Treaties, amendment: draft constitutional Treaty, intergovernemental Conference IGC for October 2003

2003/0902(CNS) - 10/07/2003 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to present a proposal for the amendment of the Treaties in which the Union is founded. CONTENT : under Article 48 of the Treaty on European Union, it is proposed that a Conference of Representatives of the Governments of the Member States be convened, in accordance with the conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council meeting. In Thessaloniki the European Council welcomed the draft Constitutional Treaty presented by the Chairman of the Convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and considered that it marked a historic step in the direction of furthering the objectives of European integration, by: - bringing our Union closer to its citizens; - strengthening our Union's democratic character; - facilitating our Union's capacity to make decisions, especially after its enlargement; - enhancing our Union's ability to act as a coherent and unified force in the international system; - effectively dealing with the challenges that globalisation and interdependence create. The text of the draft Constitutional Treaty is a good basis for initiating the Intergovernmental Conference. The Conference should complete its work and approve the Constitutional Treaty as soon as possible and in time for it to become known to Europe's citizens before the June 2004 elections for the European Parliament. The acceding States will participate fully in the Intergovernmental Conference on an equal footing with the current Member States. The Constitutional Treaty will be signed by the Member States of the enlarged Union as soon as possible after 1 May 2004. The Intergovernmental Conference will be conducted by the Heads of State or Government, assisted by the members of the General Affairs and External Relations Council. The representative of the Commission will participate in the Conference. The General Secretariat of the Council will provide the secretariat support for the Conference. The European Parliament will be closely associated with and involved in the work of the Conference. The three candidate countries - Bulgaria and Romania, with which accession negotiations are under way, and Turkey - will take part in all meetings of the Conference as observers.