

**Future of the European Union in the Perspective of the  
Constitutional Draft**  
**- National Perspective from the EU Member and Future Member States -**  
*Ambassador Miroslav Adamiš, Mission of Slovakia to the EC*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Thank you very much for inviting me to your seminar. We see the discussion about the future of the Union **as an ongoing process** that has not started with and won't end with the Intergovernmental Conference that is under way. The „*finalité*“ of the European project cannot be defined now. Every generation forms its character and orientation for the future.
- It is good and *important* for Slovakia and I assume for all the acceding countries and also for the whole Europe **that we can fully participate in the IGC**. Of course, our participation in the European Convention was highly welcomed, even when it was not on an equal footing, since we were not able to hinter a consensus.
- **Slovakia's response** to the call of the European Council in Nice for a wider and deeper debate on the future of the Union involving both member and candidate countries was the idea of **convening a national convention**. The Slovak Convention started its work already in March 2002. The national Convention have provided a suitable forum for Slovak citizens interested in discussing the challenging questions of Slovakia's future in the EU not only during the European Convention or the IGC, but will play even more important role also after May 1, 2004, when our expectations will be confronted with the real experience of membership.

- At the beginning of my short presentation I **want to stress one point**. We consider the Draft Constitutional Treaty to be a good starting point for the discussions in the IGC. The European Convention managed to achieve a good compromise in many points. However, there are some points, where there was no compromise achieved and these issues need to be discussed. The most important aspect is, that **we are strong committed to achieve consensus** and we support the Italian Presidency in its efforts to conclude the IGC by the end of this year. I think, on this aspect I am not speaking only on behalf of Slovakia, but reflecting the overall atmosphere of the negotiations so far. **There is not any country that wishes to open the whole package**. We think there is a need for clarifications and space for improvements.
- The Draft Constitutional Treaty contains **several positive elements**. There is a higher transparency in the decision-making of the Union's institutions, division of competences, simplification of the legislative instruments and procedures. The role of the national parliaments is strengthened through the monitoring of the principle of subsidiarity. The pillar structure being abolished, the Union receiving legal personality, and the creation of the „double hatted“ Union's Foreign Affairs Minister are also positive results.
- One of the most complex issues for the IGC is the **institutional question**. We should find a right balance between the composition of the Commission, the Council Presidency system, and the definition of the qualified majority voting. We are of the opinion that the proposed model of the Commission consisting of two tier commissioners needs to be reconsidered. The Commission must retain its strong position in the institutional balance. By applying the proposed model combined with the creation of a permanent Chair of the European Council this is

clearly not the case. We still see the Commission composed of equal commissioners - in their rights and obligations - coming from all member states as a body that can function effectively.

- Secondly, we would also like to see more clarity in applying the principle of equal rotation in chairing the different formations of the Council of Ministers – it is important to ensure, that a **team presidency together with the Union’s multiannual planning** will be effective and will bring more cohesion in the functioning of the Union in the future.
- Thirdly, Slovakia also supports the **inclusion of a reference to the Christian values** into the Preamble of the Constitutional Treaty. The bases for unity on our continent was brought through Christianity. By acknowledging our roots, we acknowledge not only our history, but also our spiritual and intellectual inspiration.
- Fourthly, Slovakia raised during the IGC also an issue related to the name of the document that we are going to adopt. **The name „Constitutional Treaty“ should be used throughout the whole text.** We believe, that this name would better reflect the reality that it is a treaty between the member states who, by their mutual agreement, constitute the Union and decide about the Union’s organisation.
- Finally, the **scope of the qualified majority**. Generally, we agree with this trend. However, at this point some issues should be treated with respect to national sensitivities and interests of both – the old and the new members. In our opinion there are areas where unanimity still needs to be preserved.

- I would like to stop at this point of my presentation in providing you with a basic outline of Slovakia's approach towards the IGC. The concrete details can be addressed during the discussion and I am looking forward to your questions and remarks.

Thank you for your attention.