

**COVER NOTE**

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from	The Praesidium
to	The Convention
Subject :	Note on Working Methods

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The attached note on the Convention's Working Methods is a new proposal by the Praesidium, revising document CONV 3/02, to take account of suggestions made by members of the Convention. Copies of the collected texts of all such suggestions are available from the Secretariat on request to all members of the Convention who wish to see them.

**NOTE**  
**ON WORKING METHODS**  
**of the European Convention**

*Article 1*

**Notice of meetings**

The Convention shall be convened by its Chairman with the agreement of the Praesidium or following a written request by a significant number of members of the Convention.

*Article 2*

**Calendar and Agenda**

The Praesidium shall draw up the provisional calendar and agendas for meetings of the Convention and shall submit them to the Convention for approval. Any member of the Convention may ask the Praesidium in writing to add agenda points to the draft agenda of a Convention session. The Praesidium shall in any case add a subject to the draft agenda when the request is made by writing one week before the scheduled session of the Convention by a significant number of members. At the beginning of a meeting, the Convention may decide by consensus on a proposal of its Praesidium to add other items to the agenda.

*Article 3*

**Forwarding of documents to members of the Convention**

The notice of meeting and provisional agenda for a meeting, and any other documents relating to that meeting, shall be sent to the members, alternates, and observers of the Convention by the Secretariat on behalf of the Chairman, at the latest four working days before the date of the meeting. In order to facilitate the preparation of the sessions, the documents shall be sent by e-mail by the Secretariat, whenever possible.

#### *Article 4*

##### **Written contributions**

1. Any member (full or alternate), and observer of the Convention may address a written contribution to the Praesidium. The contributions may be individual or collective.
2. Such written contributions shall be forwarded to the members (full and alternate), and observers of the Convention by the Secretariat, and shall be available on the Convention web site.

#### *Article 5*

##### **Alternates**

1. Those members of the Convention who are prevented from attending a meeting, or part of a meeting, may be represented by their alternate in accordance with the arrangements set out in paragraph 2.
2. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, an alternate may take the floor in a meeting of the Convention when the member whom he replaces will be absent for a full day and when advance notice (before 9 a.m. on the day in question) has been given to the Secretariat by the full member. When taking the floor, the alternate announces that he replaces the full member.
3. The alternates may be present during any meeting of the Convention.

#### *Article 6*

##### **Conduct of meetings**

1. Meetings of the Convention shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Convention or in his absence by one of the two Vice-Chairmen.
2. The meetings of the Convention shall be held in the eleven languages of the European Union with simultaneous interpretation.

3. The representatives of the candidate States shall participate fully in the work and deliberations of the Convention.
4. The recommendations of the Convention shall be adopted by consensus, without the representatives of candidate States being able to prevent it. When the deliberations of the Convention result in several different options, the support obtained by each option may be indicated.
5. Any procedural questions relating to the conduct of meetings may be referred to the Praesidium; it will make a decision under the conditions which it has determined in accordance with paragraph 8.
6. The Secretariat shall draw up the list of (full and alternate) members and observers present at each meeting of the Convention.
7. Taking account of views expressed by members of the Convention, the Chairman shall ensure the proper conduct of discussions, including by arranging as far as possible that the diversity of the Convention's views is reflected in the debates. He may propose to limit interventions in the interest of the efficient conduct of debates. He shall be assisted by the Vice-Chairmen and the Secretariat.
8. The meetings of the Praesidium shall be chaired by the Chairman or in his absence by one of the two Vice-Chairmen. The Praesidium shall decide on its working methods, acting on a proposal from the Chairman.

#### *Article 7*

#### **Hearings of Presidents of Institutions and organs of the EU**

The Praesidium may invite the Presidents of the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors and the European Central Bank to address the Convention.

## *Article 8*

### **Consultations with experts**

Any member (full or alternate) may propose that staff of the institutions or other experts be consulted by the Convention. The Praesidium will decide whom to invite.

## *Article 9*

### **Forum**

1. Under the authority of the Praesidium, and under arrangements which the Praesidium shall determine, the Secretariat will:
  - set up the Forum's internet site, with the Commission responsible for its technical support;
  - be responsible for the organisation and operation of other activities of the Forum, particularly hearings, in co-operation, as necessary, with the Commission and with other Union institutions and organs, ensuring a large representation of the civil society.
2. The conditions under which the Forum's contributions will be forwarded to the Convention, and the conditions under which participants in the Forum may be heard shall be determined by the Praesidium.
3. The Forum's internet site shall include a list of all members of the Convention with their contact details, including e-mail addresses, and links to their internet sites so that members of the public have the opportunity to make contact with the Convention as a whole.

## *Article 10*

### **Location of meetings**

The Convention will meet in the premises of the European Parliament in Brussels.

## *Article 11*

### **Secretariat**

The Convention Secretariat shall be directed by a Secretary-General. He shall take all necessary steps to ensure the proper functioning of the Convention.

## *Article 12*

### **Notes and verbatim records of meetings**

A summary note shall be circulated to members (full and alternate) and observers of the Convention by the Secretariat after each meeting. A verbatim record of the interventions made during the meeting in their original languages will also be made available.

## *Article 13*

### **Translation of documents**

1. The Secretariat shall provide to the members (full and alternate) and observers of the Convention, in the eleven languages of the Union, the following documents:
  - (i) documents issued by the Chairman or the Praesidium;
  - (ii) written proposals for modification to the final texts from full and alternate members;
  - (iii) summary notes of meetings of the Convention.
2. The Secretariat shall forward to members (full and alternate), and observers of the Convention, and post on the website, in the languages in which they were sent to the Praesidium, documents from:
  - (i) members (full and alternate) of the Convention;
  - (ii) institutions and organs of the Union; and
  - (iii) observers.
3. The Chairman may exceptionally ask for the translation of documents for the Convention other than those listed in paragraph 1.

#### *Article 14*

### **Publicity for proceedings**

The Convention's discussions and all its documents listed in Article 13 shall be public. All the records and written contributions shall be freely available on the Convention web site and can be freely reproduced.

#### *Article 15*

### **Working groups**

In the light of views expressed in the Convention, the Chairman or a significant number of the members of the Convention may recommend that the Praesidium set up Convention Working Groups. The Praesidium will determine their mandate, working arrangements and composition, taking into account the specific expertise of members, alternates and observers in relation to the subject under discussion. Every member of the Convention may attend all such meetings. The Secretariat establishes a summary note after each meeting of the working groups.

#### *Article 16*

### **Revisions**

The provisions of this Note may be amended or expanded by the Convention on a written proposal from the Praesidium or by a written request from a significant number of members.

#### *Article 17*

### **Correspondence**

Correspondence addressed to the Convention shall be sent to the Council, marked for the attention of the Convention Secretariat,

- by post: 175 rue de la Loi, B-1048 Brussels,
- by fax: number + 32 2 285 8155 or
- by email: [anne.walter@consilium.eu.int](mailto:anne.walter@consilium.eu.int)