

European Ombudsman proposes changes to preliminary draft Constitutional Treaty

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The European Ombudsman, **Jacob Söderman**, today outlined his proposed changes to the preliminary draft Constitutional Treaty at the Round Table on the Future of Europe in Lisbon. The Ombudsman's proposals aim to ensure that "European citizens truly have confidence in the Union".

The Ombudsman calls for:

- openness and subsidiarity to be established as fundamental principles in the Constitutional Treaty;
- a legal basis for ensuring an open, accountable and service-minded administration through a European administrative law;
- citizens to be informed of the remedies available if their rights, including fundamental rights, are not respected. These remedies include courts, ombudsmen and committees on petitions at all levels in the Union.

While welcoming the open and democratic procedure of publishing a draft for discussion, the Ombudsman stated that "the preliminary draft Constitutional Treaty contains little new of substance for the benefit of citizens". The preliminary draft was presented to the European Convention on 28 October 2002. Mr. Söderman expressed his hope that the omissions in the first draft will be corrected in the second draft of the Treaty.

The Round Table was organised in the *Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas* by the Jacques Delors Foundation in Lisbon.

To read the Ombudsman's speech, please visit:

<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/activities/speech.faces/en/271/html.bookmark> [Link]

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