

European Union

**COMMITTEE OF THE
REGIONS**

Brussels, 16 February 2004

RESOLUTION
of the Committee of the Regions
of 12 February 2004
on the
OUTCOME OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

The Committee of the Regions,

A. HAVING REGARD TO the Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe of 18 July 2003 drawn up by the European Convention;

B. HAVING REGARD TO the presidency conclusions of the European Council of 12 and 13 December 2003;

C. HAVING REGARD TO the presidency proposals to the IGC at the European Council of 12 and 13 December 2003 (CIG 60/03, CIG 60/03 Add. 1, CIG 60/03 Add. 2);

D. HAVING REGARD TO the Laeken Declaration on the Future of the European Union;

E. HAVING REGARD TO the European Parliament resolutions of 18 December 2003 on the outcome of the Intergovernmental Conference (P5-TA-PROV (2003) 0593) and of 29 January 2004 on the programme of the Irish Presidency-in-office of the Council and the European Constitution (P5-TA-PROV (2004) 0052);

F. HAVING REGARD TO the CoR's opinion of 9 October 2003 on its proposals for the Intergovernmental Conference (CdR 169/2003 fin¹);

G. HAVING REGARD TO its Bureau's decision of 18 November 2003, under the fifth paragraph of Article 265 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, to draw up a resolution on the subject;

adopted the following resolution at its 53th plenary session of 11 and 12 February 2004 (meeting of 12 February 2004).

The Committee of the Regions

1. DEPLORES the failure of the IGC at the European Council of 12 and 13 December 2003 and **SUPPORTS** the efforts of the Irish presidency to relaunch the intergovernmental negotiations in order to give the citizens of Europe a constitution as quickly as possible, preferably before the European elections;

2. CALLS for the talks to be held in public, with a view to improving transparency and accountability ;

3. STRESSES the historic progress made by the European Convention, underpinned by a powerful democratic mandate, from the citizens of Europe;

4. REGARDS the draft submitted by the European Convention to the heads of state or government, which it endorses, as the foundation of the future Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe and thus **CONSIDERS** it to be the mainstay of the ultimate IGC agreement;

5. CALLS ON Member State governments to shoulder their responsibilities and **ASKS** them to put the Community interest before national interests, in order to safeguard the future of European integration, not least cohesion policy;

6. STRESSES in that connection that the inclusion of territorial cohesion as a Union objective is one of the fundamental achievements of the Convention's draft Constitution;

7. URGES the IGC to confirm the constitutional recognition of the role of local and regional authorities in the European venture and the new role given to the CoR on the monitoring of the principle of subsidiarity, as affirmed by the Convention;

8. REITERATES its recommendations to straighten out certain inconsistencies between the various sections of the Treaty without, however, undermining the institutional balance in order, on the one hand, to clarify the CoR's institutional status, firmly establish its areas of mandatory consultation within the constitutional set-up and strengthen its consultative role,

and, on the other, to consolidate economic, social and territorial cohesion, among other things by establishing an explicit legal basis for interregional and cross-border cooperation;

9. **CALLS ON** Member State governments, to complete the Union reform process launched at the Laeken European Council;

10. **INSTRUCTS** its president to forward this resolution to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Commission and members of the Convention.

Brussels, 12 February 2004

The President
of the
Committee of the Regions

The Acting Secretary-General
of the
Committee of the Regions

Peter Straub

Gerhard Stahl

¹ OJ C 23, 27.1.2004, p. 1

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CdR 22/2004 fin EN/O

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