

Seminar Report

**An Assessment of the European
Convention: The Political Dynamics
of Constitutional Reform**

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Foreword

The European Convention, set up by the European Council in Laeken in December 2001, opened up a new chapter in the process of European integration by giving enhanced political and democratic legitimacy to the reforms of the European Union (EU). One of the fundamental reasons behind the decision to convene a constituent assembly of this kind was the realization that previous intergovernmental conferences had failed to produce reforms bold enough to prepare the EU adequately for an unprecedented enlargement to the East. Another reason was the criticism levelled against the EU that treaty reforms had hitherto been closed shops where political and bureaucratic elites decided on Europe's future without involving the European public or their parliamentary representatives.

As the Convention's work unfolded, its deliberations became the focal point for the debate on treaty reform among national and European political elites, European institutions, interest groups and other players. The Convention provided a forum for debate and bargaining over the future shape of the EU and, in the process, constitutional reform became increasingly politicized. In a novel fashion, the Convention provided a locus for political dynamics of an untried nature as political players tested each other's commitment to European integration while advancing their own perceptions of the political norms and values that should prevail on the European level. In this context, representatives from member states, applicant and candidate countries, European institutions and national parliaments from throughout Europe formed and broke alliances, confronted each other's deep-seated attitudes to European integration and exchanged views on how economic, social, political and democratic challenges could best be met in an enlarged EU. In this sense the Convention has been a unique experiment in transnational political debate and, as some of the speakers suggest in this report, holds the potential of constructing a European identity on the basis of deliberation.

The seminar, ***A First Assessment of the European Convention: The Political Dynamics of Constitutional Reform*** was organised by the Research Department of the Clingendael Institute as part of its continued research into European institutional

reform and, in particular, the European Convention. The aim of this seminar was to provide an analysis of the political dynamics of the European Convention and give an assessment of the Convention as a method for treaty reform. To this effect, Clingendael invited a number of distinguished experts on European affairs to give their first assessments of the outcome of the deliberations of the European Convention against the background its own internal dynamic, the political context within it was situated as well as the wider challenges confronting it. The seminar was held on 5 June in the midst of the Convention's difficult final debate on institutional reform, thus before the exact outcome of these deliberations were known. However, as this report shows, the pertinence and clear-sightedness of the different interventions bear witness to both the speakers' insights and command of the subject matter and the relative openness of the workings of the Convention itself.

The aim of this report is to give a succinct summary of the main arguments and observations made during the seminar in order to provide practitioners and scholars of European affairs with some important insights into the political dynamics of institutional reform and a first evaluation of the Convention as an alternative method to prepare intergovernmental negotiations. This report comes as foretaste to the revised and elaborated versions of the interventions that Clingendael is planning to publish in time before the start of the Intergovernmental Conference later this autumn. This complete collection of the analyses made by the speakers at the seminar in June will provide valuable understanding of the dynamics of institutional reform at the European level in its different dimensions and settings as existing and future member states' representatives gather to revise and sanction the reforms agreed by the Convention.

This report has been drafted by Anna Little, MA student at Leiden University under the supervision of Anna Michalski. The Clingendael Research Department acknowledges with gratitude the financial support given to this project by the Dutch Foreign Ministry and the European Commission through the EUCON project of TEPSA.

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The Hague, July 2003

1 Putting the Convention in Perspective: Constitutional Methods and Main Political Issues

*From Intergovernmental Conferences to Convention: Treaty Reform
as Part of Europe's Evolving Identity?*

Wolfgang Wessels

The Convention-method has emerged logically from the step-by-step development of the EU in the past 50 years. Although the Convention covers the same basic issues, there has been a “limited but real transfer of competencies”, and it no longer skirts around the problem of military security. For instance, defence is no longer considered a taboo subject. Far from being intergovernmental, the Convention should be considered a supranational entity within which government heads have taken on a common responsibility, despite their representing specific nations. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to see it as a “fusion of different policy matters”. Regardless of the more rigid agreements of the past, the EU Convention is more flexible, thus allowing for real debate.

