

Brussels, 19 September 2002

**Nice Referendum: "A defining moment for Ireland and Europe"  
says Pat COX**

**Pat COX, President of the European Parliament, today welcomed the announcement by the Irish Government that the Nice referendum in Ireland will be held on Saturday 19 October.**

"The vote on the second referendum on the Nice Treaty will be a defining moment for Ireland and for Europe."

"There is a lot at stake. A second rejection of the Nice Treaty would plunge the European Union's main strategic agenda, that of enlargement, into a period of uncertainty and potential crisis. This is not in the interests of the European Union, nor of the accession states and most assuredly not in Ireland's own self interest."

"For a generation Ireland has chosen intelligent interdependence rather than isolated independence. In crossing that bridge we have moved from stagnation to opportunity. We owe it to ourselves and future generations to stick with that proven path to success."

"Before I was elected President of the European Parliament in January this year I made a commitment to campaign actively in Ireland, as an Irish citizen and as an elected Irish representative, for a "yes" vote in a second referendum. Over the next four weeks I shall therefore be spending as much time as my diary allows campaigning."

Full details of Pat Cox's campaign agenda can be found on his personal website at [www.patcox.ie](http://www.patcox.ie)