
Position des gouvernements des Etats membres sur l'Elargissement de l'Union Européenne

France¹

Le 9 juin 1998, le Président de la République française, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, et le Chancelier allemand, Monsieur Helmut Kohl, ont adressé une lettre conjointe à Monsieur Tony Blair, Premier Ministre britannique, au sujet du conseil européen des 15-16 juin 1998 à Cardiff.

Dans cette lettre, ils affirment la nécessité de faire progresser l'unification européenne et de garantir le développement de l'Union européenne et son élargissement. Il faut faire preuve de solidarité à l'égard des peuples de l'ancien bloc de l'Est, qui souhaitent devenir membres de l'Union européenne, mais l'Europe ne pourra montrer sa solidarité que si elle est forte et dotée de structures d'action efficaces, et si elle peut compter sur le soutien des citoyens.

M. Chirac et M. Kohl trouvent important d'ouvrir, au conseil européen de Cardiff, un débat sur le processus d'intégration européenne et sur ses perspectives. Ils pensent que, à partir de l'acquis communautaire, il faut développer l'Union politique en harmonie avec l'Union économique et monétaire, dans la perspective du prochain élargissement. Il est aussi nécessaire de réfléchir aux réformes institutionnelles envisagées à Amsterdam, réformes qui doivent faire l'objet d'un accord avant le prochain élargissement. Enfin, M. Chirac et M. Kohl considèrent que la nomination d'une nouvelle Commission européenne pour le début de l'an 2000, et le prochain élargissement sont des échéances importantes pour l'Union européenne.

¹ Sources utilisées pour l'élaboration de ce document :

Sites Internet :

<http://www.diplomatie.fr>

<http://www.premier-ministre.fr>

<http://www.elysee.fr>

Le 6 juillet 1998, le Ministre délégué chargé des affaires européennes, Monsieur Pierre Moscovici, répond dans le Journal officiel à une question écrite à l'Assemblée nationale sur les perspectives de l'élargissement.

M. Moscovici commence par rappeler les conclusions du Conseil européen de Copenhague, qui a, sur le principe, ouvert la porte à l'entrée des pays d'Europe centrale et orientale dans l'Union européenne, et qui en a fixé les conditions.

Le ministre insiste sur le fait que la France, tout comme la Belgique et l'Italie considèrent que le Traité d'Amsterdam ne répond pas à la nécessité de renforcer les institutions, mais que ce renforcement est une condition indispensable à la conclusion des premières négociations d'adhésion.

Il indique aussi que le gouvernement français se félicite de la prise de conscience croissante des autres Etats membres de la nécessité de réaliser cette **réforme institutionnelle** avant la réalisation du premier élargissement.

Pour la France, la révision des traités doit être envisagée suffisamment à temps, pour ne pas bloquer les négociations d'élargissement, et la réforme institutionnelle doit être conçue de manière ambitieuse. Le gouvernement se félicite de la réflexion lancée sur ce sujet au Conseil européen de Cardiff, les chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement ayant accepté de participer à une réunion informelle afin d'approfondir la réflexion sur l'avenir de l'Europe.

Le 28 octobre 1998, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République a prononcé une allocution au Palais fédéral de Berne, en Suisse.

M. Chirac commence par rappeler que l'Europe s'est engagée sur la voie d'un élargissement ambitieux, pour que les pays longtemps séparés de l'Europe puissent rejoindre leur "famille".

La Suisse, dans un premier temps, a préféré se tenir à l'écart du processus de construction européenne, avançant lentement, mais sûrement, grâce à des accords sectoriels, considérés comme une étape avant l'adhésion à l'Union. L'adhésion est un objectif stratégique pour le gouvernement suisse, comme l'a dit le Président du Conseil fédéral, mais en fin de compte, la décision devra être prise par le peuple suisse.

Le Président français considère que la culture politique et les valeurs de la Suisse seraient un élément précieux pour l'Europe, et rappelle que le destin de la Suisse est depuis toujours lié à celui de l'Europe.

M. Chirac invite le peuple suisse à aller de l'avant, et à choisir l'Europe, lorsqu'ils décideront que le moment est venu. La Suisse a déjà noué des liens très forts avec l'Union européenne. L'Europe, et plus particulièrement la France, accueillera volontiers la Suisse le jour où celle-ci décidera d'intégrer l'Union européenne, et la France soutiendra alors sa candidature.

Le 19 novembre 1998, lors de son séjour en République tchèque, Monsieur Lionel Jospin, Premier Ministre, est intervenu devant les étudiants de l'Université Charles à Prague.

Le Premier Ministre aborde notamment le sujet de l'élargissement de l'Union européenne, et plus particulièrement celui de l'adhésion de **la République tchèque**. Il commence par rappeler que la phase concrète des négociations d'adhésion s'est ouverte depuis peu de temps (la semaine précédente).

M. Jospin considère que la République tchèque doit retrouver toute sa place en Europe. L'Europe a besoin de ce pays, comme ce pays a besoin de l'Europe. Evidemment, pour la République tchèque, cela représente un formidable défi, vu les adaptations qu'il lui faut réaliser avant d'intégrer l'Union européenne.

L'Union européenne est d'abord un espace de liberté, "le plus grand espace de démocratie du monde". C'est aussi un espace de solidarité, celle-ci se manifestant par des politiques communes. Les pays candidats doivent pour adhérer à l'Union, intégrer l'acquis communautaire. Ces politiques communes sont d'importants éléments d'intégration, car elles permettent d'amoinrir les disparités de situation et renforcent l'adhésion au projet européen commun. Enfin, l'Europe est aussi un espace de sécurité, c'est d'ailleurs de là qu'est née la construction européenne, de la volonté de maintenir la paix sur le continent, après les deux guerres mondiales, de la volonté de sceller la réconciliation franco-allemande. Depuis la création de l'Europe, les intérêts généraux se sont tellement entremêlés qu'aujourd'hui, un conflit entre les Etats membres n'aurait plus de sens.

M. Jospin indique aussi qu'avant le prochain élargissement, l'Union européenne doit procéder à quelques adaptations, dans la perspective d'une Europe élargie, elle doit notamment adapter **les politiques communes**, et en particulier **la politique agricole** et **la politique régionale**. Il faut aussi accomplir la réforme des institutions, de manière à ce que l'Union européenne, qui compte actuellement quinze membres, conserve toute sa capacité d'agir même lorsque l'Union comptera vingt membres ou davantage, ceci dans l'intérêt des membres actuels, et dans celui des futurs membres.

Les pays candidats ont aussi un grand effort d'adaptation à faire, surtout au niveau juridique et institutionnel, avant de pouvoir intégrer l'Union.

Lors du Sommet franco-espagnol à La Rochelle, le samedi 21 novembre 1998, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, monsieur Lionel Jospin, Premier Ministre français, et Monsieur Jose Maria Aznar, Président du Gouvernement espagnol, ont tenu une conférence de presse conjointe.

Le Président de la République évoque tout d'abord les positions communes de la France et de l'Espagne sur le thème de l'élargissement, sur le principe, c'est à dire qu'ils estiment que **la réforme des institutions** est un préalable indispensable au prochain élargissement de l'Union européenne. Cependant, les modalités devront être discutées par les quinze Etats membres.

