

EUROPEAN & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Date: 13 November 2003

Time: 11:00

Venue: Hotel Dorint, Boulevard Charlemagne, Brussels

Title: Latest developments in negotiations on the draft Constitution

IGC: TIMING AND PROCESS

Event	Date	Agenda
<p>IGC</p> <p>Heads</p> <p>Foreign Ministers</p>	<p>4 Oct</p> <p>European Council</p>	<p>Procedural questions</p> <p>Legislative Council</p> <p>Council Presidency</p> <p>European Foreign Minister</p>
<p>IGC</p> <p>Foreign Ministers</p>	<p>13 Oct</p> <p>(GAERC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EFM (<i>questionnaire</i>) - Composition of C'ssion (<i>questionnaire</i>) - Preparation for the meeting of Heads: <p>i.e. All institutional issues including: European Parliament, European Council and its President, definition of QM</p>

<p>IGC</p> <p>Heads</p>	<p>16/17 Oct</p> <p>European Council</p>	<p>Institutional issues (orientations)</p>
<p>IGC</p> <p>Foreign Ministers</p>	<p>27/28 Oct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow up of the Heads meeting - Scope of QMV (<i>questionnaire</i>) - Institutional questions (on the basis of drafting proposals submitted by the Presidency in the light of previous discussions on the Legislative Council, the formations of the Council and the system of Council Presidency) Non-institutional questions
<p>IGC</p> <p>Foreign Ministers</p>	<p>18 Nov</p> <p>(GAERC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutional questions (on basis of drafting proposals submitted by the Presidency in the light of previous discussions on the EFM and, if appropriate, on other questions) - Defence (<i>questionnaire</i>) - Part IV (revision procedure)
<p>IGC</p> <p>Heads – dinner</p>	<p>Late Nov</p>	
<p>IGC</p> <p>Foreign Ministers</p>	<p>28-30 Nov</p> <p>Conclave</p>	<p>Overall package</p>
<p>IGC</p> <p>Foreign Ministers</p>	<p>9 Dec</p> <p>(GAERC)</p>	<p>Overall package</p>
<p>IGC</p> <p>Heads</p>	<p>12/13 Dec</p>	<p>Overall package</p>

-
- A parallel track of lawyers' meetings is examining the Treaty with a view to updating the text and cleaning it up, with non-substantive technical changes. There has also been an officials' meeting and may be more before the end of the IGC, to prepare the ground for Ministerial discussions.
 - IGC should complete its work and agree the Constitutional Treaty to allow it to be signed by the Member States of the enlarged Union as soon as possible after 1 May 2004 and in time for the June 2004 elections for the European Parliament.
 - Acceding States participating fully on an equal footing with the current Member States. The three applicant countries – Bulgaria and Romania, with which accession negotiations are underway, and Turkey – are taking part in all meetings of the Conference as observers.

IGC: PROGRESS SO FAR

- Negotiations are really only just getting going. Some progress already made at IGC: agreement not to have a new Legislative Council, and for openness at Council of Ministers' meetings when legislating.
- So far Member States have mostly confined themselves to restating established positions on the main institutional issues – Chair of the European Council, the so-called European "Foreign Minister", the Commission, and the Qualified Majority Voting system. Many of the issues of most concern to us, notably taxation and Justice and Home Affairs, have not yet been reached. Government has been having separate discussions on defence, notably though not exclusively with France and Germany.

Co-ordination in Government

- Government consults Devolved Administrations at Ministerial level through regular meetings of JMC (Europe). DA officials also belong to the Whitehall Future of Europe e-mail network, and see all documents related to the IGC distributed on it.

UK Permanent Representation in Brussels

November 2003