbols and institute EP approval if the European Council decides not to call a Convention for future changes.

At the last session on Wednesday afternoon (July 9<sup>th</sup>), there was a clear agreement between national MPs and MEPs (supported by the European Commission and the political groups) to make last minute changes to the future Treaty, since the draft published on Tuesday did not take into consideration any of the demands made. It became quite clear that the Presidium would not be able to ignore all amendments requested, though it is astonishing how many they ignored nevertheless. On Thursday morning the President announced the inclusion of the signs of the Union into the beginning of part IV, with a footnote stating that 'the Convention considers that this Article will be better placed in part I'. The content of the new article defines the Union's flag, anthem, motto, currency and Europe day. The Presidium amended the draft of the Article on fighting discrimination (with measures to encourage action from the Member States), but did not put it under QMV (the huge support for this issue in the Convention was an astonishing event in itself even if unsuccessful), and added a reference to the open co-ordination method in the articles on social, research, public health and industrial policy. The Presidium decided in favour of the unanimity for agreements in trade and cultural and audio/visual services 'when these are in danger of damaging the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Union'. The protocol and Article 2 of part IV of the draft treaty have also been amended, in order to keep the Euratom mechanism outside the legal framework of the constitutional treaty, which is a huge lobby success of the environmental NGOs. The revision procedure of the future Constitution now includes the approval of the EP in allowing the Council to begin revision without a formal Convention .

Components' representatives (Lamberto Dini, John Burton, Gisela Stuart (both from national parliaments), Michael Barnier (The European Commission), Henning Christophersen (Government representative), Elmar Brok (Christian Democrat), Jürgen Meyer (Socialist family), Andrew Duff (Liberal Democrat) and Johannes Voggenhuber (Green)), speaking after the introductory presentation of the amended parts III and IV, supported the draft without 'restriction or reservation', as Klaus Haensch put it. Before wishing the Constitution a 'good journey', Michel Barnier stressed that the game was not over yet and that the

Commission would, in its official opinion in September, make proposals with a view to updating policies.

Vice President Giuliano Amato said that 'reunification of Europe has come about through our Convention' and shared his previous experience with the IGC. 'If someone says no, it is a sovereign no that must be justified', he said and added that 'in the Convention, the no had to be motivated'. Jean Luc Dehaene thanked the NGOs for their work on the Convention and stressed, 'the Convention could not have achieved this result if civil society had not rallied to the task as it has done'. Chairman Giscard d'Estaing congratulated the Convention Members for drafting the first European Constitution. 'I am proud to have been your chairman', he said, 'and to have been at the helm of our ship, sometimes through mist, sometimes through the cold, sometimes in rough weather, but to have finally come home safe and sound.' The President considered that the consensus that had been reached was 'far from being the lowest common denominator' and 'presented the furthest point possible that could be reached'. He underlined the particular responsibility for Convention Members, who would also be members of the IGC, exclaiming: 'Let's launch together an appeal to political leaders in Europe: citizens say yes to our Constitution, don't say no to them'. Giscard concluded with thanks to his tortoise. 'It allowed us to cross the river... We are all convinced that this tortoise knew where it wanted to go', said d'Estaing before feeding his mascot with salad.

PLEASE look at our webpage for the final assessments of the sectors.

## **SECTOR NEWS**

### **CONCORD**

By Florent Sebban

Concord launched a Campaign, at the occasion of its general assembly on 26 and 27 June 2003, in order to urge the Intergovernmental Conference to stay open and transparent and to ensure a strong legal basis for development and humanitarian aid in the constitution. Now that the European Convention ended, the debate on the future of Europe will be in the hands of EU Heads of State and Government during the IGC that will start in October 2003. It is of the greatest importance for CONCORD Members to insure that development issues already included in the constitution by the Convention like the principle of policy coherence, the objective of eradication of poverty, are kept in the Constitution by the Intergovernmental Conference. Furthermore some points still need to be included in the Constitution to insure a strong legal basis for development co-operation and humanitarian aid.

A CAMPAIGN ACTION paper has been drafted by members of CONCORD to urge the IGC to make the necessary changes in the constitution to keep Europe as a voice for peace and solidarity in the world.

<http://www.eurostep.org/strategy/future/Concord%20Resolution.pdf>

**Members of CONCORD will organise meetings at national level in order to develop the points included in the CAMPAIGN ACTION paper, and therefore to invite their governments to defend development issues during the debates in the Intergovernmental Conference.**