

CONV 589/03

CONTRIB 262

COVER NOTE

from	Secretariat
to	The Convention
Subject :	Contribution submitted by Mr Rytis Martikonis member of the Convention: - Position of the Government of Lithuania on the EU institutional reform

The Secretary-General of the Convention has received the attached contribution from Mr Rytis Martikonis, member of the Convention.

CONTRIBUTION FROM RYTIS MARTIKONIS
Member of the Convention (Government of Lithuania)

POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LITHUANIA
ON THE EU INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

- Equality of Member States of the European Union, democratic legitimacy and efficiency of the EU institutions should be the cornerstones of the institutional reform of the EU. The institutional balance of the EU should be upheld.
- Community method, which reflects a dual nature of the EU as the Union of Member States and citizens – should be consistently preserved and strengthened.
- Proposals concerning reform of the particular EU institution should be assessed only in the light of the entirety of the institutional reform. The existing institutions of the EU should be reformed in such way, that the whole institutional system would not become more complicated. The establishment of the new EU institutions would contribute to the structural and decision making-making complication of the EU.

Council

- Rotating Presidency (in the European Council and the key formations of the Council of Ministers) should be maintained. It ensures the equality of the Member States and their direct participation in the EU governance. Rotating Presidency of the Council is an important link between the citizens of Member States and EU institutions.
- Continuity and coherence of the work of the Council should be ensured by strengthening of strategic planning as well as by closer co-operation among the Presidencies and EU institutions.

- Current state of discussions on the permanent President of the European Council (to be elected for a longer period than six months) does not provide enough convincing arguments for the necessity of such a post. Permanent President of the European Council would change the institutional balance of the EU, lead to the competition with Commission's President and bring confusion with regard to political accountability.
- The possibility of team Presidencies could be considered, but it should be viewed in a context of interaction amongst all EU institutions.
- The scope of application of the qualified majority voting in the EU legislation should be extended, but decisions concerning this extension of scope should be taken on a case-by-case basis taking into account financial consequences and capabilities to implement the decisions taken by the qualified majority.

Commission

- Proposal that the President of the Commission would be elected by the European Parliament and then approved by the European Council could be supported. It would increase the legitimacy of the Commission.
- Composition of the Commission - if Nice treaty provisions are revised, the principle of one commissioner per Member State should be maintained. Otherwise, when the Union consists of 27 Member States, the number of Members of the Commission should be less than the number of Member States. The Members of the Commission should be chosen according to a rotation system based on the principle of equality.
- Current positions of the High Representative for CFSP and the External Relations Commissioner should be merged into a position of the EU Minister of Foreign Affairs, who at the same time would be a Vice-president of the Commission. Minister of Foreign Affairs should be appointed by the European Council in consultation with the President of the Commission.

European Parliament

- Support the proposal concerning the extension of co-decision procedure. This would strengthen the role of European Parliament in the process of the EU's legislation.
- The role of European Parliament would be strengthened by introducing the right to elect the President of the Commission.

National Parliaments

- National parliaments should be more involved in the political surveillance of the application of the principle of subsidiarity before the European legal act enters into force. The review of the application of the subsidiarity principle after the act enters into force should remain within the competence of the Court of Justice.
-