

***CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!***

**INSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS  
OF THE FUTURE CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY**

**Intervention by Mrs. Meglena Kuneva,  
Representative of the Bulgarian Government to  
the European Convention  
Brussels, 15-16 May 2003**

**Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would start by stressing that we continue to support the essential principles set out in the joint paper "Reforming the Institutions: Principles and Premises" presented by 16 governmental representatives at the end of March. The new constitutional provisions on the institutions should preserve the existing institutional balance, respect the equality of Member States and reinforce the community method.

Having this in mind, let me mention very briefly our main considerations on the institutional provisions:

A very positive step forward is the creation of the position of the **European Foreign Minister** who will be a Vice-President of the Commission and will have overall responsibility for the Union's external action. There is no doubt that this will help the European Union speak with stronger and coherent voice in the world.

We consider that the presidency of the **European Council** should be exercised on a rotational basis. This would guarantee the respect for the principle of equality among Member States. In order to ensure continuity the European Council should adopt a multiannual strategic programme. We have some doubts about the creation of a permanent President of the European Council. We think that might be a risk of him entering in competition with the President of the Commission and undermining the role of the latter. Furthermore, the permanent President would not be accountable neither to the European Parliament nor to the national parliaments.

The **Council** in its general affairs formation should be presided by the President of the Commission and in its foreign affairs formation - by the European minister of foreign affairs.

The election of the President of the **European Commission** by the European Parliament would reinforce the community method and would increase the democratic accountability of this institution. The election should be confirmed by the European Council by qualified majority. The Commission should comprise a

**national of each Member state.** We are of the opinion that the idea to introduce Associate Commissioners is not consistent with the principle of equality.

As far as the **qualified majority** vote in the Council is concerned, we are of the opinion that the Constitution should include the **figures for EU of 27** agreed in Nice.

Last but not least, the **European Parliament** should have a stronger role by sharing with the Council the power to enact legislation and to adopt the Union's budget. The **number of seats per Member State** should again **follow the agreement reached in Nice**. It is difficult for us to subscribe to the idea of creating a Congress. It would make the institutional structure more complicated and the decision making process even more cumbersome.

Thank you for your attention.