Preparing the next intergovernmental Conference for the year 2000

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PURPOSE: the present the 3 main points on the agenda for the Intergovernmental Conference of 2000 on institutional questions. CONTENT: In a document prepared for the Cologne European Council and presenting the conclusions of the German Presidency, the Council is putting forward three main points for the agenda of the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) expected to start in early 2000. This IGC will deal with institutional questions not resolved by the Treaty of Amsterdam and which need to be sorted out before further enlargement of the EU takes place. This IGC is expected to conclude at the end of 2000. More specifically, the IGC's mandate will cover the following: 1) size and composition of the European Commission; 2) weighting of votes in the Council (new weighting, introduction of double majority, threshold for decisions taken by qualified majority); 3) eventual extension of qualified majority voting within the Council. The IGC may also deal with other amendments to the Treaty to the extent that these concern the European institutions in the framework of these three points or that they arise from the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty. The document invites the Finnish Presidency to draw up a report on how these three points might be dealt with, to be submitted to the Helsinki European Council. This report will take up the proposals put forward by the Member States, the Commission and the European Parliament. The Presidency may give some consideration to additional consultation. The Council is to examine as to how the European Parliament may be involved in this work.