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First contribution from the European Research Advisory Board to the Convention on the Future of Europe.

In the area of research and innovation, three important steps have been taken which carry important implications for the future of Europe. One is the political vision expressed in the Lisbon European Council in March 2000, when Heads of State of Government stated that the EU shall, in the next 10 years be turned into *"the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"*. The second important step is the proposal launched by the Commissioner for Research, Mr. Philippe Busquin, for the *European Research Area* with a co-ordinated European research policy emphasising networking between centres of excellence, a common approach to the needs and means of large research facilities, a more coherent implementation of national and European research activities and organisations, and more abundant and more mobile human resources. Finally, the European Council meeting in March 2002 in Barcelona emphasised the need to develop the *European knowledge area* and to aim towards increasing the funding for research and development to 3% of GNP until 2010, with two thirds of the increase coming from the private sector.

EURAB welcomes this ambitious vision and the efforts undertaken to achieve a more integrated European research, innovation and educational policy as well as a more coherent implementation of national and European research and innovation activities.

We consider that the re-drafting of the Treaty, envisaged by the European Convention, offers a unique opportunity to build this vision into a legal framework thereby facilitating and supporting the achievement of the goals stated above.

We will submit a more complete statement and concrete proposals in the coming weeks.