

CONV 274/02

WG X 4

NOTE

from :	Secretariat
to :	Working Group X "Freedom, Security and Justice"
Subject :	Summary of the meeting on 16 September 2002

The first meeting of Working Group X "Freedom, Security and Justice" took place on 16 September 2002 under the chairmanship of Mr John Bruton, member of the Praesidium. The list of members of the Working Group attending the meeting is given in the Annex.

1. Calendar of meetings (CONV 256/02)

The Chairman presented the calendar set out in the above document (for the record: the Working Group is scheduled to meet on Wednesday 25 September, Tuesday 8 October, Tuesday 29 October, Wednesday 30 October, Friday 8 November, Friday 22 November, Wednesday 27 November and Wednesday 4 December).

He pointed out that the Working Group was expected to complete its work in time to present its findings at the plenary session of the Convention on 5 and 6 December. This being the case, the meeting scheduled for 4 December was unlikely to take place.

The calendar was favourably received. However, some members of the Group regretted that the 25 September meeting was being held in Brussels when the European Parliament would be in session in Strasbourg.

2. Mandate of the Working Group and organisation of future work – exchange of views on the mandate presented by the Chairman (CONV 258/02)

The Chairman presented the annotated mandate (CONV 258/02), stressing the importance of working on the basis of the identification and practical evaluation of the current situation and the expectations of European citizens. He therefore proposed that the Group organise its work in the following manner:

- the meeting on 25 September would be devoted to the fight against organised crime. The chiefs of the national police forces of two Member States would be given a hearing in the morning, followed by the heads of Europol and Eurojust;
- the meeting on 8 October would examine the instruments and procedures (question 2 of the annotated mandate) in place for European action in the area of freedom, security and justice. Discussions would focus on the improvements to be made. Experts would be invited to express their views;
- the meeting on 29 October would deal with judicial cooperation in criminal and civil matters. The Group would concentrate in particular on identifying crime sectors requiring action at European level;
- the meeting on 30 October would be devoted to the problem of asylum and immigration and of improving controls at the Union's external borders;
- the meeting on 8 November would tackle outstanding institutional questions, including in particular the role of unanimity, enhanced cooperation, the possibility of resorting to constructive abstention and budgetary aspects.

Lastly, the meetings on 22 and 27 November and, if necessary, on 4 December would be set aside for studying and discussing the Group's final report with a view to the plenary session of the Convention on 5 and 6 December.

One member of the Working Group pointed out that it would also be interesting to hear from a representative of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), in addition to Europol and Eurojust. The Chairman took note of this suggestion and will be contacting OLAF with a view to having one of its representatives address the meeting on 25 September.

Other members of the Group wanted the Group's work to cover the topics of European citizenship, freedom of movement and establishment within the Community area (one of the four freedoms under the single market) and personal data protection as well. These topics will also be addressed by the Group as its work proceeds. However, some members of the Group called for proceedings to focus on institutional questions. Several speakers stressed that the specific characteristics of the candidate countries as regards matters falling within the Group's sphere of competence should also be taken into account, particularly matters relating to controls at external borders.

At the end of the presentation and subject to clarification provided by both the Chairman and members of the Group, the annotated mandate was favourably received by the members of the Group.

The Chairman proposed that the Group hold its meetings in public. However, he felt that when drawing up its final report, the Group might wish to meet in restricted session. These guidelines met with general agreement.

The question of interpretation during proceedings was raised by some members of the Group. The Chairman promised to make all the necessary arrangement to meet, on a pragmatic basis, the needs expressed by the members of the Group. He asked the Group's members to let the Secretariat know as soon as possible what their requirements in this regard were.

Finally, the Chairman invited the members of the Group to send him their written contributions on the various points the Group would be discussing at its future meetings, as well as any questions they might wish to raise with experts.

**List of members of the Working Group attending
the meeting on 16 September**

- **Mr John BRUTON, Chairman, member of the Praesidium**
 - **Mr Pat CAREY**
 - **Mr Oskaras JUSYS**
 - **Mr Jürgen MEYER**
 - **Ms Elena PACIOTTI**
 - **Baroness SCOTLAND of Asthal**
 - **Mr Antonio VITORINO**
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