According to Wolfgang Wessels, there exist three possible readings of the Convention:

1. the Convention as a continuation of the IGCs of the 1990s with a different means (a reading supported by intergovernmentalist theory), which facilitates the broaching of taboo subjects;
2. The Convention as a proper political process based on the legitimacy of elected representatives - The Laeken Declaration opened the possibility for this. Consequently, In this case, Wessels claimed, the autumn intergovernmental conference (IGC) should simply be a question of rubber-stamping, that is, no leader should dare to go against the outcome of the Convention;
3. The Convention as an integral component of identity building. Seen in this light, the Convention becomes a part of the process of creating a European

identity, rather than a means with which to discover one that already exists. Deliberation is the key element in the process of identity-building.

In reality, the Convention is a mixture of the different political styles among groups of different nationalities institutions and backgrounds. External factors, such as September 11th, the war in Iraq, and the emerging world order have also made an impact on the Convention. Constitution building in a changing international context – e.g. the threat of terrorism – has seen previously fixed positions abandoned. Many of the formulations (albeit nominally federal or intergovernmental) are no longer as clear-cut. Contrary to the aim announced at the Laeken summit in December 2001, the debate about the future of Europe has become more complex with respect to the question of competencies, and in terms of the number of actors and views held. While reserving judgment as to whether the proposals for an early warning system for national parliaments, a European Congress, a European Foreign Minister, or reinforced co-operation in the area of foreign policy are good or bad, Wessels claimed that they are not fulfilling the simple ideas set forth at Laeken. The constitutional treaty may be easier to read, but the ambiguities in competencies have not been reduced.

Wessels claimed that the EU member states and institutions need to recognize the value in the integration process itself, which Wessels refers to as the “constitutionalization of Europe” – that is, the formalization of informal practices already in use in the EU. It should also maintain its own agenda of constitutional reform in sight. This is important if Europe hopes to avoid agenda setting according to Washington.

Above all, the Convention is not a “*finalité finale*” – as with the Treaty of Rome, there will be leftovers. The idea that the Union is a work in progress allows for an openness that should be considered beneficial to the Europe project.

Political Contexts and Challenges Facing the EU: Motivations behind the Convention

Michel Theys

From the perspective of Michael Theys, the Convention emerged out of the need for treaty reform. Despite an earlier attempt to do so, and heads of state fighting late into the night on the topic, the Nice summit failed to produce a satisfying agreement on the issue of institutional reform. When faced with enlargement, the EU was once again forced to grapple with the question of overhauling the institutional structures and decision-making procedures. Consequently, the Laeken summit held under the Belgian Presidency dealt with the reforms proposed at Nice and the challenges posed by enlargement. The resulting Laeken Declaration and the four themes given to the Convention went far beyond the previous recommendations.

Turning to the approach in question, Theys claimed that the Convention-method allows for more openness than any “sterile” IGC, excluding the first treaty on coal and steel: “the Convention has renewed the energy in the EU and toppled mountains by putting forward proposals such as that for a European Minister of Foreign Affairs, who would also be the vice President of the EU Commission”. In the past, many IGCs would have considered this issue a taboo.

The extraordinary moment of truth for the Convention, and the turning point with respect to its progress, was the Iraqi crisis. Two camps emerged during the conflict: on the one hand, those who opposed going to war without a mandate from the UN, and on the other, those who supported the US led attack on Iraq. However, this rupture can be seen as politically motivated, and situated at the level of the leaders rather than that of the population of Europe, due to the fact that mass anti-war protests were held throughout the continent. More important to note is the resulting clarification of existing and future member states’ commitment to European integration that is taking place. The integration-minded states are joining in a “marriage of the Europe of Charles de Gaulle and that of Jean Monnet”, through reinforced co-operation in various areas. In sum, while it goes without saying that the common market will survive, a political union, which will not include all the present European countries as member states, is bound to emerge.