Le Premier Ministre, M. Jospin, estime que la France et l'Espagne sont entièrement d'accord pour bien marquer la différence entre le financement des politiques à Quinze, et **le financement de l'élargissement**. Enfin, ces deux pays sont aussi d'accord pour aborder l'élargissement de façon positive, mais réaliste, pour ne pas décevoir les pays candidats.

Le premier décembre 1998, à l'issue du Sommet franco-allemand de Potsdam (72èmes consultations franco-allemandes), les Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement de la République fédérale d'Allemagne et de France ont fait une déclaration commune.

Ils ont notamment décidé de se concerter pour définir une approche commune vis-à-vis du processus d'élargissement, et de favoriser la poursuite des négociations dans un souci de responsabilité et avec le souci de conduire les pays candidats à l'adhésion sans discrimination, tout en tenant compte des situations propres à chacun.

Dans la perspective des futurs élargissements, ils souhaitent aussi parvenir à des positions communes sur les réformes institutionnelles, et poursuivre une réflexion sur le processus de décision et sur **le cadre institutionnel nécessaire** à l'Europe de demain.

Ce même jour, le premier décembre 1998, à l'issue de ce Sommet de Potsdam (72èmes consultations franco-allemandes), Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, Monsieur Gerhard Schröder, Chancelier de la République fédérale d'Allemagne, et Monsieur Lionel Jospin, Premier Ministre français ont tenu une conférence de presse conjointe.

Le Chancelier allemand, M. Schröder, indique que M. Chirac, M. Jospin et lui-même se sont concertés sur le processus d'élargissement. La France et l'Allemagne considèrent que l'Europe ne doit pas s'arrêter à la frontière orientale actuelle, et qu'il est important de négocier rapidement avec les pays candidats. Ils rappellent aussi qu'il est nécessaire de **réformer les institutions européennes** avant le prochain élargissement. Peut-être faudra-t-il rapetisser la Commission, revoir le processus de prise de décision ; il faudra notamment plus de décisions à la majorité, et non plus à l'unanimité, si l'on veut que les décisions soient efficaces.

Le Chancelier insiste sur le fait que la France, comme l'Allemagne sont toutes les deux favorables à l'élargissement, et à ce que les négociations avec les premiers pays candidats avancent rapidement. Les seules difficultés existantes portent sur le calendrier d'adhésion, surtout parce qu'il faut réformer les institutions avant le prochain élargissement. Cela étant dit, l'Union européenne est prête, elle attend les pays candidats, qui doivent d'abord intégrer l'acquis communautaire. L'adhésion aura lieu quand les pays candidats s'estimeront prêts à supporter le choc de l'intégration, pour leurs économies et leurs sociétés.

Le 12 décembre 1998, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, et Monsieur Lionel Jospin, Premier Ministre, ont tenu une conférence de presse à l'issue du Conseil européen de Vienne.

M. Chirac commence par expliquer la nécessité de répartir le **financement** des conséquences de l'élargissement entre tous les Etats membres de l'Union européenne, pour des raisons de justice.

Selon le Président, les préoccupations des pays de l'Est ne sont pas des préoccupations matérielles, financières ou culturelles, ils veulent simplement rejoindre "la famille dont ils ont été brutalement séparés il y a cinquante ans".

Enfin, le Président de la République estime qu'au Conseil européen d'Helsinki, il sera encore trop tôt pour fixer une date à l'entrée des pays dans l'Union européenne. Il réaffirme la volonté de l'Union de tout faire pour que l'adhésion se fasse le plus vite possible, mais en fonction de la situation de chacun des pays candidats. Il n'est pas dans l'intérêt des pays candidats d'entrer trop vite, car les conséquences économiques et sociales pourraient être graves. Le Premier Ministre ajoute que certains pays candidats ont évoqué ces problèmes de date, mais la plupart ont réalisé que, concernant la capacité d'avancer rapidement dans le processus d'adhésion, leur responsabilité est aussi grande que celle de l'Union européenne. Le Président rappelle que c'est dans l'intérêt de tous que l'élargissement se fasse le plus rapidement possible mais aussi le mieux possible, et que cet élargissement suppose un effort de la part des Quinze, mais aussi de la part de chacun des pays candidats.

Le 15 mars 1999, le Ministre des Affaires étrangères, Monsieur Hubert Védrine, répond dans le Journal officiel à une question écrite à l'Assemblée nationale sur la position du gouvernement français à l'égard du processus d'adhésion de la République de Chypre à l'Union européenne.

Le ministre commence par rappeler que la position de la France à ce sujet s'inscrit dans le cadre de la décision du Conseil des ministres de l'Union européenne du 6 mars 1995, qui stipulait que les négociations d'adhésion avec **Chypre** commenceraient six mois après la fin de la conférence intergouvernementale. Cette décision, rappelée dans la déclaration d'ouverture des négociations par l'Union européenne implique que l'adhésion bénéficie « à toutes les communautés, y compris la communauté chypriote turque », et concoure « à la paix civile et à la négociation dans l'île ». La France tient à ce que ce que le processus d'adhésion se fasse au profit d'une île réunifiée, et à ce que les Chypriotes turcs prennent part aux négociations au sein d'une délégation chypriote unique. M. Védrine souligne que la France ne souhaite pas que les négociations d'adhésion entre Chypre et l'Union européenne favorisent une partition de fait de l'île.

Enfin, M. Védrine rappelle que la France participe, en tant que membre permanent du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, aux efforts de la communauté internationale pour régler la question chypriote, et soutient les résolutions des Nations unies tendant à mettre en place une fédération bi-communautaire et bi-zonale.

Le 27 avril 1999, Monsieur Lionel Jospin, Premier Ministre, répond aux parlementaires français sur la situation au Kosovo.

M. Jospin indique qu'il n'est pas sûr que la crise du **Kosovo** doive conduire l'Union européenne à accélérer le processus d'élargissement sans tenir compte des réalités économiques, sociales, techniques, culturelles et agricoles des pays européens. A son avis, il faut être capable d'avancer à deux rythmes, et il est toujours possible de passer des accords d'association sans entrer dans des mécanismes accélérés d'adhésion qui ne seraient pas suffisamment réfléchis.

Il se pose aussi la question de savoir si dans ce rassemblement des peuples européens qu'est l'Union européenne, on peut dire dès maintenant qu'il y a une place pour la Serbie. La réponse ne peut être positive pour l'instant, quand on voit que les autorités serbes ne respectent pas les droits de l'Homme, mais on ne peut répondre non pour l'avenir, pour ne pas enfermer le peuple serbe dans le nationalisme et la violence qu'il connaît depuis dix ans maintenant. L'Europe prospère et démocratique doit pouvoir être offerte à tous, et d'autant plus parce qu'au sein de l'Union européenne sont regroupés des pays qui se sont jadis combattus, et qui sont aujourd'hui des pays unis, démocratiques et pacifiques. Mais M. Jospin ajoute que pour entrer, il faudra d'abord que le peuple serbe rompe avec les théories de la violence et de la guerre.

Le 6 mai 1999, Le Ministre délégué chargé des Affaires européennes, Monsieur Pierre Moscovici s'est exprimé devant le Sénat lors de la Conférence-débat « La vocation européenne de la Pologne et l'élargissement de l'Union européenne ».

M. Pierre Moscovici ouvre son discours en soulignant que l'initiative de cette conférence-débat lui semble des plus opportunes, car **la Pologne** va bientôt rejoindre l'Union européenne.

