

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES  
THE CHAIRPERSON

Mr Giscard d'Estaing  
Chairman of the European Convention  
Bâtiment Justus Lipsius 175  
175, rue de la Loi  
1048 Brussels

Brussels, 22 May 2003

Dear Mr Giscard d'Estaing,

I refer to earlier letters sent to you, on behalf of the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities, requesting you to include gender equality and the role of women in designing and constructing the future of Europe. I recall my email message sent to all Members of the Convention on 15 May, which had as an Annex a declaration adopted by our Network of Women Parliamentarians in Members States, European Parliament and Accession States. The declaration contains clear and concise minimum requests on the content of the Constitutional Treaty, in order that gender equality and women's rights are respected.

I note with surprise and concern, that in the draft texts presented so far, it seems that you and the Convention Members are completely neglecting our requests which have very broad support among women Parliamentarians, NGOs representing the civil society, experts, researchers etc working in the field of gender equality, and which have been formulated on behalf of those who represent more than half of the population. As the draft texts stand today, it seems that gender equality in the future Constitutional Treaty will be weakened, instead of showing the necessary strengthening of what has already been achieved.

Women will never accept that the *acquis communautaires* in the field of gender equality is rolled backwards.

Women will never accept that gender equality is left outside the core values and objectives of the Union.

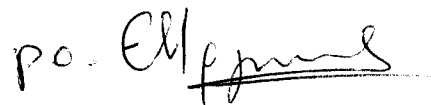
Women will never accept that gender equality and the fight against all forms of gender discrimination are not listed among the shared competencies of the Union.

Women will never accept that gender mainstreaming is not included in all policies and actions of the EU.

Women will never accept that the rapidly increasing violence against women cannot be effectively combated due to lack of a clear legal basis in the Constitutional Treaty.

Therefore, on behalf of the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities, I urge you to reconsider our requests and let them be part of your final draft Constitutional Treaty.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "po. Ellfmanou", written over a horizontal line.

Anna KARAMANOY