Debate: Round One

- In responding to the question of whether or not the Convention-method is better suited to tackle the issue of treaty reform than the intergovernmental approach, Wessels highlighted the increased need for flexibility – “***parliamentalisme rationalisé***” - in the EU. The point was reiterated that the Convention-method is currently the best tool to deal with the cross-cutting differences between nations, and even within the countries themselves; the complex and often ambiguous competencies; and to develop the values and deep understanding that are required to deal with external shocks that can develop out of nowhere.
- Wessels argued that more important than the external shocks themselves, is the way that we define such challenges. Machiavelli would say that you have to be prepared for all unknown events that might come. We need a flexible institutions set up in order to face these yet to be identified trials. There was also the suggestion put forward that, despite the Convention’s slow moving external presentation, its institutional organization allows participants to come to an understanding of each others’ positions through debate. Wessels posited that this could decrease the likelihood of an internal implosion.
- Having said this, an observable pattern of alliance formation emerged during the conflict in Iraq. Much like treaties that have required leadership in the past, the Franco-German team rematerialized in their stance against the United States.

There was also mention that this united front between the two nations was intended to restore good relations after their falling out over Nice. However, upon closer inspection, it should be noted that the cleavages were cross-cutting. Despite their being at the centre of the anti-US campaign, Germany and France have very different outlooks. It was also not simply a matter of a Franco-German core, coupled with Belgium and Luxembourg, versus *the others*. They cautioned us against speaking of a continental rupture, especially on the basis of politicians' reactions. He also suggested that it was imprudent to draw conclusions from the positions taken by Italy and Spain during the Iraq crisis with respect to their devotion to the European project.

- This tied neatly into addressing the question of what potential impact a constitution would have on a European identity. Turning the question around on its head, Wessels replied that the Convention, and the possible constitution to come, are part of the process of constructing an identity. Further linking the questions together, he posited that no nation simply emerged from nothing – “solidarity is born out of a reaction to external shocks”. In his view, institution building goes hand in hand with identity creation.
- In conclusion, he also pointed out that the concern over the disappearance of the pillar system was simply one of semantics. He argued that special measures are laid out in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and despite the fact that things are no longer labelled as such, the pillar structure still exists. He posited that if anything, talk of an EU military, suggested the emergence of a fourth pillar.

2 The Political Dynamics of the Convention

The Convention's Internal Dynamic: Leadership, Alliances and Interest Formation

Mark Gray

“Where is the Convention situated in the course of institutional reform?” While there are those who feel that it is preparing a subsequent IGC, Mark Gray suggested that the Convention is already in the process because of the unusually early engagement in intergovernmental negotiation due to the heightened interest and involvement of the participating countries’ governments. From this, Gray launched into an outline of the organization of the Convention.

In contrast to the public plenary meetings held in the European Parliament (EP), where the public has full access to the proceedings, the Convention’s secretive working groups and the Praesidium’s meetings are held in the Council building, where access is denied to the public. Although the Praesidium has become the most important body of the Convention, concern exists over whether it provides enough of a counterweight against the President, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing. There is strong evidence that it is not. Praesidium members have come to support texts of an intergovernmental character despite the fact that most personalities therein are supranationally inclined (due in part to the fact that no one wants to overrule Giscard, and partly because there is a strong sense of collective responsibility for the success and ratification of the Convention). For example, and counter-intuitively, there has been no defender of the community-method, which is particularly salient to the already weakened Commission.

The patterns in alliances are constantly changing according to a range of cross cutting issues. There has also been little leadership demonstrated in the Convention. Neither France, Germany, European institutions such as the Commission or the EP, nor the Greek Presidency has taken much initiative. In contrast to previous IGCs, it appears as though some taboos of European integration have been removed. For instance, it is considered acceptable to take backward steps in terms of integration.

Above all, the personality of the President of the Convention does matter. There are those who feel that, had Giscard d'Estaing been in the room during the debate about a European Congress, a provision to that effect would certainly have been included in the Constitution.

