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EUROPEAN UNION
THE COUNCIL

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SEMDOC

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PRESIDENCY INFORMATION NOTE

**Subject: *Drawing-up of a Charter of Fundamental Rights in the European Union*
– *Presidency presentation on procedure***

The European Council took the view at its meeting in Cologne on 3 and 4 June 1999 that fundamental rights applicable at Union level should be consolidated in a Charter and thereby made more evident. To this end the European Council decided that a draft of such a Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union should be elaborated by a Body composed of representatives of the Heads of State or Government and of the President of the European Commission as well as of members of the European Parliament and national parliaments. Representatives of the European Court of Justice should participate as observers. Representatives of the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and social groups as well as experts should be invited to give their views. Secretariat services should be provided by the General Secretariat of the Council.

The Body should present a draft document in advance of the European Council in December 2000. The European Council will propose to the European Parliament and the Commission that, together with the Council, they should solemnly proclaim on the basis of the draft document a European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The Presidency has been asked to establish the conditions for the implementation of the decision by the extraordinary meeting of the European Council in Tampere on 15 and 16 October 1999. Coreper II agreed at its meeting of 16 June 1999 that the Presidency convene an *ad hoc* working group to discuss the question of how to

organise the work to prepare a draft Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The *ad hoc* working group will be chaired by Ambassador Holger Rotkirch, Director General of Legal Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Delegations will find attached a provisional timetable for bringing forward work on this topic. The Presidency will circulate a non-paper in advance of the first meeting of the *ad hoc* working group as a basis for discussion.

Fundamental rights – Provisional timetable

Month	Procedural steps
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of method of work (7.7.1999) • Convening of the ad hoc working group • Discussion on organisational arrangements and procedure in the ad hoc working group (13.7. and 26.7.1999)
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to Coreper from ad hoc working group (8.9.1999) • General Affairs Council 13.9.1999 (poss.) • Resumption of work at Coreper level
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Affairs Council (12.10.1999) • Tampere European Council (15-16.10.1999)
November/ December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First meeting of the Body drafting the Charter of Fundamental Rights