Il évoque rapidement la crise de la Commission, qui selon lui, a montré clairement la nécessité de mettre en place rapidement des réformes institutionnelles, réformes qui étaient indispensables dans la perspective de l'élargissement.

Selon M. Moscovici, en ce qui concerne l'élargissement, l'espace politique européen recouvre deux enjeux : les frontières, et les institutions démocratiques. En effet, les perspectives de l'élargissement de l'Union européenne vers les pays d'Europe centrale et orientale posent la question **des frontières européennes**. M. Moscovici pense qu'au-delà des candidats actuels à l'adhésion il sera nécessaire de fixer une frontière orientale à l'Union, et ceci sera un enjeu important, notamment pour la Pologne. L'Union devra aussi définir ses relations avec les pays situés hors du territoire européen, entre autres la Russie, mais aussi l'Ukraine et la Biélorussie. La géographie européenne ne résout pas complètement la question de la frontière méridionale (le ministre pense notamment à la demande d'adhésion de la Turquie). Il ajoute aussi qu'il sera nécessaire de définir les conditions d'une intégration progressive des Balkans occidentaux (ex-Yougoslavie et Albanie) à l'Union européenne. M. Moscovici aborde aussi le sujet de **la réforme institutionnelle**. Il insiste sur le fait qu'elle se fera en plusieurs étapes, et les décisions à

ce sujet seront prises par les quinze Etats membres. Cependant, les pays candidats en seront informés, et ils seront pleinement associés aux réformes ultérieures.

En conclusion, le ministre rappelle que le gouvernement français est engagé à la réussite de l'élargissement, que M. Moscovici préfère considérer comme la réunification du continent européen. L'important maintenant est de poursuivre les négociations d'adhésion entamées en 1998 avec six pays, au premier rang desquels se trouve la Pologne. Il est nécessaire de réussir ces nouvelles adhésions pour qu'elles apportent la stabilité et la prospérité aux pays candidats, et pour renforcer l'Union européenne. Le ministre souligne qu'il s'agit là d'un enjeu historique, et qu'il ne doit pas être obscurci par de fausses querelles sur la question de la date de l'adhésion. Pour cela, les pays candidats doivent se fixer des échéances pour réaliser les réformes internes nécessaires, mais il est encore trop tôt pour que l'Union fixe une date-butoir qui pourrait pénaliser les candidats les plus avancés dans le processus d'adhésion, la Pologne étant l'un de ces pays. M. Moscovici ajoute que les premiers candidats auront sûrement rejoint l'Union européenne avant le milieu de la prochaine décennie, et qu'il sera alors possible d'aborder ensemble les défis qui attendent l'Europe réunifiée.

Le 7 mai 1999, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, Monsieur Aleksander Kwasniewski, Président de la République de Pologne, et Monsieur Gerhard Schroeder, Chancelier de la République d'Allemagne, ont tenu, à Nancy, une conférence de presse conjointe à l'occasion du Sommet tripartite du Triangle de Weimar.

M. Chirac, M. Kwasniewski et M. Schroeder se sont réjouis du bon fonctionnement de la coopération trilatérale, qui s'est développée dans le cadre des jumelages du programme européen **PHARE**, qui a permis à certains ministères polonais, allemands et français de mener une action conjointe, entre autres dans le domaine de la justice, de l'agriculture, de l'environnement, de la culture et de la sécurité. Ils annoncent également avoir l'intention d'élargir cette action, qui permet un tissage de liens entre leurs gouvernements, administrations et centres de décisions.

Le Président français tient à souligner qu'il partage entièrement le sentiment de M. Schroeder sur le futur des Balkans, à savoir que la région a besoin d'une perspective européenne, dans le sens où pour instaurer une paix durable, il faudra un développement économique, et politique, qui ne peuvent se faire sans une orientation européenne. L'Allemagne et la France sont d'accord pour que les accords de coopération existants déjà avec l'Albanie et la Macédoine puissent devenir la base pour de futures négociations d'association. Pour le Chancelier allemand et le Président français, pour obtenir la paix dans les Balkans, les pays du sud-est de l'Europe ont besoin d'une perspective d'adhésion à moyen terme.

Le 11 mai 1999, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, et Monsieur Paavo Lipponen, Premier Ministre de la République de Finlande ont tenu un point de presse conjoint, à Helsinki, en Finlande.

Le Premier Ministre finlandais annonce que le Président de la République française et lui-même sont d'accord sur le fait que l'élargissement de l'Union européenne vers les pays candidats doit progresser pendant la présidence finlandaise. M. Lipponen et M. Chirac sont d'avis qu'il faut aussi donner de l'espoir, des perspectives aux pays qui ne sont pas encore de vrais candidats, qui n'ont pas encore commencé les négociations d'adhésion, et que ces pays devraient aussi avancer dans le processus d'adhésion.

M. Jacques Chirac estime que la présidence finlandaise sera une présidence importante pour l'Union européenne, en raison des sujets traités, et plus particulièrement l'élargissement. Le Sommet d'Helsinki sera l'occasion de définir quels sont les pays qui auront la possibilité d'ouvrir des négociations pour entrer dans l'Union. Le Président rappelle également la nécessité de réaliser les réformes institutionnelles en vue de l'élargissement, tâche qui incombera en partie à la présidence finlandaise.

Selon le Président de la République, la dimension septentrionale de l'Union sera l'un des sujets importants qui seront évoqués pendant cette présidence finlandaise. Ce sujet tient particulièrement à cœur à la Finlande, et la France y adhère totalement et soutiendra les initiatives de la Finlande dans ce domaine. Cependant, pour M. Chirac, l'adhésion des pays de l'Est à l'Union européenne ne doit pas se faire au détriment de l'adhésion de certains pays du sud-est de l'Europe.

Le 8 juin 1999, Monsieur Lionel Jospin, Premier Ministre, répond aux questions des représentants de groupes parlementaires, et aux présidents de la Commission des Affaires étrangères et de la Défense nationale.

A propos des relations entre les pays **des Balkans** et l'Union européenne, Monsieur Jospin estime qu'aujourd'hui, on peut dire que ces pays seront, dans le futur, à côté de l'Union européenne, et non pas au sein de l'Union européenne. On peut tout à fait aider ces pays par des accords d'association avec l'Union, mais il ne faut pas confondre l'aide à ces pays et le processus d'adhésion.

Le Premier Ministre considère qu'il serait imprudent d'accélérer le processus d'adhésion, qui commenceront en temps voulu, comme avec les autres pays candidats. Ces pays pourront tout à fait être candidats à l'Union européenne, mais ils devront suivre la procédure d'intégration, avec ses mécanismes de sélection, d'appréciation, et de transition.

Le 20 juin 1999, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, a tenu une conférence de presse à l'issue du sommet des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement du G7-G8, à Cologne, en Allemagne.

