

## Closing address given by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing at the final session of the European Convention (Brussels, 13 June 2003)

**Source:** La Convention européenne sur l'avenir de l'Europe / Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.- Bruxelles: Parlement européen - Division de l'audiovisuel [Prod.], 13.06.2003. Parlement européen, Bruxelles. - VIDEO (00:02:59, Couleur, Son original).

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**Last updated:** 05/07/2016

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[Valéry Giscard d'Estaing] Sixteen months ago, with a mixture of hope and fear, sprinkled with a touch of imagination, we were given the task of reflecting on and making preparations for the Europe of tomorrow. Have we succeeded? I would say, in all honesty, that it is not up to us to say. What we can say, however, is that we have worked hard. We have been the first to see how the enlarged Europe works — the first. Coming from 28 States, we learnt to work together. And I should like to express, perhaps I did not do so sufficiently at the beginning, my particular appreciation for the members of the Convention coming from countries outside the Fifteen. We have sown the seeds, and that is the most important task in spring. From those seeds, as we have said, we hope that a true European people, a European *demos*, will grow. The result is not perfect, but it is better than we had hoped. Remember the beginning. The term 'conventional' was unknown, the word 'constitution' was rejected, there were three Treaties. Where are we now? In place of the three Treaties, a single Constitution. In place of a Europe without an official status, a Europe with legal personality, an identity. I shall go and present at the European Council in Thessaloniki, on your behalf, our joint work as the foundation of a future Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. As for me, the advice that I shall offer you is that, standing on the threshold of a new era, let us decide to enter, together, the new Europe. Thank you.