

Annual Report 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Re-)building Europe

In the sound and the fury of the Spring 2003 it was easy to forget that in many ways 2002 had been a great year for Europe. A year which began with the unprecedented deepening of the Union represented by the adoption of a single currency by 300 million Europeans was brought to a close by the European Council in Copenhagen which set the date for the long-anticipated enlargement: on 1 May 2004, ten new Member States will accede to the European Union. Between these two events we saw the establishment of the Convention whose mandate was to give Europe the institutions and management methods required by this wider and deeper Union; as the months went by, the Convention's work acquired a growing visibility and credibility, and it encouraged great hopes.

However, the mood today is not one of enthusiasm, and the media are filled with images of impotence and divisions in Europe. One of the chief engines of its economy - Germany - has stalled; the Lisbon objective of making the European Union the most competitive economy in the world by 2010 seems increasingly out of reach; the stability and growth pact has been badly shaken, and the subject of economic governance has made scarcely any progress at the Convention. Worse still, the very idea of a common defence and foreign policy in Europe seems to have fallen apart when confronted with the war in Iraq. Finally, in an international climate that was in both political and financial turmoil, the Convention has managed to complete its work but its results, in addition to the fact that they might be partly undone by the IGC, are well on this side of the hopes one could entertain.

Under these conditions, will a European Union, extended to include 25 States but in danger of becoming paralysed in its actions, be anything more than a giant market in which the lead will come from the culture of large Anglo-American companies, and forever unable to achieve a worldwide political influence commensurate with its economic weight? In the current climate there is good reason to fear such an outcome.

Yet this is not the time to give way to discouragement. In 1946, the ELEC founders did not throw up their hands at the immensity of the task of European reconstruction. On the contrary, we should never forget:

- * that Europe is being built step by step, stone by stone, and that economic cooperation in particular, which our movement has supported for over half a century, is far from having exhausted its possibilities;
- * that the single European market is in itself a great achievement, but in many areas is still far from complete;
- * that, furthermore, a great market cannot, at the end of the day, achieve all its potential in terms of wealth creation, innovation and welfare without some degree of political integration;
- * that beyond the single market and the fostering of a European social model, Europe should aim to become a new political and strategic power able to hold its own with the United States in a relationship based on mutual respect and support for identical democratic and progressive values;
- * that nevertheless Europe, because of its history and linguistic and cultural diversity, will never have the uniformity of the United States, and that the institutional

framework which it constructs must find a way of preserving this diversity and accommodating these differences.

In their work our commissions will list and explore those areas where economic cooperation, in an enlarged Europe that seeks to be open to the world, raises fresh questions and sets new challenges. Our national sections, for their part, will do everything in their power to support the work of the commissions by sending their representatives and passing on and expanding their discussions among their own members. ELEC will try in this way to promote our common European interests, giving this concept as precise and practical content as it is possible.

Ferdinand CHAFFART

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

During 2002 the ELEC Central Council met on 7 June in Monaco and 13 December in Brussels.

Having chosen "The Deepening of Europe" as its theme, the **enlarged Central Council in June** considered the Convention's initial work and heard a report from Carles GASÒLIBA, MEP and President of the Spanish Committee. It was also addressed by Philippe CHALMIN, economic adviser at Euler-SFAC and professor at the Université de Paris-Dauphine, on "The development of the European social model". It also welcomed Franck BIANCHERI, financial and economic advisor to the Monaco Government, who presented the main characteristics of the economy in the Principality.

As well as the traditional reports from working party presidents, the Central Council also debated a draft position paper on behalf of the study unit that he leads, on "the future of the European project and the points under examination by the Convention" [1].

[1] This text, after amendment to take into account the comments and suggestions of the Central Council, was delivered on 4 July 2002 to Jean-Luc Dehaene, Vice-president of the Convention responsible for contacts with civil society, and to the Convention Secretariat.

The **Brussels meeting** took as its central subject: "A Constitution for Europe?" Two speakers led the debate: Thomas Jansen, *chef de cabinet* to the President of the Economic and Social Committee, who sketched the background to the Convention and analysed its mandate and successive phases; and Thomas COTTIER, professor at the University of Bern and president of the ELEC Swiss section, who explained the features of the Swiss federal model after a century and a half of institutional experience and deduced the possible implications for the future of the European Union.