The Convention seen from a Future Member State: The Case of Hungary

Károly Grúber

Now that Hungary has become a future member state and is no longer an applicant country since the signing in April of the Accession Treaty, its position in the Convention has changed. The Convention currently constitutes an important learning process during which Hungarian representatives can make personal contacts, learn how to build coalitions, and negotiate.

In fact, Hungary hopes that the IGC, which is scheduled for October 2003, does not end before May 2004, as it feels that member states in its position should take part in any negotiation on EU reform. The outcomes that Hungary anticipates include, among others, the preservation of the Community-method, i.e. the institutional balance that currently exists and the extension of the co-decision procedures and qualified majority voting (QMV). Specifically, it is pleased with the abolishment of the European Congress from the texts, and does not want the number of commissioners reduced, as the present system is a strong selling point for the EU to the general public in the country. However, it should be noted that in the long run, Hungary would be willing to discuss this issue further. It also expects that equality among each and every member state will be ensured. It is for this reason that Hungary, who sees the Presidency of the Council as “a symbol of equality between member states and a bridge between EU citizens and the Union”, is keen that the Constitution preserves this position on the basis of a rotating system. Hungary is strongly against the idea of a permanent President of the European Council but supports the proposal to create a European Foreign Minister. Although voicing some concern that the involvement of national parliaments might have the potential to slow down the decision-making process, Grúber underlined his government's official support for this proposal. Finally, Hungary is eager to see human rights inserted into the Constitution, particularly in the area of minority rights. It intends to come back to this issue once it has become a member of the EU.

In conclusion, although most analysts claim that the main fault lines in the Convention fall between small/big countries, new/old member states, federal/integrationist countries, alliances change daily. In fact, Hungary finds its closest allies in member states who are concerned about the size and composition of the Commission, and the question of whether or not the presidency should be

rotating or permanent. During the Convention, Hungary has found common ground with the Benelux countries and Austria.

Debate: Round Two

- A major question that was addressed by both Gray and Grüber was the issue of double-hatting. The Hungarian government supports this proposal but is wary about its institutional articulation, i.e. whether by virtue of its place in the institutional structure, the Foreign Minister will have a communitarian bias or be dominated by the European Council. Gray suggested that this proposal was only being accepted because, as of yet, no one had come forward and opposed it.
- In response to a question posed with regard to alliance formation, Gray said that no structural alliances had appeared on issues pertaining to parts I, II and III of the constitutional treaty. Towards the end of the Convention, however, alliances did emerge around 2-3 big political issues, namely, the President of the European Council, the number of Commissioners and the articulation among the Foreign Minister, the Commission and the European Council. On the last point, there is some question as to whether a Foreign Minister will develop a communitarian spirit and frame of mind, or simply become a puppet of the European Council.
- Gray claimed that Giscard d'Estaing did not leave much room for actors other than those traditionally making up the IGCs during the Convention. Grüber claimed that, although there had been a lot of lobbying before December, since Copenhagen, the main players involved have been either member states' diplomats, or those from the Commission and Council Secretariat. This question is important in relation to the up-coming IGC because if the Convention is to be seen as truly representative, then member states' elite circles will not be able to disregard it. It would appear, at least from Hungary's perspective, that the Convention is unlikely to reach its aim of opening up the process of institutional reform to a set of representative actors. Gray also concluded that, despite the fact that during the plenary everyone gets a say, negotiations typically take place in smoke-filled rooms among initiated elites.

3 The Institutional Implications of Constitutional Reform

Perspectives on the Community-Method in a Constitutional Setting
Jan Rood

The community-method has played a large part in the success of the EU as it supports the supranational dimension of European integration. As the Commission is key to this particular approach, due to its central position in the decision-making process, there are calls to preserve and strengthen its importance. There certainly exist compelling reasons to do so: to counteract the rise in status of the European Council; the ambitious agenda in the socio-economic area and in JHA that the EU set itself, and must now live up to; and the impact that enlargement will have on the EU.

