

Resolution of the European Economic and Social Committee on the roadmap for the constitutional process (30 May 2007)

Caption: In its resolution adopted on 30 May 2007, the European Economic and Social Committee reaffirms its support for the Constitutional Treaty. The Committee also states its intention to assist the negotiation process for the new treaty by helping ensure that the voice of civil society is heard.

Source: European Economic and Social Committee. Plenary assembly 30 and 31 May 2007 summary of opinions adopted – 1. Resolution on the roadmap for the constitutional process – European Council of 21 and 22 June 2007. Brussels: 04.06.2007. P. 1-2. http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/grf_ces83-2007_d_en.pdf.

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European Economic and Social Committee

Brussels, 4 June 2007

PLENARY ASSEMBLY

30 AND 31 MAY 2007

SUMMARY OF OPINIONS ADOPTED

Full text versions of EESC opinions are available in the official languages on the Committee's web site at the following address:

http://eesc.europa.eu/activities/press/summaries_plenaries/index_en.asp

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The Plenary Assembly was attended by **Mr Marcos Peña**, President of the Spanish Economic and Social Council, who spoke about "Europe: social involvement and deliberative democracy"; by **Mr Günter Verheugen**, Vice-president of the European Commission, who explained action already taken and progress made on the "Better Lawmaking" initiative; and by **Ms Margot Wallström**, Vice-president of the European Commission, who spoke about the "Roadmap for the constitutional process" and the strategic objectives set by the Commissioners for 2008. Together with EESC President Mr Dimitriadis, Ms Wallström went on to sign the Addendum to the Cooperation Protocol between the European Commission and the EESC concluded by the two bodies in November 2005.

1. RESOLUTION ON THE ROADMAP FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS – EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF 21 AND 22 JUNE 2007

- **Rapporteur:** Mr Frerichs (Employers – DE)
- **Reference:** CESE 640/2007 fin

- **Key points:**

The EESC supports the German Presidency in its intention to present a roadmap for future endeavours to solve the crisis on the occasion of the meeting of the European Council on 21 and 22 June 2007, and welcomes the fact that in the Berlin Declaration of 25 March 2007 the European Parliament elections of 2009 were set as a deadline for the entry into force of the new Constitution.

There is an urgent need for a speedy resolution of the present crisis by the adoption of a treaty that meets the requirements of a Union of 27 or more Member States. For new challenges make it essential that the European Union reaches agreements on new policies and takes the necessary decision.

Since the Constitutional Treaty has been ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Member States with a population representing a clear majority of the citizens of the European Union, the EESC insists that the Treaty continue to be the basis for future negotiations and that the outcome of these should be to preserve the substance of what was decided at the European Convention and signed by all the Heads of State and Government.

The EESC reaffirms its support for the Constitutional Treaty and reiterates the stance it has taken earlier regarding the Treaty, which it continues to regard as a vital instrument which will enable the Union to meet the challenges it faces and the institutions to operate more efficiently.

This is why it believes, on the one hand, that the Treaty must continue to be the basis of negotiations underway to find a way out of the current political and institutional impasse and, on the other, that its substance be preserved, especially the democratic, institutional and procedural innovations as well as the introduction of Fundamental Rights. This means: Part I (Objectives, Institutions, Framework of the Union), Part II (The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union) and Part IV (General and Final Provisions) must remain as they are. The institutional and procedural provisions of Part III should, where they go further than existing law, be incorporated into Part I.

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Regarding the substance of the new version as being more important than its name, the EESC is not opposed to the new treaty being given a new name, given the numerous misunderstandings the term "constitution" has given rise to in some Member States.

The Committee also affirms its intention to shadow the negotiation of the new Treaty by helping to ensure, in keeping with its institutional remit, that the voice of organised civil society is heard. It is prepared, for example, to join with the Portuguese Council Presidency to stage meetings with civil society organisations, as it did during the work of the European Convention, to provide information and engage in dialogue.

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2. THE EUROPEAN UNION AND GLOBALISATION

- ***Challenges and opportunities facing the EU in the context of globalisation***

- **Rapporteur:** Mr Malosse (Employers – FR)
- **References:** Exploratory opinion – CESE 804/2007

- **Key points:**

This opinion was requested by the German presidency, on the subject "Challenges and Opportunities Facing the EU in the Context of Globalisation". The opinion was adopted in the REX section of 4 May 2007.

The opinion considers that, at international level, the EU response to the globalisation must be to contribute more forcefully to the establishment of a "state governed by the rule of law" promoting a humanist globalisation based on the multilateralism, the fundamental rights of individuals, greater transparency on the financial markets and a high level of health and food safety for all population groups. In the field of international trade, the EESC takes the view that bilateral approaches are beneficial only insofar as they are complementary to the multilateralism pursued by the WTO.

Inside the EU, globalisation should be a source of opportunity for the European integration by stepping up economic integration and solidarity, which are core aspects of the Lisbon Strategy.

Organised civil society should promote the achievement of globalisation "with a human face". The EESC stresses the need to fully involve the social partners and the various players representing organised civil society.

The achievement of both globalisation with a human dimension and European integration are matters which involve the people and organised civil society. If they are better informed and consulted and