After hearing the reports from the commissions' presidents and a progress report from Ivo STANEK on the Danube cooperation project, the Central Council also:

- * welcomed Charles RUPPERT, the new president of the Luxembourg Section;
- * took note of the resignation of the Agriculture Commission president, Rudolf STRASSER, and gave the go-ahead for the search to find a new president;
- * paid tribute to Baron Bernard SNOY who had chaired the Monetary Panel for a period of six years;
- * ratified the choice of his successor, Jean-Jacques REY, honorary director of the Belgian National Bank and professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, whose name had been put forward to the International President by the Belgian Section;
- * approved the gradual evolution of the "institutional study unit" into a new Europe & Strategy Commission that will open to national section representatives.

ACTIVITIES of the NATIONAL SECTIONS and MEETINGS of the WORKING COMMISSIONS

2 January - Barcelona - Spanish Section

Lunch-debate "Convención para el futuro de la UE y propuestas para reformar los tratados de la Unión en la Conferencia Intergubernamental del 2004": Miguel ROCA JUNYENT, member of the Council for the debate on the future of the EU.

8 January - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "Outlook on the Spanish Council Presidency".
Speaker: Raimundo PEREZ-HERNANDEZ y TORRA, Spanish Ambassador.

4 February - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "Defending Austria's Economic Interests in Europe". Speaker: Christoph LEITL.

8 February - Brussels - Enlargement Commission

President: Michael PALMER. Topics: the problem of corruption and the action of Transparency International (Dietrich FRISCH - Mienieke de RUITER et Hilde HARDEMAN) - a new vision of European agriculture after enlargement (Thomas GERKE - J. KOL).

19 February - Budapest - Hungarian Section

Meeting of the Hungarian Section.

22 February - Barcelona - Spanish Section

Lunch-debate "Politica de Seguridad y Defensa de la UE": Joan PRAT, Spanish Ambassador to NATO.

25 February - Antwerp - Infrastructures Commission

President: Ottokar HAHN. Topic: visit of the infrastructures of the Port of Antwerp.

25 February - Vienna - Austrian Section

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "Balance of the Austrian AG and the Business Plan of the next two years". Speaker: Lorenz FRITZ.

4 March - Brussels - Infrastructures Commission

President: Ottokar HAHN. Topics: Galileo (Olivier ONIDI): a letter was sent to governments of EU countries - round-tables EU/Russia and EU/Ukraine (Klaus MILZ) - new projects PPP (D. BADEA-TAYLOR).

5 March - Paris - French Section

Lunch-debate "Quel avenir pour l'UE dans la perspective de l'élargissement?": Michel BARNIER, European Commissioner in charge of Regional Policy and Institutional Reform.

5 March - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "South-Eastern Europe and Enlargement".
Speaker: Albert ROHAN, Ambassador.

22 March - Brussels - Monetary Panel

President: Bernard SNOY. Topics: progress towards an integrated market of financial services (Karel LANNOO) - *tour d'horizon* on economic convergence in EU countries (Antonio CABRAL).

27 March - Brussels - Mediterranean Commission

President: Carles GASÓLIBA. Topic: *tour d'horizon* on Euro-Mediterranean relations.

28 March - Brussels - Belgian Section

General Assembly

March - London - British Section

Traditional "briefing" of the British Section by the Spanish Ambassador.

8 April - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "The European Convention - Challenges and Difficulties". Speaker: Hannes FARNLEITNER.

29 April - Vienna - Austrian Section

Meeting of the Infrastructures Commission on the topic "Private Public Partnership: an example of traffic in the Danube Region". Speaker: Ottokar HAHN, President of the Infrastructures Commission.

8 May - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "Europe and the Danube Area". Speaker: Paul LENDVAI.

17 May - Brussels - Working Group Enlargement

President: Michael PALMER. Topic: work programme.

24 May - Barcelona - Spanish Section

Lunch-debate "La ampliación de la UE: como integrar 60 millones de nuevos ciudadanos": Fernando PERPIÑÁ ROBERT, Ambassador.

29 May - Brussels - Mediterranean Commission

President: Carles GASÒLIBA. Topic: Chambers of Commerce of the Mediterranean (Jilani BEN M'BAREK).

3 June - Bern - Swiss Section

General Assembly.

3 June - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "Russia and the EU: New Partners for a Safer Future?". Speakers: Andrej FEDOROV, Jutta STEFAN-BASTL, Hannes SWOBODA.

6 June - Monaco - Economic and Social Commission

President: Philippe JURGENSEN. Topics: economic situation in the EU and prospect for recovery (Philippe LEFOURNIER - Jean-Paul BETBEZE) - economic consequences of fluctuations of the euro exchange rate (Hervé CARRE - Robert RAYMOND - Vitor GASPAREL).

