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Subject: Social democrats discuss key 'Future of Europe' issues at
Florence Seminar.

News from the PES in the Convention

13 January 2003

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS DISCUSS KEY 'FUTURE OF EUROPE' ISSUES AT FLORENCE SEMINAR

Social democrats in the European Convention are to hold a two-day seminar this weekend on key policy questions in the 'Future of Europe' debate.

PES leader in the Convention, Giuliano Amato, will open the talks at 14h30 on Friday 17 January at the Palazzo dei Congressi, Florence. He will give a press conference after the seminar – at 12h30 on 18 January in the Palazzo.

Talks will focus on making EU bodies more effective and managing foreign, security and defence policy. Discussion is also planned on social Europe and economic governance.

The talks are private but limited camera access is available at the beginning of sessions.

Party President Robin Cook will attend along with PES leader in the European Parliament Enrique Barón. Italian party leaders Piero Fassino of DS and Enrico Boselli of SDI, as well as Tuscany's President Claudio Martini, will address participants.

In the opening debate on 'Making the EU institutions more effective', the PES caucus will discuss four themes: the powers of the European Parliament; the European Council and its presidency; reorganisation of the Council; and the European Commission and its presidency.

Discussion of the common foreign and security policy along with European security and defence will open the second day's discussion.

Issues to be addressed include:

- the decision-making process, including the use of vetoes and qualified majority voting;
- democratic control;
- the EU High Representative for the CFSP;
- EU representation in international organisations;
- the aims and instruments of the ESDP; and

· operational capability for military and civilian crisis management.

Greek member of the Convention Praesidium Giorgos Katiforis will make a presentation on "Social Europe (and economic governance)" to lead the concluding debate.

For further information, please contact Tony Robinson, PES Spokesman's Service,
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