

Draft contribution from the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union of the German Bundestag (April 2001)

Resolution submitted by the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union of the German Bundestag for the XXIV COSAC, Stockholm, 21-22 May 2001

Greater participation by the national parliaments in the preparations for the 2004 Intergovernmental Conference

The European Union's democratic legitimation and transparency must be further improved and safeguarded on a lasting basis. The process of drafting the Treaty of Nice demonstrated very clearly that the IGC, as an instrument to reform the European treaties, has reached its limits. For this reason, the European Parliament and the national parliaments - including the parliaments of the accession countries - must play a more active part in the preparatory work, now commencing, for the drafting of a constitution, which is part of the process for the EU's further development agreed at Nice. In future, the parliaments must be able to contribute substantively to the further development of the European treaties. The EU's positive experiences with the Convention during the drafting of the Charter of Fundamental Rights should be taken into account when preparing the texts of new EU treaties in future. As part of the preparations for the 2004 IGC, a conference based on the Convention model should therefore be convened in order to develop proposals for EU reform. A "Committee of Wise Men" is an inadequate response to the demand for more democracy and transparency in Europe's opinion-forming and decision-making processes.

The participation of all the key civil society actors in a comprehensive debate on the European Union's future must be guaranteed. These civil society actors should be able to play a continuing and active part in the drafting of a European constitution. This will also help to ensure the greatest possible openness and transparency in the further development of the European Union.