M. Jacques Chirac pense que la résolution du conflit du **Kosovo** est indiscutablement une victoire pour l'Europe, et qu'elle a donné une impulsion supplémentaire à la construction européenne. C'est une victoire, parce que l'enjeu était de montrer que les démocraties sont capables de dire non à des actes qu'elles réprouvent, de dire non à la barbarie et au racisme. Il considère que cela doit permettre une évolution, dans deux domaines. Tout d'abord, cela montre que l'Union européenne a besoin de moyens coordonnés militaires de défense. Et ensuite, cela prouve que le meilleur moyen d'étouffer les conflits internes en Europe, généralement d'origine ethnique ou de nationalités, c'est d'être intégré dans l'ensemble européen. Le président ajoute que **la Roumanie** a réglé ses problèmes avec **la Hongrie** et avec **l'Ukraine** parce qu'elle veut entrer dans l'Union. C'est parce que ces pays savent qu'ils ont intérêt à intégrer l'Union, dès que leurs réformes le leur permettront, qu'ils vont régler leurs problèmes, leurs conflits potentiels. L'Union ne veut pas importer de risques de guerre. Pour le Président français, il est évident qu'il y aura une impulsion vers l'accélération de l'élargissement, un élargissement qui aura vocation à couvrir la totalité des Balkans, dès que cela sera possible pour eux.

En réponse à une question sur la situation de **Chypre**, M. Chirac affirme que celle-ci est préoccupante depuis longtemps, mais d'autant plus depuis que l'île est candidate à l'entrée dans l'Union européenne. Comme il l'a dit juste avant, l'Union européenne est soucieuse de ne pas importer de tensions, de conflits. A ce sujet, le Président pense que l'Union européenne a encore des progrès à faire dans ce domaine.

Le 30 juillet 1999, Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Président de la République française, a tenu une conférence de presse à l'issue du Sommet du Pacte de Stabilité, qui s'est tenu à Sarajevo, en Bosnie-Herzégovine.

M. Jacques Chirac, à l'occasion de cette conférence de presse, rappelle que le peuple serbe fait partie des peuples européens, de la famille européenne ; il affirme que ce peuple a sa place dans l'Europe, qui, rappelle le Président, a pour vocation de rassembler tous les peuples qui la composent. M. Chirac considère que l'ambition de l'Europe doit pouvoir permettre à chacun des peuples européens de la rejoindre, dès qu'il sera possible d'accepter les contraintes économiques et les exigences politiques.

Le Président considère que nous allons vers une Europe solidaire, pacifique, démocratique, prospère, et que le peuple serbe a aussi droit à cela. Il ajoute que le problème de la région **des Balkans** ne pourra être résolu que par la réconciliation.

M. Chirac veut marquer la volonté de l'Union européenne de rassembler tous les peuples qui feront l'effort d'accepter la discipline nécessaire pour former un ensemble européen qui soit un élément essentiel du monde multipolaire d'aujourd'hui et de demain.

M. Chirac indique aussi que ce nouveau **Pacte de stabilité** ne pose pas de problème par rapport aux actions spécifiques de l'Union européenne, notamment par rapport au processus d'élargissement, processus engagé pour plusieurs pays candidats. Lors du sommet d'Helsinki, sous la présidence finlandaise, les conditions pour les pays qui voudront être candidats seront définies. Il ajoute qu'il va de soi que les pays des Balkans seront un jour candidats, même si pour l'instant, il est encore trop tôt. Mais le Président rappelle que pour l'Union européenne, l'effort financier lié à l'élargissement n'est pas contradictoire avec l'effort de solidarité engagé par l'ensemble de la communauté internationale à l'égard des Balkans.

Enfin, M. Chirac souhaite que l'Europe devienne une Europe « réellement organisée, unie et moderne », et qu'elle intègre tous les pays, y compris les Balkans, afin de cicatriser définitivement les blessures laissées par l'Histoire. Il faut que ces pays soient en mesure d'entrer rapidement dans un système stable et convivial.

Le Président conclue en ajoutant que cet appel, s'adressant à l'ensemble de la République fédérale de Yougoslavie, émane de la France, mais a été discuté par l'Union européenne, qui a accepté de le faire sien.

BELGIQUE²

Le premier décembre 1998, Monsieur le Premier Ministre Jean-Luc Dehaene a prononcé un discours au Collège d'Europe à Bruges sur "Le rôle de l'Europe dans le monde global".

Le Premier Ministre débute son discours en disant que l'Europe doit relever le défi actuel de l'élargissement et accélérer la réforme interne pour jouer un rôle primordial sur la scène internationale. L'intégration des pays d'Europe centrale et orientale sera une nouvelle étape décisive dans le processus d'unification pour l'Union Européenne. Puisque la Guerre Froide est terminée, il faut désormais mettre fin à la séparation qui a divisé l'Est et l'Ouest de l'Europe.

A l'aube du 21^{ème} siècle, l'UE s'élargit pour construire une zone de stabilité régionale. Pour que l'Europe puisse garder une position importante dans le monde globalisé, cette stabilité est indispensable. La responsabilité de l'Union dans la globalisation exige premièrement des réformes internes. Même si les réformes concernant le marché intérieur et la monnaie unique sont mises en place et que l'on cherche à réaliser l'élargissement, ces mesures ne signifient pas que l'intégration européenne est déjà complète. Selon M. Dehaene il faut surtout que l'Union veille à ce que le processus décisionnel interne soit efficace en vue d'amplifier le processus d'intégration européenne.

En référence à la page historique de l'intégration européenne écrite par Jacques Delors, M. Dehaene pose la question suivante: comment l'Europe en tant que puissance régionale peut-elle obtenir une position dirigeante dans le monde? Face à cette question, il y a trois domaines à considérer:

la politique commerciale, le système ACP (Assemblée paritaire de l'accord conclu entre les Etats d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique et la Communauté Européenne) et les élargissements qui sont considérables.

Il faut que l'Union Européenne élabore une politique commerciale à part entière pour atteindre le prolongement de l'union douanière et également du grand marché unifié.

Bien que les élargissements successifs constituent un succès, le prochain élargissement va être un processus long et difficile tant pour les Etats membres que pour les pays candidats. En développant les valeurs de stabilité, les perspectives d'adhésion de Luxembourg présentent un avenir durable pour les 11 pays.

L'exemple de la Yougoslavie démontre ce qui peut arriver à un pays qui retourne à ses racines historiques après 50 années de communisme. A cet égard, on voit que l'absence d'élargissement pourrait coûter cher à l'Union Européenne.

Dans son discours, M. Dehaene fait aussi référence à un besoin commun auquel l'intervention commune à l'étranger doit répondre. Selon le Premier Ministre c'est "l'intérêt commun" qui abouti à la volonté politique. Les questions concernant seulement un ou deux pays n'atteindront pas un seuil.

²Source utilisée pour l'élaboration du chapitre: <http://www.premier.fgov.be>

Le texte complet des documents cités peut être consulté soit via l'INTRANET à l'adresse de:

<http://www.europarl.ep.ec/enlargement> soit via l'INTERNET à l'adresse:

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement>

Il appelle cela la règle du besoin commun qui dans le passé était prédominante dans le cadre de la politique commerciale, l'élargissement et la coopération avec le Tiers Monde. Grâce aux initiatives de la Commission, son contrôle exercé sur les négociations, la pression exercée sur les Etats membres et la prise de décision avec vote à la majorité, ces trois "politiques étrangères" n' échoueront pas. C'est toujours grâce à la méthode communautaire que l'on peut atteindre ces objectifs finaux.

Le 7 décembre 1998, Monsieur le Premier Ministre Jean-Luc Dehaene a fait un discours devant la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de la Province de Namur sur le thème "Investir au coeur de l'Europe".

