

EPP SUMMIT - STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT WILFRIED MARTENS ON THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION

15-06-2006



The meeting of the EPP Heads of government and Party leaders confirmed the commitment of the EPP regarding the European Constitutional Treaty. The EPP is convinced that the European Union needs more transparency, democracy and capability to act in order to deal with those issues where the citizens expect an added value from Europe. We don't want this project to fail.

Therefore, we consider the continuation of the ratification process as essential, considering in particular the fact that 15 Member States have already taken this step. The EPP encourages those countries which have not yet ratified the Treaty to continue the ratification process.

The EPP encourages Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel and the Austrian Presidency of the European Union to table concrete proposals for further steps in today's meeting of the European Council.

The European Council should decide not only to extend the period of reflection but also to open a period of analysis, which could last until the meeting of the European Council in June 2007. This phase should include an examination of political and other costs for the citizens of Europe in case of an absence of any solution in the constitutional question. It will be within the responsibility of the German Presidency in the first half of 2007 to prepare in due time further proposals with the aim of concluding the ratification procedure by 2009.

In parallel to this, the measures for the communication with the citizens proposed by the Commission in its Plan D for the promotion of democracy, dialogue and debate have to be carried forward actively. In particular, the national governments have to take part in a stronger and more positive way in the debate.

For the EPP, the opening of the Council deliberations to the public is a necessary step to make the European Union more transparent. We encourage the European Council to take this decision and to also organize public debates on important issues affecting the interests of the Union and its citizens.

The EPP proposes to prepare a declaration for the 50th anniversary of the European project in 2007, which should demonstrate our common values and show, that for us the European Union is not a project of the past but absolutely indispensable for a prosperous future of all Europeans.

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