At first glance, the Convention is reassuring with respect to the Commission. The Community-method is posed to become the main decision-making process of the Union, and the Commission's exclusive right of initiative is acknowledged – even in new areas of policy-making. However, there still remain some areas of concern, which include, among others: the maintenance/strengthening of the co-decision procedure, as some feel that this further restricts the Commission's role; the lack of initiative to simplify the comitology procedure; and the proposal to replace a rotating Council President with a permanent one – some oppose the concept of the permanent position (especially if coupled with the creation of a European Minister of Foreign Affairs) as it might lead to inter-institutional rivalry between the two, which would weaken the Commission.

In fact, Rood argued that, contrary to an initial and superficial reading of the Convention texts, the proposal severely restricts the role of the Commission by calling for the institutionalization of a Euro-group and the creation of a Mr. Euro; the creation of a legislative Council, which will restrict the legislative and executive roles of the Commission; the double-hatted European Foreign Minister, who in reality should be viewed as single-hatted, as the Commission will be diluted in the

area of foreign policy; and the nationalization of the Commission due to member states' insistence on retaining "their" commissioner.

The Question of Power: Where will it lie in the new EU?

Kirsty Hughes

According to Kirsty Hughes, the Convention is a battle over power, which has pushed the issue of democracy aside. The fact that accountability has almost become an afterthought has implications for the institutional structure of the EU. The Convention's key split over institutional reform has up until now been between large and small countries, between pro and con-integrationists, and between those nations wanting to revisit the Nice agreement and those that refuse to do so.

While the Convention-method has been successful in many areas and the discussion papers produced by the Convention secretariat have always been of a high quality, this is not the case with respect to the issue of institutional reform, where few preparatory documents – or intermediary ones – have been produced, no working groups have been convened, and where little plenary debate took place before the first documents were produced. Consequently, the text that was eventually released at the end of April was the product of Giscard d'Estaing, and did not reflect the vastly different opinions within the Praesidium.

The current texts reconfirm the strengthening of the EP in the area of legislation, through the extension of the co-decision procedure and QMV. The proposal for a review of the number of seats in Parliament, however, seriously impacts the smaller member states. Whereas Spain and Poland are set to lose, other larger countries, like Germany, will gain. On the issue of simple/double-majority rule in the Council, it is still too early to predict what effect this will have.

Hughes highlighted the gaps between the anticipated proposals and the actual draft. In her opinion, the most surprising one was the omission of the direct election of the Commission President by the EP, which would have been seen as a counterweight to the creation of a permanent President of the European Council.

In sum, there has been an exaggerated amount of time devoted to the question of the Commission's size. While some feel that a two-tier system is what is needed to account for enlargement, the smaller member states insist that the "one member per country" rule should continue to be applied. This would amount to an intergovernmentalization of the Commission.

Legitimizing the new EU: What did the Convention achieve in terms of Democratization?

Christian Lequesne

There is no clear answer to the question of whether the Convention constitutes a supranational form of democracy – i.e. one that has moved away from its state centric focus. Although the Convention fits the outlines of a post-parliamentary model, with its introduction of new players into the game – national parliamentarians of existing and future member states, Euro-parliamentarians, and to a much lesser degree, interest groups – it appears that these actors, in approaching the end of the process, have begun to represent national interests.

The EP has been relatively unaffected by the outcome of the Convention. This is due to the fact that this institution suffers from a lack of legitimacy rather than of power. The lack of an overall democratic reform of the EU institutional framework is, for instance, reflected in the Convention's failure to address the electoral laws at the European level and its resistance towards the creation of a Congress made up by national and European parliamentarians. While national parliaments could have provided a forum on the European level, the new control procedure only gives them the right to oppose proposals on grounds of subsidiarity (i.e. a negative power). It should be noted, however, that net-working among national parliaments and the EP will be stepped up as a result of the formers' greater involvement in European affairs, which in the medium-to-long term will have an effect on the emergence of a European public space. The potential for a conflict of legitimacy between a Commission President, nominally elected by the EP, and the creation of a permanent President of the European Council also looms large over the EU.

