

# Road map for the Union's constitutional process

2007/2087(INI) - 21/05/2007

The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Enrique BARÓN CRESPO (PES, ES) and Elmar BROK (EPP-DE, DE) on the roadmap for the Union's Constitutional Process.

The committee reaffirmed its endorsement of the content of the Constitutional Treaty, which would make the EU more efficient and democratic, and called on the June European Council to convene an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) with a view to reaching a settlement on institutional reforms and defining a roadmap "containing a procedure, a clear mandate and the objective of an agreement before the end of this year". It recalled the need to guarantee the EU's decision-making capacity, the effectiveness of its policies and their full democratic legitimacy and to strengthen the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the role of the EU in the world.

The committee report called for the preservation of all basic principles as contained in Part I of the Constitutional Treaty, including the primacy of European law, the double nature of the European Union as a union of States and of citizens, and the new typology of acts. It stressed that the Constitutional Treaty also contained other important improvements such as the consolidation of the existing treaties and the merging of pillars, the express recognition of the values on which the EU is based and of the legally binding force of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the participation of citizens in the political life of the EU, clarification of the respective competences of the EU and of the Member States, and respect for the subsidiary principle and the role of national parliaments.

The committee stated that the European Parliament would "reject any outcome of the negotiations which, if compared with the Constitutional Treaty, would lead to a diminution of the protection of the rights of citizens(...) as well as to less democracy, transparency and efficiency in the functioning of the Union".

The report went on to underline the need for the IGC to take into account major issues raised during the reflection period and to clarify others that had already been addressed in the Constitutional Treaty, such as climate change, energy, migration policy, the European Social Model, terrorism, enlargement and the coordination of economic policies in the euro-zone. The Commission was urged to prepare proposals for modernising the Constitutional Treaty with regard to these issues.

The committee also called for the Parliament, as the only institution of the EU directly elected by citizens, to be fully involved in the IGC at all levels and to a greater extent than during the 2003-2004 IGC. It also called for the creation of an interinstitutional conference (following the model used when drawing up the Maastricht Treaty) in order to keep the European Parliament informed and "bring an important contribution to building a cross-party and transnational consensus in the IGC".

To help achieve a positive outcome, the committee also expressed its willingness to maintain close contact with the national parliaments during the forthcoming negotiation phase, as well as with the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European social partners, religious communities and civil society.

Among other points, the report demanded that all Member States coordinate their ratification procedures, in order to allow for the ratification process to be completed simultaneously, and stressed that everything must be done to avoid the creation of a two-tier Europe.