Tout d'abord, le Premier Ministre fait référence à l'intégration européenne en disant que le support populaire pour l'Europe en Belgique a diminué ces dernières années. Le peuple belge n'approuve pas les mesures européennes impopulaires, mais nécessaires au projet européen.

Cependant, au lieu de faire de l'Europe un bouc émissaire, il faut retrouver l'adhésion de la population au projet européen et créer une opinion publique européenne.

Deuxièmement, M. Dehaene met l'accent sur l'Euro comme un nouveau cadre d'action. En ce qui concerne le plan économique, il souligne la perspective de l'élargissement de l'Union européenne à moyen terme et l'introduction de l'euro comme deux facteurs-clefs qui dynamisent le commerce et la croissance économique. Grâce à l'aide de l'union monétaire, le processus de l'intégration européenne va être dynamisé. Selon le Premier Ministre, sans l'union monétaire, le risque que l'Europe s'enlise était réel en retournant à une simple zone de libre-échange, particulièrement dans le domaine de l'élargissement aux pays-candidats. A l'égard de l'introduction de l'Euro, l'un des avantages se trouve dans la coordination des politiques économiques, parce que l'Union monétaire va les modifier en Europe.

Le 10 février 1999, Monsieur le Premier Ministre Jean-Luc Dehaene a prononcé un discours au Chaire Glaverbel de Sociétés et Civilisations européennes, U.C.L. à Louvain-la-Neuve: "Quel est le sens de la construction européenne?"

Au début de son discours, le Premier Ministre envisage l'approche du nouveau millénaire comme une perspective pour l'Europe qui deviendra ce que les Européens voudront en faire. Des hommes, tel que Monnet, Schuman, Adenauer, Spaak et Gasperi ayant la vision d'une Europe durablement pacifique et prospère ont lancé un processus d'intégration supranationale. Actuellement, à l'égard de l'élargissement on trouve un parallèle historique: pour le moment c'est la division entre Europe occidentale et orientale qui est en train de disparaître de la même manière que l'Europe occidentale était instaurée après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale. Selon M. Dehaene il faut donner la même réponse aux pays d'Europe centrale et orientale que celle trouvée par les pays d'Europe occidentale dans le temps de l'après-guerre.

L'élargissement de l'Union européenne ne peut pas atténuer la dynamique de l'intégration européenne. Tant pour les Etats membres actuels que pour les futurs, c'est important de savoir que l'élargissement ne peut pas gêner le processus de l'unification. Toutefois, pour que l'Union européenne de 25 pays ou plus reste efficace, l'intégration européenne doit

être effectué sans décélération. Sans la garantie du projet politique de l'unification européenne et la méthode d'intégration supranationale, l'élargissement va conduire à une Europe difforme et impuissante. Si l'élargissement aboutit à l'affaiblissement de l'unification, il ne faudra pas non plus compter sur une répétition de l'histoire.

Un autre thème intéressant que M. Dehaene aborde dans son discours: il s'agit de l'Union Monétaire qui forcera les Etats membres à continuer l'intégration européenne. L'introduction de l'euro dans 11 des 15 Etats membres de l'UE montre le choix de renforcer l'unité européenne pour parvenir à une prospérité et une sécurité durables en Europe. Le processus de l'unification européenne et la mise en place de l'Union Monétaire sont deux exemples exprimant la volonté politique qui rendent possible la construction de l'avenir.

En outre, le Premier Ministre explique que le Conseil Européen a mis en évidence l'impératif politique, l'intérêt économique, l'obligation morale qui conduisent l'Union Européenne à accepter les nouveaux membres. Néanmoins, il ne s'agit d'une solution réalisable que si l'on approfondit la dimension de solidarité au coeur de l'Union. En cherchant l'appui que les candidats précédents (Espagne, Portugal, Grèce, Irlande) ont reçu après leur adhésion, les pays candidats actuels s'attendent à devenir membre d'une Union ayant les institutions efficaces et également un modèle de société compétitif et solidaire.

Le Premier Ministre considère l'élargissement de l'UE comme une transformation devenue irréversible à laquelle tant les membres actuels que les membres futurs s'engagent et qui sera accomplie dans les années prochaines. Les réformes structurelles qui sont essentielles pour les pays candidats exigent un effort considérable. C'est l'Union qui doit effectuer les réformes indispensables. En ce qui concerne le fonctionnement des institutions, qui devra être adapté, une des priorités principales est la généralisation du processus décisionnel par majorité qualifiée dans l'Union Européenne.

Quand le traité d'Amsterdam a été signé, la Belgique, la France et l'Italie ont annoncé qu'ils souhaitent que la réforme des institutions soit effectuée avant le premier élargissement. A cet égard, le Premier Ministre est content que, pour le moment, presque tous les partenaires soutiennent ce point de vue.

M. Dehaene met en évidence que l'Union monétaire et l'élargissement ne représentent pas des obstacles mais des opportunités. L'élargissement façonné dans de bonnes conditions et à l'aide d'un appareil institutionnel va renforcer le poids de l'Union dans le monde globalisé.

A la fin de son discours, M. Dehaene se montre préoccupé par les difficultés s'annonçant dans la négociation de l'Agenda 2000. Comme un sondage récent indiquait que seulement 44% des citoyens de l'Union sont favorables à l'élargissement (32% en Belgique), il faudrait mieux expliquer les perspectives à long terme dans le futur.

Le 8 mars 1999, Monsieur le Premier Ministre Jean-Luc Dehaene a prononcé un discours lors de la réunion ad hoc du Conseil à Bruxelles sur " La Belgique dans l'Union Européenne: un point de vue personnel".

Le Premier ministre débute son discours en exprimant l'idée prioritaire: la seule possibilité pour l'Europe, pour maintenir la stabilité et la prospérité dans le monde du futur, se trouve dans le choix du même chemin vers l'unification économique et politique que l'on a déjà suivi depuis la Seconde Guerre Mondiale. En garantissant la paix et la prospérité pendant les dernières décennies, la construction européenne a réussi. A la veille du 21ème siècle on peut constater un parallèle en ce qui concerne l'élargissement: les divisions entre l'Europe de l'Ouest et de l'Est sont en train de disparaître.

Pour le moment c'est le défi de la globalisation économique qui change les structures de la société post-industrielle. Selon le Premier Ministre c'est le même processus d'intégration qui aidera à l'Europe à faire face à ce défi. L'intégration européenne va permettre de préserver le modèle de l'économie de marché dans une société ouverte. Grâce à ce processus d'intégration, on pourrait parvenir à l'équilibre du monde ressortissant des pouvoirs régionaux afin d'atteindre l'efficacité et la solidarité.

Néanmoins, l'Europe sera seulement capable d'atteindre cet objectif en cas d'adoption des réformes et d'adaptation des institutions et des directives.

En ce qui concerne la réforme à l'échelle de l'Union Européenne, ses institutions et ses directives, le processus irréversible de l'élargissement vers l'Europe centrale et orientale est en cours.

Tant les Etats membres que les pays candidats soutiennent le processus en vue d'atteindre ce but.

Les bénéfices de l'histoire obtenus par l'élargissement seront effacés s'ils provoquent une perte d'intégration. Il faut que l'intégration européenne continue même si l'Union européenne se compose de 25 Etats membres ou plus. Selon M. Dehaene plusieurs facteurs montrent qu'il est essentiel de continuer le processus d'intégration, tant en réalisant l'élargissement.

