

COVER NOTE

from : Secretariat

to : Convention

Subject: **Report on National Debate on the future of Europe:
– Malta**

Members of the Convention will find attached the report on the national debate on the future of Europe taking place in Malta.

MALTA**NATIONAL DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE****Initiatives related to the Future of Europe Debate**

In the light of the ongoing debate on the Future of Europe, the Malta-EU Information Centre (MIC) has been active in launching this debate in Malta. Since October 2001, the following activities have been held:

17th - 18th October 2001: Conference on the Future of Europe

This Conference launched the important debate on the Future of Europe in Malta. It was spread over two days, commencing on 17th October 2001 with a Public Dialogue with ***Pierre Moscovici***, Minister of Europe of France. The Conference proceeded the following day with a full day session addressed by among others, the representative of the Maltese Government at the European Convention, Prof. ***Peter Serracino Inglott***, and by the Prime Minister of Malta, Dr ***Edward Fenech Adami***.

Various relevant issues were dealt with such as the prospects for a Constitutional Treaty for the European Union, the relationship of the EU with citizens and the vision of the EU governments and institutions on the future of Europe.

Participants included key opinion leaders and representatives from a number of non-governmental organisations. The conference gave participants the opportunity to voice their views and concerns on the subject.

November 2001 - May 2002: Public Dialogues

As from late last year, MIC also hosted a series of public dialogues on the Future of Europe:

- 20th November 2001 - Public Dialogue with ***Nicole Fontaine***, former President of the European Parliament on "The Future of Europe".
- 28th March 2002 - Public Dialogue on the Future of Europe with Professor ***Peter Serracino Inglott***, Maltese Government Representative at the European Convention.
- 16th April 2002 - Public Dialogue with Prof. ***Rocco Buttiglione***, Minister for European Community Policies of the Italian Republic, on "A Europe of Challenges, The European Convention, Enlargement, Governance of Globalisation".
- 20th May 2002 - Public Dialogue with ***Pat Cox***, President of the European Parliament on "The European Parliament - Preparing for Enlargement"

Upcoming Events

23rd July 2002 : Future of Europe Conference (2002)

The MIC is preparing a follow-up Conference on the Future of Europe, which is earmarked for the 23rd July 2002. In the main, the conference will target and stimulate the participation of non-governmental organisations and would mirror the NGO Forum of the Convention. Malta's representatives at the Convention will also be invited to address this conference.

On this occasion, the keynote speaker will be Prof. **Giuliano Amato**, Vice Chairman of the European Convention.

Future of Europe Booklet

In order to facilitate further the Future of Europe debate in Malta, the MIC is compiling a publication with key speeches delivered by academics, opinion leaders and the main players in the debate, both local and foreign, delivered in Malta. This is the first publication of its kind in Malta.

MIC Website

In the month of June, MIC will be re-launching its website, which will also carry a prominent section on the Future of Europe. This section will include the main documents and speeches related to the Future of Europe, and links to other official sites. It will also include questions referring to the Laeken Declaration. The first debate-on-line will be dedicated to the theme of the "Future of Europe" and will include the participation of Malta's representatives in the European Convention.

Other Initiatives

The Malta National Parliament Representative Dr Michael Frendo has also carried out consultation with civil society in two ways.

Firstly, he set up a website, www.futureofeurope.info which includes an inter-active forum. This forum is utilised regularly by members of the public to air their views and opinions. Dr Frendo also responds and stimulates debate on the various issues of the Convention. The site also includes news about the Convention.

Secondly, he has instituted a series of parliamentary hearings which are held in the Foreign Affairs Meeting Room of the Maltese Parliament. The first hearing was with representatives of the European Movement. Other NGOs, unions, associations of employers and the like, will be part of the parliamentary consultative process. In this process, the Maltese parliament provides logistical support. The hearings are recorded and open to the Press and Media.

Youth Convention

On 4 June, an assembly was held to designate two youth candidates to participate in the European Youth Convention in July, as counterparts to the Convention member nominated by the Government of Malta and his alternate. It transpired during this selection process that the debate among the candidates raised several issues which provide scope for further debate. Several points were put forward denoting a remarkable appreciation of the issues under consideration at the Convention. For this reason, the Convention member nominated by the Government of Malta and his alternate intend to maintain this dialogue by periodically organising similar events to gauge the opinion of interested youths. For their part, the youths designated to the Youth Convention by virtue of this selection process will be encouraged to themselves organise similar fora addressed towards the youth population.
