

12 March 2003

**ADDRESS BY MR GEORGES JACOBS PRESIDENT
OF UNICE
PLENARY SESSION OF THE CONVENTION
ON 17 MARCH 2003**

Thank you Mr President,

Dear Conventionals,

As you know, the issue of co-regulation and self-regulation is very close to the heart of UNICE. Several times I have taken the floor here to ask for better recognition of these tools as an alternative to regulation.

Therefore, we regret very much that no reference whatsoever is made to them in the articles concerning the instruments of the EU.

In this context, UNICE has tabled an amendment to article thirty-two which suggests that a third indent be added, which would read, “The Institutions shall encourage and support self-regulation and co-regulation”.

These instruments must be given recognition by the Treaty as possible ways of reaching EU objectives, instead of systematic legislation.

At a time when the EU Institutions have their desks full with proposals for legislation, better use of co- and self-regulation would help to alleviate their legislative tasks and would democratise the rule-making exercise.

This is also a golden opportunity to involve key stakeholders further and also to make them more responsible in the EU debate and process.

UNICE has also suggested in its amendments that a reference to these alternatives tools to legislative instruments be made in the Protocol on Subsidiarity, in order to ensure that the horizontal nature of subsidiarity is also properly taken into account and respected.

I trust that members of the Convention will carefully study the UNICE proposal which could give recognition to the important tools of self- and co-regulation as alternatives to regulation.

In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that UNICE has tabled an amendment in order to require that the Commission is assisted by an independent body advising on the cost-benefit aspect of any draft legislation.

I thank you in advance for your support on this.

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