On a more positive note, the simplification of the treaty texts into a clear, understandable, readable document is a step towards increased accountability. While more could have been done on the issue of ratification of international agreements where individual member states will still be able to block, the right for the member states to withdraw from the EU can also be seen as an improvement. The introduction of EU citizens' rights also has the potential to increase popular participation and interest in the EU. However, the extent to which these provisions concretely offer any new rights in comparison to rights already enshrined in existing national or international frameworks, along with their enforcement, remain unclear.

Arguably, popular participation cannot be framed within an institutional procedure. Having said this, the EU policy process has traditionally prompted a stronger involvement from social and functional interests and NGOs than from political parties, and there is no indication that this is about to change in the future. Lequesne posited that NGOs social and functional interest groups might also play a role in encouraging transnationalization.

Debate: Round Three

- Responding to the issue of whether or not a permanent Council President is a beneficial thing for member states, Rood argued that he did not foresee the President of the European Council being able to impose a European approach, particularly in the area of foreign policy, or in other fields, which goes against the wish of the bigger member states. If this proves to be the case, this implies that the arguments behind the creation of the office of a permanent President are flawed.
- In the same vein, the point was made that if the President of the European Council were weak, this might affect the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Union. On the other hand, one of the speakers suggested that a clear political representative for the EU might be a positive element in the area of foreign affairs (especially in light of the tension created within the Union over the war in Iraq).
- The relevance of the Community-method in the long run was also questioned. It is felt that the increasingly federal nature of the EU is making the potential for the continued use of this approach rather difficult. The problem involved in democratizing the Community-method is another major challenge to the EU. This causes concern for those who feel that a strong Commission is crucial.
- Unease was expressed over the issue of the withdrawal clause, arguing that this clause might become a weapon of strategic national self-interest to be used as blackmail by member states threatening to withdraw from the EU unless its specific concerns were taken into account. Such a weapon would be efficient only if it could be used convincingly implying that only bigger member states would attempt to use it. At any rate, the possibility to withdraw from the Community had always existed, but by writing it into the treaty, member states' behaviour might change.

4 Implications for European Integration?

Lessons to be drawn from the Convention as a Method for Treaty Reform: Implications for the IGC and beyond

Jan Wouters

The Convention represents a novel form of treaty reform that has emerged logically from the trend towards IGCs becoming more and more open. Although the Convention-method has a weak legal foundation, as it only refers to the end part of the Laeken Declaration, the final document that was produced was clear and indicated various options, which set out consensus-based recommendations. Jan Wouters was quick to state that, despite the political merits that could potentially accompany such an approach, the Convention-method was never intended to replace the IGCs. Its main role is to prepare for the IGCs, leaving the member states as “*les maîtres des traités*”.

According to Wouters, the current Convention emerged from: a realization that IGCs cannot be convened based on closed-shop meetings and preparations, as was the case with Spaak before Rome, Delors before the IGC on EMU, the personal representatives’ reflection group before Amsterdam. It has proven its value as an enriching learning process on how to organize and steer a complex and open debate among numerous actors with specific interests. The constitutional treaty’s revision mechanism for treaty modifications calls for the following: any future changes to the Constitution must follow the Convention model; any convention to prepare for an IGC can be convened on the initiative taken by the Commission, a member state, or the EP; and future conventions will have limited room to create their own agendas and must adopt by consensus a recommendation for the subsequent IGC. This confirms Wouters’s statement that the Convention-technique was never intended to replace that of the IGC: “it is still expected that the IGC will come afterwards to determine by common accord amendments to the constitution, which will have to be ratified (according to the individual constitutional provisions of each member state) by all EU countries to enter into force”.

Although the Convention-technique is depicted as being complementary and preparatory to IGCs, Wouters suggested that the constitutional treaty's provisions are somewhat regressive in comparison to those of the current Convention. Its limited ability to set agendas; the restrictions imposed on it to adopt only consensus-based recommendations; and the fact that the IGC ultimately holds the power to make a decision based on convention recommendations, if at all, are evidence of this. In sum, Wouters claimed that the requirement for unanimity at three stages is not much of an advancement over today's Convention.