Premièrement, il s'agit de l'établissement de l'Union économique et monétaire qui aboutira à une structure économique stable.

Le deuxième facteur garantissant le renforcement de l'Union Européenne en vue de l'élargissement

sera la différenciation en ce qui concerne l'intégration. Cette différenciation introduite par le Traité d'Amsterdam en vue de générer une coopération entre les Etats membres va utiliser les institutions et procédures de l'Union pour arriver aux objectifs de l'Union. L'Union économique et monétaire est un exemple de la différenciation. Selon le Premier ministre il est probable que les nouveaux Etats membres ne vont pas rejoindre l'UEM tout suite.

Vu qu'il faut renforcer l'intégration européenne, le troisième facteur représente la généralisation du processus de décision par le vote à la majorité qualifiée. En général, la majorité qualifiée s'avère la méthode la plus efficace pour atteindre un consensus.

A la fin de son discours, le Premier ministre parle de la globalisation en soulignant que l'intégration européenne contribuera à faire face à ses défis. La globalisation concerne tant l'économie et les finances que la stratégie, les communications et l'information. Il est

indispensable d'effectuer des réformes structurelles en vue de maintenir le contrat social européen de la responsabilité et de la solidarité également dans le 21ème siècle. Dans le monde global, l'Europe doit se présenter comme une force régionale qui se soumet à ces règles.

Dans sa session ordinaire du 28 avril 1999 la Chambre des représentants et le Sénat de Belgique ont traité du financement de l'Union européenne en vue de l'élargissement et la réforme de la Politique agricole commune.

Dans la première partie, le rapport commence avec quelques exposés introductifs, qui contiennent aussi les commentaires sur les aspects politiques des négociations relatives à l'Agenda 2000 du professeur F. Dehousse de l'Université de Liège.

M. Dehousse débute son commentaire en disant que le débat budgétaire est lié à l'évolution politique de l'Europe et de ses institutions. Le Conseil européen spécial en mars prochain cherchant une solution pour l'Agenda 2000 va aborder quelques problèmes auxquels l'Union doit se confronter, et d'abord le mauvais fonctionnement du Conseil des ministres. Faisant référence à ce problème, l'Agenda 2000 est un document qui soulève des questions relatives à l'agriculture, au budget, à l'élargissement de l'UE, etc. Si les premiers ministres ne font pas les arbitrages indispensables, cette institution ne fonctionnera plus efficacement.

Deuxièmement, en ce qui concerne la mauvaise gestion budgétaire, il est nécessaire de relever les autres défis:

- l'amélioration de la monnaie unique
- les réformes institutionnelles
- le financement de l'élargissement: comme on ne demande pas aux États candidats de financer leur adhésion dans l'Union européenne, il serait important de créer un mécanisme d'assistance directe. De plus, il y a un autre "triangle" qui est en train de se former: soit on laisse à la disposition des pays candidats des ressources supplémentaires, soit on prévoit des possibilités d'exportation plus fortes comme par exemple dans le secteur agricole, soit on devra gérer d'importantes migrations de population.

Selon M. Dehousse, face à l'agenda institutionnel, l'ordre du jour du Conseil européen de Cologne de juin 1999 devrait être amplifié parce que les mécanismes de décision vont conditionner les dépenses futures dans une Union de 27 États membres.

La deuxième partie du rapport traite de la réforme de la politique agricole dans la domaine de l'Agenda 2000. A cet égard, il y a un échange de vues:

M. Borginon, membre de la Chambre des représentants en Belgique, spécifie que au lieu de considérer l'élargissement comme un problème technique, il vaut mieux comprendre l'élargissement comme un fait acquis.

M. Van der Maelen, également membre de la Chambre des représentants en Belgique, entend soulever le débat de société sur la problématique de l'agriculture. En ce qui concerne les problèmes de l'agriculture, il fait référence à l'incidence de l'élargissement de l'Union européenne sur l'agriculture et à la libération du commerce mondial et son

incidence sur les débouchés des produits agricoles européens (OMC). Pour trouver une solution à l'échelle de la réforme de l'agriculture (en vue de l'élargissement et de la stabilisation des dépenses de l'UE), M. Van der Maelen propose les priorités suivantes:

- une attention dans le cadre de la politique rurale
- des garanties en ce qui concerne la conservation des sites naturels, la protection de l'environnement et la gestion de la nature
- la qualité des aliments

Dans la troisième partie du rapport, qui montre les résultats du sommet de Berlin (24-25 Mars 1999) concernant l'Agenda 2000, il y a un échange de vues:

M. Van der Maelen constate que les résultats du sommet de Berlin conviennent à la Belgique. Tant les dispositions relatives aux fonds structurels que celles concernant le financement de l'UE conviennent aux intérêts budgétaires de ce pays. La réforme de l'agriculture est indispensable pour le financement de l'élargissement. Si cette réforme n'est pas lancée, l'élargissement n'aura pas lieu avant 2006.

M. Duquesne, également membre de la Chambre des représentants en Belgique, souligne que les décisions prises en ce qui concerne l'agriculture ne permettront pas de faire face aux conséquences de l'élargissement.

En répondant aux questions des membres, le Premier ministre belge met l'accent sur le fait que l'élargissement va conduire à accomplir des réformes si l'on veut que l'Union européenne soit capable de continuer à fonctionner.

Denmark

On the 25th of June 1998, the Danish Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, replied to the Parliament's inquiry about the current national and foreign policy situation. The topic of the presentation was "We came back – Denmark is on the right track"³.

Mr Rasmussen introduces his speech by proclaiming that seldom has so much been at stake for Denmark's future as at present. He continues to stress the importance of international values and welcomes the decision taken at the Nato Summit in Madrid, to invite Poland, the Check Republic and Hungary to become members of the organisation. Denmark is also very pleased with their negotiations to secure an open door to the Central and Eastern European countries and the Baltic States.

The Prime Minister moves on to evaluate the enlargement of the European Union. At the EU Summit in Luxembourg in December 1997, a historical agreement was made to initiate the enlargement process of the EU and to incorporate the applicant countries from Central Europe and Cyprus. The resolution asserted that all candidate countries should be judged according to the same principles, rules and criteria and that the enlargement must not come to a halt until all of the applicant countries have been incorporated. The enlargement process is the greatest peace project of our generation and fundamental cornerstone of Danish foreign policy.

On the 6 October 1998, the Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, gave an opening statement to the Danish Parliament, the Folketing⁴.

In the view of the Danish Government, the enlargement of the European Union is the greatest challenge to the EU and its immediate future. The future of Europe must be found in unity and not in division. In addition, it is crucial for Europe to serve as a model for democracy and a well functioning market economy, where the natural economic environment is secured against disruption as a result of unrestrained competition. Mr Nyrup Rasmussen, continues by declaring that the Russian crises emphasises the importance of the contingency of the dynamic integration of the Central and Eastern European states.

On the 6th of February 1999, the Danish Minister for Economic Affairs, Mrs Marianne Jelved, published the article, A common future, in the newspaper, Berlingske Tidende⁵.

All countries within the European Union wish for a stable and thriving economy. The unconditional preconditions for this development is peace, security, continued co-operation and engagement throughout Europe. This can only be achieved if we are

³ Source: <http://www.stm.dk>

⁴ Source: <http://www.um.dk/english>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.europarl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage <http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement>

⁵ Source: www.folketinget.dk

striving towards the same goal and if we maintain strong collaborators. The truth is, Mrs Jelved asserts, we are all neighbours that are deeply dependent on each other and we gain our revenue from integrated trade with each other.

