

THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION

THE SECRETARIAT

Brussels, 28 January 2003

CONV 512/03

CONTRIB 212

COVER NOTE

from	Secretariat
to	The Convention
Subject :	Contribution submitted by Mr John Bruton, member of the Convention and Mr Pat Carey, alternate member of the Convention. - “Contribution to Convention on future of Europe”

The Secretary-General of the Convention has received the contribution annexed hereto from
Mr John Bruton, member of the Convention and Mr Pat Carey, alternate member of the Convention.

CONTRIBUTION TO CONVENTION ON FUTURE OF EUROPE BY JOHN BRUTON TD
AND PAT CAREY TD

At present Irish MEP's have the automatic right to attend and speak (though not vote) at the Joint Committee on European Affairs and at the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament). Time and commitments do not allow for regular participation but MEP's do participate from time to time as they wish. This arrangement works quite well.

We suggest that national parliaments should have a reciprocal arrangement with the European Parliament whereby the Chairman of the European Affairs Committee (who is already the COSAC member), or one other nominee of a Member State national parliament, had the right to attend and speak (though not vote) at the European Parliament, and Committees thereof, and to from time to time raise issues of concern to National Parliaments.

The current arrangement of according observer status at certain Committees is of little benefit.

In a Union of twenty-five, a maximum of twenty-five members would have access under the arrangement outlined above. If two or three turned up from time to time it would not burden the European Parliament but would greatly enhance the role of National Parliaments, without creating a new institution or upsetting the institutional balance.

A change along these lines would be in accordance with the spirit of the Laeken declaration and of reports already presented to the Convention.