

*Adopted resolution at the YEPP Plenary Session in Belgrade (25<sup>th</sup> June 2005)*

### **Call for statesmanship**

In its history the European Union has had its up sides and its down sides. Now we are facing a major downward turn. But staying there is not an option. European institutions need reforms to be better at doing the business we all need the EU to attend to. Too much in our history has taught us the dangers of unilateralism and isolation. Far too much has been successful, thus far, to allow those who voted no to a complex constitutional treaty place our political ambitions for Europe at a dead end.

It is not just an easy call to get out of this situation. During the recent summit EU leaders granted time for reflection, freezing the process of ratification. Still more than thirteen countries have yet to ratify and more rejections, or at least difficult referenda's, are to be expected if nothing does not change profoundly. Continuing with the same proposal even after plenty of reflection still seems very unlikely. The populations in two of the founding member countries, France and the Netherlands, have given their clear vote, turning down the new Constitutional Treaty. The two rejections were a clear set back for the modernisation of the EU and a great disappointment for YEPP. We strongly support the new treaty. However for YEPP it is more important to support the ideas behind the draft constitutional treaty rather than just the text.

Now, true statesmanship must be shown so that all member countries can obtain a stronger Union in areas where it is needed. Granting time for reflection doesn't take away the responsibility to act. The new treaty was never supposed to be taken into effect before 2007. It is therefore important to ensure that the needed democratic and institutional changes will be implemented in the near future for the benefit of the people of Europe.

First of all reforms need to be introduced that make the European institutions more transparent and closer to its citizens. And more swift rules and regulations for the governing of these institutions are also badly needed after the enlargement last year. This also applies for the clarification of the mandate for the global role that Europe has to play. We know our position is strengthened globally if we stand united. Sadly we also fear the global consequences if infighting is allowed to occur for too long in Europe.

The big question that needs to be answered during the present time of reflection is where reforms are most urgent and measures are demanded for these to be achieved.

- The period of reflection should be used to regain the trust of the EU-citizens in the EU itself.
- The financial perspectives are areas in which the EU should work hard to regain this trust through a balanced and solid framework.
- The Copenhagen criteria must also continue to be upheld within the enlargement process.
- The EU-members must also honour the already agreed treaties.
- In order to build up this renewed confidence the EU must become more accountable to those in a position to scrutinize and if necessary also discipline its members.

There are several possible alternatives from which a solution can be decided upon. The Amato plan is one example. That is a minimalist vision taking the preamble of the first part of the text and intergrating it into the Treaty of Nice. This would enable the institutions to function better.

A broader way of action is the Lamassoure plan. This would initially consist of convening a “group of wise men” charged with giving a progress report of the ratification process or on the parliamentary debates, which could then possibly advise the European Council to set up a new Convention. The new text would be subjected to parliamentary or popular ratification on the same day across the entire European Union.

Representing young people from all over Europe we disagree with the claims that people, particularly the youth, want to turn away from Europe. Young people more than any other citizens need to see Europe reformed. However, young people also demand straight answers.

Therefore we call upon European leaders to seek opportunities in this crisis. Show statesmanship and introduce the reforms that are truly needed to make the Union capable of living up to its ambitions. The new treaty aims at ensuring this, – more clear-cut, efficient and transparent European institutions. These ambitions must still be sought and a new way to get there must be found.

*Belgrade, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2005*