



## **Supportive voices: Civil Society and Environmentalists**

### **David Baldock (Director, Institute for European Environmental Policy)**

Few Governments, in Britain or elsewhere, have been ready to acknowledge how far progress on the environment in their own countries has depended on agreements at a European level. Standards have been raised across the board – in air and water pollution, recycling, the regulation of chemicals and nature conservation. Without the force of law behind these standards they would not have been respected. The world now looks to Europe for leadership on the environment, including climate change in a way they once followed the US.

### **Charles Grant, Director Centre for European Reform**

Without a deal, the EU would have been mired in arguments on treaties, institutions and process for a prolonged period. Now, hopefully, the Union can move on to deal with real problems in the real world, such as climate change, energy security, Kosovo, the revival of Russian power, and so on.

### **Charles Grant, Director Centre for European Reform**

I have always been in favour of a referendum on any new treaty that would change the way Britain is governed, or transfer significant powers to the EU. Thus I would not want Britain to join the euro without a referendum. The important changes in the treaty, such as the merger of two existing posts into that of the High Representative, to give the Union a single spokesman on foreign policy, are technical and improve existing institutional arrangements. So I do not see the point of a referendum.

### **Stephen Hale (Director, Green Alliance)**

European agreements have been the driving force behind the improvements in many aspects of the UK environment, including air quality and recycling. Individual governments cannot meet environmental challenges alone. In part that is because climate change and many forms of air pollution do not respect national boundaries. But it is also because environmental standards and environmental improvements cost money, and individual governments cannot bear these costs in isolation. Common European action has made pan-European environmental protection a reality. The conclusion of the debate on the reform treaty will enable European countries with common interests to work more effectively together to meet these pressing challenges.

### **Dame Mary Marsh, Chief Executive, NSPCC**

NSPCC welcomes the fact that in the EU Treaty children's rights are explicitly recognised in the objectives of the EU and that the child's best interests are in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. For the first time children are included in the EU and we

can move beyond children being Europe's invisible citizens. Child protection crosses national boundaries and we need to be able to respond to issues such as child trafficking and protection of children on the internet at a transnational and European level.

**Geoffrey Martin, Office of the Secretary General, Commonwealth Secretariat**

The European Union urgently needs to be streamlined in order to meet the challenges of a rapidly globalising world. Whether it is called a reform treaty or a constitution, is not a central issue. Streamlining for greater political influence is the immediate need.

In Britain, calls for a referendum come from the extremes on both sides of the argument, anti Europeans as well as federalists. The vast majority want a European Union that is strong. A minority want Britain out. Parliament has the necessary machinery to do justice to the need to scrutinise the new texts. A media surge of anti Europeanism howling for a referendum will only consolidate prejudice. But if a free vote in Parliament decides to have a referendum, so be it. Britain will stay in Europe.

**Mieke Schuurman, Children's Network Secretary-General**

With the protection of children's rights included in the EU's objectives for the new 'Reform Treaty', for the first time in the history of the EU, children's rights will be legally recognised in the EU Treaties.