

AMENDMENT FORM

Part Three: General and final provisions

Suggestion for amendment of Article : D

By Members: Mr Andrew Duff, Mr Lamberto Dini, Mr Paul Helminger, Mr Karel De Gucht, Mr Alain Lamassoure, Mr Peeter Kreitzberg, Mr Algirdas Gricius, Mr Puiu Hasotti, Mr Jelko Kacin, Mr Zekeriya Akçam, and Mr Eugenijus Maldeikis; **and Alternate Members:** Mrs Elena Paciotti, Mr Willem Van Eekelen, Lord MacLennan of Rogart, Mr Nesrin Uzun, Mr Marios Matsakis, Mrs Androula Vassiliou, Mr Istvan Szent-Ivanyi, Mr Péter Eckstein-Kovacs, Mr Patrick Dewael, Mr Ibrahim Ozal and Mr Gintautas Sivickas.

Status : Members and alternate members.

Article D: Regional unions

The *Constitution* shall not preclude the existence or completion of regional unions between *neighbouring Member States* to the extent that the objectives of these regional unions are *in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and are* not attained by *its* application.

Explanation:

1. We refer here and throughout to the 'Constitution' rather than to the 'Constitutional Treaty'. The pact is of course a treaty in terms of the Vienna Convention on the Law on Treaties. But it establishes a constitution for the European Union, and it is simpler and clearer to call it so.

2. The existence of Benelux is all very well, but it is not the one and only form of closer cooperation between neighbouring Member States that could in the future take an institutionalised format within the provisions of the Union's Constitution - see for example, the Nordic Council and the British-Irish Agreement. Enlargement might well induce further manifestations of geographical proximity among certain Member States, for instance in the Balkans or the Baltic. The development of regional unions should certainly not be discouraged as they may well contribute to the regional and cultural diversity of the Union as a whole and even to its efficient management.

We suggest here a form of words that would permit such developments on the condition that they do not conflict with the aims, objectives or constitutional order of the Union.