

**Speech delivered by József Szájer, Hungary At the European Convention
2003.02.27.**

I would like to express my support to two very important package of amendments.

One is on the spiritual heritage of Europe, the other is on national and ethnic minorities.

On the spiritual reference I have submitted amendments together with 16 other EPP conventioners. Our proposal is to include an additional second paragraph to Article 2.

II. Pope John Paul has indicated in a message to our President Giscard d'Estaing how important it is to include a reference to the spiritual roots of our common Europe. We Europeans now it very well that the judeo-christian culture is at the very foundation of our idea of a common Europe. Without this presently we would not be able to speak about European integration and an ever closer union of the peoples of our continent.

The text we propose has been borrowed from the preamble of the Polish constitution.

It is conscious that it does not speak about any specific religion or system of belief, it speaks about God which could be the God of various beliefs. In opposite to those who criticize it, it is a tolerant and non-discriminative, inclusive concept giving equal respect to those who do not believe in God and those of different beliefs.

But in the same time this formulation invokes an evident spiritual source of the present common Europe. For many of the candidate countries this is a highly important message. For many people under the communist rule, religion has been one of the few remaining links to the common European heritage behind the iron curtain.