The history of Europe is full of war and conflicts and a numerous member states and applicant countries are old enemies. This, however, belongs to the past and today we are agreeing on common rules and directives that will prevent any hostility from erupting. A community like the European, where 15 nations have come together in order to secure peace, stability and to solve conflicts, is not found anywhere else in the world. The fall of communism in Eastern Europe has confronted us with new problems and challenges that we never could have imagined when we joined the community in 1973. If we can support the new democracies, the fall of communism has not only resulted in new problems but it has also created new possibilities to secure peace and security throughout Europe.

Mrs Jelved moves on to discuss the economic perspectives of the union by proclaiming that the Euro is the solution to old wars and conflicts and it gives the potential for the EU to match USA's economic strength. Today old enemies have joined together in order to secure the welfare and prosperity of their people and in order to guard their international economic interests. Most importantly, their united strength has the ability to assist the new democracies in the east and improve their conditions and possibilities.

Even more important than the economic factor is the political one. It stabilises Europe and gives it the possibility to meet common obstacles and challenges, such as the enlargement process of the union. Denmark will however continue to pursue its own politics as an independent state and the future of the EU is not only to be determined by Germany and Great Britain but by all its 15 member states and the 11 candidate countries.

At the Conference on Regional Co - operation in an Enlarged Europe, April 19, 1999, the Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, gave an introduction statement⁶.

The Prime Minister begins by asserting that the greatest chore of Europe today is the enlargement of the European Union and the incorporation of the Central and Eastern European countries. The Kosovo crisis highlights the necessity of regional co – operation in order to reach long term solutions and secure peace and stability. Moreover, the issue of peace and security corresponds to the fundamental correlation that if your neighbour feels threatened and insecure, so will you. It is important to bear in mind that the most crucial component of security is preventive diplomacy, and not military action.

The enlargement process, Mr Rasmussen continues, is a natural consequence of the fall of the Berlin Wall and it is a response to the increased globalisation of the world today. The expansion process of the candidate countries does, however, require changes, both within the applicant countries as well as within the European Union itself. Agenda 2000 resulted in the decision on a reform of the common agriculture policy, the EU budget and the policy towards the least prosperous regions of the European Union. Of most importance, is that the budget will meet the expenses of the enlargement process. A

⁶ Source: www.stm.dk

well-structured budget is the fundamental approach in order to be able to accomplish the enlargement. Denmark has a strong aspiration to implement the incorporation of the three Baltic States, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, but at the same time, they want to continue their own co-operation and integration with these states. Mr Rasmussen concludes his speech by asserting that you only have to visit the Baltic States and talk to the population in order to understand how important Europe and regional co – operation are to them. The referendum in Latvia that resulted in increased rights for the Russian minorities was not an easy one but the answer was positive and illustrated the ambition and desire for Latvia to become a member of the European Union.

In relation to the Amsterdam Treaty, the Danish Foreign Minister, Mr Niels Helveg Petersen, on the first of May 1999, published an article in the newspaper Aktuelt: “The Amsterdam Treaty has come into force”⁷.

According to Mr Petersen, the Treaty of Amsterdam plays a significance role for Europe’s future co-operation and for the enlargement process. It is through the implementation of this treaty that the enlargement operation and the integration of Central and Eastern Europe have become possible.

On the 21st of May 1999, Mr Niels Helveg Petersen, the Danish Foreign Minister, delivered a statement to the Danish Parliament, Folketinget, on the subject of the EU’s foreign policy⁸.

In his introduction, Mr Petersen, acknowledges the importance of the European Union’s foreign policy. Democracy, human rights, conflict solution and peaceful existence are all key components of the EU’s policy and it is important for Denmark to contribute to these objectives. The collaboration between the EU and the associate countries of Central - and Eastern Europe, has played a significant role in abolishing the former European division between East and West. Additionally, increased partnerships and mergers with Russia have created a stable and trustworthy relationship. The Foreign Minister continues by asserting that there is a connection between a state’s geographical position and its region of priority. Whereas the southern European countries focus on the Mediterranean, Denmark has a special devotion towards the countries around the Baltic Sea.

There is no doubt that the EU’s foreign policy has had a positive influence on the Baltic States and that its support and guidance have supported the development of democracy and reformation in these countries. Today, the Baltic States are, for instance, moving towards becoming members of both the EU and NATO. Finally, he concludes, we should be pleased over the stability and progress that have developed in these countries.

⁷ Source: www.um.dk

⁸ Source: www.um.dk

On the 21st of June 1999, Denmark's Foreign Minister, Mr Niels Helveg Petersen, addressed the enlargement process in an article in the newspaper Erhvervsbladet⁹.

Overall there is a vast support for the enlargement process, both among the political parties and the population, in Denmark. The enlargement is both a moral responsibility but also a historical necessity in order to safeguard peace and stability in Europe. Even though there is an extensive agreement that division and confrontation should be resolved through co-operation, many are relating the enlargement process with extensive expenditures. Even though the countries in Eastern Europe, on an average, are poorer than the EU member states, we are obliged to assist these countries which for half a century were deprived from their rightful freedom and independence.

Regarding the economic perspective of the enlargement, Mr Petersen continues, it will not have a negative effect on Denmark, but on the contrary. Unquestionably our budget expenses to the EU will increase but in the end there will be a positive economic outcome due to expanded trade. Denmark has already recognised the immense possibilities in Central and Eastern Europe and Poland serves as a good example that Denmark will benefit from the enlargement process. Denmark's trade with Poland has, for instance, increased by 45 percent since 1995 and the country is today Denmark's largest eastern European trading partner. Additionally, more than 220 companies have acknowledged the favourable business climate in Poland and set up their businesses there.

Denmark will continue to take advantage of their geographical position and maintain their positive co – operation with Poland and the Baltic States. Other European countries are of course also important and Denmark especially perceives the economic development in Hungary to be very promising.

The Danish Government, the Foreign Minister proclaims, is promoting the enlargement process and has continuously worked for a dynamic and extensive process. Denmark, he continues has played a key role in pushing the negotiations forward and so far the candidate countries have made impressive progress in order to meet the EU's requirements. He concludes by declaring that the enlargement process is a true success and the expectations are very high.

⁹ Source: www.um.dk

GERMANY

On July 29th 1998 the German Foreign Minister Dr. Klaus Kinkel held an interview for the Saxonian Newspaper regarding the enlargement of the European Union and the freedom of movement for workers.¹⁰

When being asked how to reply to the hesitation and the sceptism of the German people concerning the enlargement of the European Union, Mr. Kinkel pointed out that the reason for it is that a lot of Germans are comparing this unconsciously with the German reunification and its costs and difficulties. According to him this comparison is wrong, since the present process of enlargement is dealing with different conditions than the process of reunification and the countries of Central-and Eastern Europe would have had ten years to prepare the accession thoroughly. Mr. Kinkel stressed that it is very important to keep the sorrows of the people in mind and to convince them of the advantages of the enlargement. Already now 16,5 % of the German exports go to the countries of Central-and Eastern Europe. This is almost as much as exports going to the USA (17,9%) and more than those to the tiger states in Asia (11,4%). And these exports are growing yearly.