Looking Ahead: Did the Convention prepare the EU for the Future?
Helen Wallace

The Convention has not prepared the EU for the future. On the contrary, constitution-building does not in itself provide functional reform, especially when it is based on underinformed opinions; the Convention process is a great excuse not to pay attention to other important challenges; its recommendations can simply be overlooked by the following IGC – “the Convention-method is not the end of the story”; and finally, the Convention is about the input side of things. Helen Wallace warned that this risks losing sight of the need for organic reform.

In her opinion, the Convention fails to deal with the three main challenges that are facing the EU today. First, the profound change in the international context. The Iraq crisis, for example, has had huge implications for the unity of the Union. Second, the European economy is going through a rough period. This is in part due to the “catching-up” countries, the slippage in the goals set in Lisbon, and the appalling population profile. This poses a real problem for the EU, as its main *raison-d'être* is to provide economic well-being for its citizens. Third, the parochialism of domestic contexts and national political systems inhibit informed debate on possible policy reform on state-specific and European levels.

While in the past, the European factor has positively influenced many domestic arenas, there is concern about the impact that its playing a negative role will have on the popular acceptance of the EU. So far, the Convention offers little of substance to deal with current challenges. The structural changes in the international context must be addressed with reference to an American imperial power and the Europeans have not yet properly understood the implications of this. There is some question as to whether a President of the Union is equipped to deal with this since this is a question of mindsets and attitudes. The Convention is similarly silent on the neighbourhood policy that the EU is putting forward. Wallace suggested that enlargement cannot be the only answer for increased integration and co-operation as a strategy of good neighbourly relations, and alternatives to full EU membership should also be considered. The Convention does not properly address the issue of economic governance or the delegation of executive power, nor does the constitutional treaty make any provision to set up



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Programme Seminar

*An Assessment of the European Convention:
The Political Dynamics of Constitutional Reform*
5 June 2003, Clingendael Institute

09.15 hr Arrival of guests

09.30 hr *Introduction* by the chairman Alfred van Staden

I Putting the Convention in Perspective: Constitutional Methods and Main Political Issues

- *From Intergovernmental Conferences to Convention: Treaty Reform as Part of Europe's Evolving Identity?* Wolfgang Wessels
- *Political Contexts and Challenges Facing the EU: Motivations behind the Convention* Michel Theys

11.00 hr Coffee

II The Political Dynamics of the Convention

- *The Convention's Internal Dynamic: Leadership, Alliances and Interest Formation* Mark Gray
- *The Convention seen from a Future Member State: The Case of Hungary* Károly Gruber

13.00 hr Lunch

III The Institutional Implications of Constitutional Reform

Chair: Jacques Pelkmans

- *Perspectives on the Community-Method in a Constitutional Setting* Jan Rood
- *The Question of Power: Where will it lie in the new EU?* Kirsty Hughes
- *Legitimising the new EU: What did the Convention achieve in terms of Democratisation?* Christian Lequesne

15.30 hr Coffee

IV Implications for European Integration?

- *Lessons to be drawn from the Convention as a Method for Treaty Reform: Implications for the IGC and beyond* Jan Wouters
- *Looking Ahead: Did the Convention prepare the EU for the Future?* Helen Wallace

17.00 hr Closure of the Seminar

**‘An Assessment of the European Convention:
The Political Dynamics of Constitutional Reform’
5 June 2003**

Speakers

Professor Wolfgang Wessels	Professor of Political Science at the University of Cologne, Jean Monnet Professor, chairman of TEPSA.
Michel Theys	Journalist at Euro-Media Service, formerly deputy editor of Agence Europe (Europe)
Mark Gray	Working at the Brussels Office of White & Case LLP, formerly a member of the European Commission’s negotiating team for the Intergovernmental Conferences of Amsterdam and Nice.
Dr Károly Gruber	Consultant of the Embassy of Hungary in London, formerly a senior analyst at the Department for Strategic Planning at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest
Professor Jan Rood	Director of Research, Clingendael Institute
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