

COVER NOTE

from	Secretariat
to	The Convention
Subject :	Contribution from certain members of the Convention

The Secretary General of the Convention has received the contribution annexed hereto from : Irena BELOHORSKA, Elmar BROK, Andrew DUFF, Olivier DUHAMEL, Peter GLOTZ, Sylvia-Yvonne KAUFMANN, Kimmo KILJUNEN, Rene van der LINDEN, Hans van MIERLO¹, Proinsias de ROSSA, , Frans TIMMERMANS, Pal VASTAGH, Paraskevas AVGERINOS, , Lamberto DINI, Ben FAYOT, Klaus HÄNSCH, , Alain LAMASSOURE, Luis MARINHO, Jacques SANTER, Jozsef SZAJER, Edmund WITTBRODT, Peter BALAZS, Karel de GUCHT, Pavol HAMZIK, Jan KAVAN, Anne van LANCKER, Jürgen MEYER, Jozef OLEKSY, Erwin TEUFEL, Meglena KUNEVA, members of the Convention, and Peter ALTMAIER, Elena PACIOTTI, Valdo SPINI, Pervenche BERÈS, Piia-Noora KAUPPI, Marie NAGY, Gunter PLEUGER, Maria BERGER, Reinhard RACK, Wolfgang SENFF, Joachim WUERMELING, alternate members of the Convention.

¹ The Netherlands' government representative adds that for the future the possibility of direct elections by the European citizens may not be excluded. The Netherlands' government representative considers an election by the European Parliament for the moment as an important first step.

Contribution to the Convention on the Future of the European Union

After three months of intensive discussion in the Convention, the general debate is nearing its end. We agree with the many speakers who have demanded that we should strive for further integration in areas which Europe can only together tackle effectively. But when discussing possible further competencies for the Union we have to simultaneously address the question of how the European institutions will carry out these tasks.

We should not address the different aspects of the necessary reform of the European Union in a piecemeal approach. We have to weigh the impact of each aspect of reform on the whole institutional architecture. A wider debate on institutional reform has already begun, with President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Prime Minister José María Aznar having made an interesting proposal to elect a President of the European Council. It is time to carry this debate into the Convention, where it belongs.

We need to increase the effectiveness and democratic legitimacy of the European institutions. In order to achieve this goal we have to make the work of the Council and of the European Council more effective (i.a., by extending qualified majority-voting), increase the role of the European Parliament (i.a., by generally using the co-decision procedure), and strengthen the executive role and increase the democratic legitimacy of the European Commission.

In order to achieve the latter, we propose that the President of the European Commission should be elected by the European Parliament. Our aim is to strengthen the political accountability of the European Commission. We strongly believe that the President of the Commission needs to have a stronger democratic legitimacy.

The different aspects of this proposal need to be carefully thought through and have to be seen in relation to each other. Our goal should be to create stronger, more democratic, and more effective European institutions within a balanced architectural system. We believe that it is urgent that the Convention starts debating these issues.