

SUMMARY

from: Secretariat

to: Working group VI on "Economic Governance"

Subject: Summary of the meeting held on 18 September 2002

Outcome of Proceedings

1. Opening by the Chair

- The chairman outlined the agenda for the meeting.

2. Hearing of Commissioner Diamantopoulou

- Following a presentation by Commissioner Diamantopoulou, the group had an exchange of views with the Commissioner. This focussed on the relationship between the economic and employment coordination processes, the open method of coordination, and on the need for transparency.

3. Examination of draft report (WD 14).

- The chairman presented to the group the draft report which had been circulated previously (WD 14). The text in brackets referred to elements which remained open, but the draft also contained compromise proposals on some issues. The text would be discussed in full at the next meeting of the group (27 September), but members were invited to give their preliminary reactions.

In discussion, a number of members said that the draft constituted a good basis for further

work, and was a reasonable reflection of the discussions in the group so far. The Chairman took note of a number of specific comments on the text, and agreed that these would be looked at during the detailed examination at the next meeting. Several members wondered whether one further meeting would be sufficient to reach agreement on the text, and asked about the subsequent timetable for presentation to the Convention. Some asked about how precise the report could be in making recommendations for a constitutional treaty given the fact that a discussion in plenary on the what form the Convention's 'product' might take had still to take place. It was suggested that where agreement could not be reached, the report should set out briefly the different views and the arguments supporting them.

The Chairman agreed that an additional meeting would probably be required and proposed the afternoon of 10 October. The current plan was that he, as chairman, would deliver a preliminary oral report to the Convention at its session at the end of October, and that the main discussion on the report itself would take place at the November plenary. The Chair agreed that the group's recommendations would have to reflect the fact that there had been no discussion yet on the possible content of a constitutional treaty, and that this therefore required a flexible approach from the group. The Chair said that, in cases where differences remained over elements in the final report, the options in brackets would be replaced by a brief description of the differing opinions and the arguments used to support them.

4. Hearing of Mr Åkerholm

The group took note of a presentation by Mr Åkerholm, chairman of the Economic and Financial Committee, on the views of the EFC on the various issues being discussed in the Working Group. Mr Åkerholm underlined the basis message that, in the interests of maintaining confidence, there should be as little change as possible to the basic system. In subsequent discussion, members questioned Mr Åkerholm on the range of issues in the group's mandate.

5. Agenda for the next meeting

The Chairman reiterated that the next meeting would be devoted to a detailed examination of the draft report. Members of the group were invited to submit written comments on the draft to the secretariat by Tuesday 24 September 2002.
