DG Budget. The Commission will also, at a consolidated level, take note of reservations entered and will comment on the proposed solutions and timeframes and adopt a list of measures to resolve the problems identified, including on the findings of the Internal Audit Service. It will make choices in the event of incoherence or conflict between proposed corrective action by the Authorising Officers by delegation.


(2) WRITTEN QUESTION E-1171/02
by Carmen Cerdeira Morterero (PSE) to the Commission
(24 April 2002)

Subject: European Union participation at international summits

Would the Commission consider it useful for a guide or protocol to be prepared for the improved participation and coordination of representatives of the European institutions (Commission, Council, Parliament) at events such as international conferences, of which an example is the March 2002 Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development, and also at other types of meeting where we attend as a 'European Union delegation' or 'European Community delegation'?

Does the Commission believe that such a protocol would help to maximise the efforts of all the members of the above-mentioned delegations, as well as to raise their profile?

Answer given by Mr Prodi on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2002)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member’s concern that the Union should speak with one voice on the international stage and more generally in its relations with third countries.

There is actually no difficulty with the coordination of the Community position and singleness of its representation in matters covered by the first pillar, such as the common commercial policy. As was seen at the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation in Doha, it is because the Community speaks with one voice that it has become an essential player in international trade.

The situation is less satisfactory, however, in the other areas of external relations, owing to the increased number of players provided for in the existing Treaties and the confusion that can ensue.

As the Commission stated in its communication of 22 May 2002 on a project for the European Union (1), we should take advantage of the future reform of the Treaties to simplify and rationalise the whole of the Union’s foreign policy and thus make it more efficient, in accordance with the wishes of the European citizen.

Participation by the Community delegations in international conferences is in most cases dependent on the Community’s status at the conference in question (e.g. participant without voting rights, observer with speaking rights, etc.).

For these reasons, it will be difficult to draw up a protocol for improving the participation of Community delegations.

On the other hand, there are rules of procedure for participation by the different institutions in international conferences.