

**Speaking points for Ivan Korcok,**  
**Rep. of the Government of the SR in the Convention**  
**(Convention Meeting on 7-8 November)**

Following the September Slovak parliamentary elections - the outcome of which essentially reaffirmed domestic and foreign policy continuity - I wish to reiterate our Government's deep interest in a comprehensive reform of EU institutions and policies. We therefore welcome the efforts of the Convention Presidium in drafting the outline of the Union's future constitutional treaty. The Convention's work on the details of this draft represents an historic challenge that will be best served by our attempts to arrive at a consensual agreement on a single proposal for Europe's constitutional document. We also welcome a relatively early start of the Convention's discussion on the topic of 'EU Constitution'. The presentation of a skeleton in October provides us with the time frame of several months for the real work on the contents. However, we should not rush the efforts to simplify the Treaties and adopt a single constitutional treaty for the Union too quickly. We are working on a document that will lay the foundations for the future of an integrated Europe. Its contents concern equally and are going to affect all participants involved in integrating our Continent. Therefore, the Intergovernmental conference (IGC) - that will ultimately decide on the nature and on the scope of the EU constitution - should definitely not conclude its deliberations prior to the upcoming round of enlargement. After all, we are discussing a constitutional document for the future "us" - a wider EU of almost thirty member states. While the debate on the label of an integrated Europe (European Union, United Europe or some other name?) will no doubt prove interesting especially in the latter stages of our proceedings, it is the body hidden beneath this label that matters most. Slovakia supports the explicit recognition of the Union's legal personality (Proposed Art. 4). This will both enhance the EU's status on the international scene and help boost the European identity. We are also in favor of a legally binding status of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, possibly attached as a protocol in order to limit the contents of the new treaty. We welcome the definition of categories of competence (Proposed Art. 9) in the skeleton of the constitutional document. We are deeply interested in further transparency and a clearer division of powers and tasks within the EU (Title 4). We wish to emphasize the importance of reaching a balanced relationship within the institutional triangle: The Commission has to maintain its exclusive right of policy initiative and should not be undermined to the advantage of the Council. We favor the reinforcement of the traditional Community method of policymaking. While we recognize the need for the reform of EU Presidency, we are fundamentally concerned with the maintenance of equality among all members states – the old ones & new the new ones, the big ones & the small ones. Last but certainly not least, the Union does not need additional institutions, such as the proposed Congress of the Peoples of Europe. The institutional framework is complex enough as it stands. For the sake of our citizens, the primary task of the Convention must be both the simplification and a greater clarification the Union's institutional architecture.