



Resolution on the period of reflection about the future of the European Union

Adopted at LYMEC EC, Helsinki, Finland 2005

Resolution submitted by the Bureau

WHEREAS:

- The draft Treaty *establishing a Constitution for Europe* was rejected by referendum in France (29 May 2005) and in the Netherlands (1st June 2005) but was approved by a majority of Member States representing a majority of the peoples of Europe
- In the absence of a clear plan B, the European Council decided on 16-17 June to install a “*period of reflection (...) to enable a broad debate to take place in each of our countries, involving citizens, civil society, social partners, national parliaments and political parties*”.
- On 21 September, European Commission President Barroso declared that “*at least for the next two or three years, we will not have a Constitution*”, creating a row of protests.
- Andrew Duff MEP (ALDE) set out to rescue the European Constitution and presented on 13 October a draft report on the period of reflection, to be voted by the EP Plenary next December, whilst Commissioner Margot Wallström launched on the same day the European Commission’s “Plan D” (for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate).

AND CONSIDERING THAT:

- It is necessary to respect the verdict of those Member States and their peoples which have ratified the Constitution as well as those which have not,
- The ‘No’ votes appear to have been rather more an expression of dissent at the present state of some Member States, than a specific objection to the constitutional reforms as has been shown by several polls,
- Part I of the draft Treaty strengthens EU parliamentary democracy and the rule of law, anchors fundamental rights, enhances the capacity of the EU to act effectively on the world scene, and forms a suitable constitutional framework for the European Union;
- The European Council failed to give a clear focus to the period of reflection or to define methods, and has been seen to lack both the political will and the capacity to stimulate and manage the European dialogue,
- The European Commission has lacked political leadership to help the Union emerge from its current constitutional difficulties;

THE EUROPEAN LIBERAL YOUTH - LYMEC:

- Confirms its wish to see without undue delay a constitutional settlement of the future of Europe: a fully-fledged political union cannot indeed emerge without a prior agreement on a common constitutional framework,
- Supports the Constitution rescue initiative launched and led by Andrew Duff MEP, whilst inviting the ALDE Group to sharpen as much as

possible EP recommendations - sometimes too lukewarm - on the possible way out from the period of reflection.

- Calls for a ratification of the constitutional part of the draft Treaty (essentially Part I, which contains a reference to Part II) by popular vote at the occasion of the European Parliament elections of 2009, thereby constituting the first Constitution of Europe's history
- Calls for a separate ratification by national parliaments of the non-constitutional parts of the draft Treaty (essentially Part III, which provides an excellent in-depth summary of the *acquis communautaire*),
- Maintains its long-term vision of a European Federation, with a clear European Government and a bicameral Parliament representing on the one hand the European citizens and on the other hand the European Member States.
- Proposes that a European Constitutional Assembly is elected in 2014 in order to shape a European Constitution that responds to the challenges of the 21st century and the coming enlargement of the EU to Turkey.

AND FURTHERMORE:

- Welcomes the beginnings of a fresh debate, coordinated by the European Commission, about the controversial issues that surround the future of the EU
- Warns that uncoordinated, narrowly focussed national debates will serve only to harden national stereotypes and accentuate divisions; and an imposed dialogue without political goals will be nebulous, even vacuous, thereby giving rise to public cynicism;
- Asks the ELDR Party to take an active role, together with other European political parties, in this pan-European debate and give a European perspective to this debate