

The Rt.Hon. Jack Straw MP
Foreign Secretary
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AH

16th July 2003

Dear Minister,

RE: The IGC and animal protection

I am writing to you now that the Convention on the Future of Europe has finished its work and the Inter-Governmental Conference will shortly begin to draft a new Treaty, based on the work of the Convention. I urge you to ensure that animal protection will be given an improved position in the new European Constitutional Treaty.

The importance of animal welfare was recognised by the Treaty of Amsterdam's Protocol on "Improved Protection and Respect for the Welfare of Animals". This recognises animals as sentient beings and requires the Community and the Member States, when formulating and implementing certain policies, to pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals.

However, the Protocol's requirements are often ignored. Future progress needs to be underpinned and facilitated by giving animal protection a proper legal foundation in the Treaty. I therefore urge the UK government to secure the following at the forthcoming Inter-Governmental Conference:

Include the protection of animals among the Union's objectives. Many European citizens view the humane treatment of animals as one of Europe's central values. As such, it should be included among the Union's objectives, alongside environmental protection which is already included in the proposed text;

Include animal protection among the areas of shared competence between the Union and the Member States. In certain areas, the Union's power to legislate on animal protection is unclear. Including animal protection in the shared competences would give the Union a clear legal basis for adopting legislation on animal protection;

Animal protection should be included in the Title on Solidarity in Part Two of the new Treaty; environmental and consumer protection are already included in this Title;

Add 'the welfare of farm animals' to the list of factors which must be taken into account in working out the common agricultural policy;

Ensure that the Protocol continues to be part of Union law, either as a Protocol annexed to the new Treaty or by being incorporated into the body of the new Treaty.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP