

Declaration by Parliamentary members of the European Convention (Brussels, 5 December 2003)

Caption: Fearing the consequences of a failure by the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to finalise the constitutional negotiations, the former Parliamentary members of the European Convention meet in Brussels on 5 December 2003 in order to call on the IGC to adhere the Convention's package deal and to finish its work at the European Council in Brussels on 12 and 13 December 2003.

Source: Joint Declaration addressed to the European Council by Parliamentary members of the European Convention, reunited in Brussels on Friday 5 December 2003. [ON-LINE]. [Brussels]: European Parliament, [27.01.2005]. Available on <http://www.europarl.eu.int/europe2004/textes/declaration-ep-memb-03-12-03-en.htm>.

Copyright: (c) European Parliament

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/declaration_by_parliamentary_members_of_the_european_convention_brussels_5_december_2003-en-c463343d-24e4-4116-9a37-7371306fdd78.html

Publication date: 18/12/2013

Joint Declaration addressed to the European Council by Parliamentary members of the European Convention (Brussels, 5 December 2003)

Recalling the outstanding legitimacy of the European Convention and the richness of its work;

Convinced that the Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe will enable the European Union to be at the same time successfully widened and deepened;

Fearing the political consequences at home and abroad of a failure by the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to finalise the constitutional negotiations in line with the agreement reached in the Convention;

Concerned that despite the efforts of the Italian presidency and the progress made on certain issues, it is apparent that the IGC has been tempted to open up some of the key elements of the consensus achieved by the Convention;

Noting that the IGC will be judged on its success in completing the institutional architecture of the Union now and not later;

Therefore calls on the IGC to adhere to the Convention's constitutional package deal, and to finish its work at the European Council in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003;

And believes, further, that the following points are indispensable for the enlarged Union to act:

1. The formula for qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council as drafted by the Convention is clear, simple and facilitates decision making. The eventual solution must respect the principle of double majority and lower the Nice threshold.
2. The re-organisation of the European Commission after 2009 must be designed to ensure first and foremost a strong and manageable executive in which all nationalities have an equal chance of access.
3. To undermine the financial settlement of the Convention, as proposed by certain governments, is a major attack on the core principles of parliamentary democracy and is totally unacceptable. A Constitution that failed to respect the budgetary rights of the European Parliament will not obtain the approval of either the European or national parliaments.
4. There must be no retreat from the Convention's already modest proposals for its extension of QMV in the fields of tax, social security or criminal justice. The passerelle provisions, triggered by a unanimous decision of the European Council, as well as in enhanced cooperation, must be maintained as a key element of the evolutive nature of the Constitution.
5. Development of common foreign and security policy will be helped by the introduction of a larger element of QMV. We support the proposals of the Italian presidency to this end. We also welcome the emerging agreement in defence policy. We urge, nevertheless, that the role and standing of the Foreign Minister as established by the Convention should be wholly respected.
6. The Legislative Council will encourage transparency and the separation of the law making from the executive functions of the Council. We urge the IGC to keep open this option.
7. Reform of the constitutional revision procedure in Part IV, which was left unresolved by the Convention, is essential if the Union is not to be held ransom to the veto of one or two member states. In changes to Part III, where the competences of the EU are not extended, a lighter procedure should be agreed.

8. The independence of the European Central Bank must be guaranteed under the Constitution.
9. Any weakening of the constitutional validity of the Charter of Fundamental Rights is unacceptable.
10. We request that equality between men and women should be inserted as a value of the European Union.

The citizens of Europe expect their governments, acting collectively at the European Council, to shoulder their responsibility to build a more secure and democratic future. The time to act decisively is now.