7 June - Monaco - Enlarged Central Council and General Assembly

28 June - Brussels - Enlargement Commission

President: Michael PALMER. Topic: European agriculture after enlargement (Shelby MATTHEWS and Niklaus MORAWITZ - Dietrich HAMMER).

8 July - Barcelona - Spanish Section

Lecture "La economía europea después de la entrada del euro": Guillermo de la DEHESA, Advisor of the Presidency, Banco Pastor.

2 September - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "European Cooperation and the EU Enlargement - The Danish Presidency". Speaker: Torben Mailand CHRISTENSEN, Ambassador.

20 September - Brussels - Enlargement Commission

President: Michael PALMER. Topic: European agriculture after enlargement (Michel JACQUOT).

26 September - Vienna - Austrian Section

Lunch in collaboration with IVC: "Yugoslavia before the European Challenge". Speaker: Mihajlo KOVAC, Ambassador.

30 September - Barcelona - Spanish Section

Lunch-debate.

7 October - Paris - French Section

Symposium "Europe dans la mondialisation" (Fondation Singer-Polignac).

7 October - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "Common Agricultural Policy put to Test". Speaker: Rudolf STRASSER.

8 October - Barcelona - Infrastructures Commission

President: Ottokar HAHN. Topic: visit of the infrastructures of the Port of Barcelona.

30 October - Paris - French Section

Lunch-debate "L'avenir de l'UE à la veille de l'élargissement": Noëlle LENOIR, Minister delegated to Foreign Affairs.

5 November - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "The Danube Cooperation Process paves the Way to Europe". Speaker: Benita FERRERO-WALDNER.

6 November - Vienna - Austrian Section

General Assembly. Speaker: Alexander GOLOWIN, Ambassador.

15 & 16 November - Kronberg - Monetary Commission

President: Rolf BREUER. Topics: "European Monetary Policy: Current Issues and Challenges of the Future" (Lucas PAPADEMOS, Vice President of ECB) - "The Worldwide Currency Situation and International Monetary Co-operation" (Jürgen STARK, Vice President, Deutsche Bundesbank), "The European Single Financial Market: a Permanent Construction Site?" (Alexander SCHAUB, Director general, European Commission) and "The EU Candidate Countries: on a Bumpy Road to EMU?" (Ryszard KOKOSZCZYNSKI, Director, National Bank of Poland).

18 November - Brussels - "enlarged" Enlargement Commission

President: Michael PALMER. Topics: "Foreign direct investment as economic leverage in the accession countries?" (Economic and Social Commission: Sylvain PLASSCHAERT), "EU enlargement: challenge for the CAP" (Agriculture Commission: Niklaus MORAWITZ) and discussion of the document "The Common Agricultural Policy and the Eastward Enlargement of the EU" (Enlargement Commission, Dietrich HAMMER).

28 November - Brussels - Mediterranean Commission

President: Carles GASÒLIBA. Topic: development banks and the integration of capital markets in emerging countries (Jean-Jacques SCHUL).

29 November - Frankfurt - German Section

Annual meeting of the section. Speaker: Ivo STANEK "EU Eastward enlargement".

November - London - British Section

Traditional "briefing" of the section by the Danish Ambassador.

2 December - Vienna - Austrian Section

In collaboration with the European Club: "The Enlargement - Europe Ten Days prior to Copenhagen". Speakers: Eva NOWOTNY - Ursula STENZEL - Eva BEIABED.

14 December - Brussels - Central Council and General Assembly

And not to forget ...

The publication in September 2002 of the Information Letter n°14 "Europe close at hand", with the help of Régis MALBOIS, ELEC Advisor,

and of the Cahier Comte Boël n°10 "The Euro: Required Steps to Success" with contributions from members of the Monetary Panel.

NEWS from ELEC

Austria

Resignation of Rudolf STRASSER, President of ELEC Agriculture Commission.

Belgium

Designation of Luc DELVAUX, Director general at Fortis Bank, as President of the Belgian Section replacing André Dirckx.

Resignation of Bernard SNOY, President of ELEC Monetary Panel Ligue for six years. Jean-Jacques REY, Honorary Director of the National Bank of Belgium was appointed to succeed him.

France

Death of Alexis WOLKENSTEIN, Secretary general of the French Section.

Publication of a book by Edouard BONNEFOUS, member of ELEC Honorary Committee "La construction de l'Europe par l'un de ses initiateurs".

Luxembourg

Death of Pierre WERNER, one of the "fathers" of the euro, member of ELEC Honorary Committee;

Charles RUPPERT, Conseiller d'Etat, succeeds Remy KREMER at the presidency of the Luxembourg Section.

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