Furthermore, Mr. Kinkel highlighted that the enlargement of the European Union is a big political challenge for the German people: because of the reunification and the process of European integration, Germany has become part of the center of Europe. For the first time the dream of peace, democratic stability and prosperity has become closer. Germany has a fundamental interest in extending the zone of prosperity beyond its own Eastern frontier. His country exports stability and wealth to the applicant states while gaining interesting political partners that will soon become economically powerful.

In the declaration "Because we confide in the German power" given by the German Government on November 10th 1998, the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder announced that Germany will be benefiting from the enlargement of the European Union.¹¹

The German people were able to complete the reunification in peace and self-determination with the help of its friends and allies. Germany supports the membership to the Western alliance and to the European Union: today the Germans are democrats and Europeans- not because they have to, but because they want to.

German integration within the European Union is of great importance for German policy. Therefore, the German government is going to use the German Presidency in the first half of 1999 to deepen the European integration process.

¹⁰Source: Interview given by the German Foreign Minister Dr. Klaus Kinkel in the German newspaper "Saechsische Zeitung" on July 29th 1998

¹¹ Source: <http://www.bundesregierung.de>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.euoparl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage:<http://www.euoparl.eu.int/enlargement>

Germany's principal concern must be to prevent Europe from limiting itself to the German-Eastern border. Germany will never forget about the valuable contributions of the people in Hungary and the Czech Republic to the process of overcoming the division of the German state. For this reason, these countries should be integrated in partnership. The German state is aware of its historical responsibility concerning Poland and is consequently going to strengthen the cooperation between Germany, France and Poland. As for the Czech-German relations the German government will remedy existing problems within the relationship with the Czech Republic on a basis of the German-Czech Declaration.

According to the German government political agreement must be reached on the financial framework of the European Union to be able to enlarge the EU. As for the dispute between member states concerning the burden-sharing, the German government does not only want to support the co-financing of the aid to agriculture, but also to keep all of the three models under surveillance which the Commission has submitted.

Germany, Austria, Sweden and the Netherlands being all net contributors to the EU, contribute more than they receive. At the moment the German net payments amount to a total of 22 thousand million DM.

On November 23rd 1998 the German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer gave an interview in the German magazine "Der Spiegel" regarding his view of himself as a Foreign Minister as well as the Common Foreign Security policy and Human Rights.¹²

Asked about the conception that the German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder had carried forward during his official visits in Warsaw and Moscow, Mr. Fischer replied that Germany has to get to a successful completion of the EU enlargement with Poland and the other applicant states. To be able to realize this, a lot of realism would be necessary. Of course, Germany has a big political, economic and humanitarian interest in helping Russia. But doing this all by itself, would overstrain his country.

Moreover, Mr. Fischer explained that Germany has to endeavour to reach a consensus in the European Union. His country would like to be the driving force within the process of integration. Europe has to be modernized and enlarged at the same time.

Furthermore, Mr. Fischer was asked whether it would overreach the sources of the EU to try to realize everything at the same time. He answered that without substantial reform of the institutions, which he considered to be of great importance, the enlargement is unlikely to be carried out.

In addition, he was asked why he thinks that enlargement is necessary, even if the German people are afraid that the enlargement would attract tens of thousands of people from Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to the German labour market. Mr. Fischer pointed out that the fear is understandable, but will turn out to be unfounded. When Spain and Portugal were joining the EU, the same fears occurred in France and as "Der

¹² Source: Interview given by the German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in the German magazine "Der Spiegel" on November 23rd 1998

Spiegel" added, the response to these concerns were long transition terms. Mr. Fischer contended that these transition terms would also be necessary this time, but would not be valid ad infinitum. As far as he is concerned, the pressure on the German labour market would be even higher without the enlargement. For instance, Greece, Spain and Ireland are countries that have had economic success since forming part of the EU. German foreign trade has benefitted from this situation as have German employees. At the same time, this has lowered the pressure on emigration. In Central-and Eastern Europe Germany would make the same experience.

"The Spiegel" carried on expounding that first of all the enlargement would cost billions of euros and up to now, Germany has been the highest net contributor. Besides, "Der Spiegel" asked Mr. Fischer if he would run around in Europe telling everybody "I want my money back" like Maggie Thatcher did. Mr. Fischer replied that there is no scope left in Germany for additional expenditure and that the German state has been explaining this to every one of its partners.

Finally, the German Foreign Minister declared that the European Union stands for the breaking with a political system that had been based on the permanent competition of national states since the Thirty-Years-War where there was a permanent danger of war. The response to bring this situation to an end has been integration.

During the 14th session of the German "Bundestag" on December 10th 1998, the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder made the declaration: "Preview of the European Council in Vienna on December 11th and 12th 1998 and forecast of the German Presidency in the first half of 1999".¹³

The European integration process has been supported by a sufficiently high number of citizens within the member states. In Germany, the favourable opinion on European affairs has been present constantly.

For the German state it is very important to establish the conditions for the enlargement of the EU. Germany takes it seriously that the EU should not stop at the German Eastern border. His country has been declaring in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and elsewhere that Germany would always be a trustworthy broker of the enlargement.

During the Government of the Christdemocrates (CDU), it was promised to Poland to become a member of the EU in the year 2000. This was a promise that could not be feasible for economic reasons. According to Mr. Schroeder, the party of the Christdemocrates has therefore caused problems which the party of the Socialdemocrates (SPD) has to solve now. His party has been claiming that they want the enlargement of the EU, and that they would like to establish the conditions to reach this.

Germany is in the beginning of a negotiating process that will be complicated and will cost a lot of money. Therefore, Mr. Schroeder would like to tell the applicant states that Germany wants the negotiations to be carried out promptly. Moreover, during the same

¹³ Source: <http://www.bundesregierung.de>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET or INTERNET homepage

time the institutional reforms should be implemented, since without these reforms it would be very difficult to admit new members. According to him, it is nonsensical to fix new dates of accession all the time, because the German state would like both and because it is not predictable, when both would be reached. This would damage the confidence.

As far as Mr. Schroeder is concerned, the contractors of his country in Eastern Europe know that the German state supports rapid negotiations because of economic and political reasons. These countries also trust Germany to be their representative of their interests. Germany does this as well, because the German people are aware of the solidarity that they owe to Poland on account of history. The German state is going to support the accession of the applicant countries which they are desiring without imposing any conditions, since it is obvious what the reform forces in these countries were able to do in favor of Germany to help establishing the German reunification.

For these reasons, Germany is obliged to be the representative of interests of the people in those countries. But his country is going to point out the realities which would help Germany in order to orientate the support of the aspiring accession instead of creating an illusion.

Finally, the German Chancellor underlined that the German Government is aware of the differences regarding the question of how to finance this. Furthermore, the German state knows that the aim of fair contributions could only be carried out step by step.

On December 11th 1998 the German Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guenter Verheugen held the speech "The enlargement of the European Union: positions and perspectives" on the occasion of the event "Neighbours in the house of Europe" in the "Evangelische Akademie Tutzing".¹⁴

The enlargement of the European Union by ten countries in Central-and Eastern Europe and Chyprus is the biggest challenge for Europe besides the completion of Monetary Union at the eve of a new millennium. Opening up the European Union towards the East and the South-East is much more than just an enlargement. This process has been overcoming the post-war time and its painful separation.

The new German Government is going to continue the process of enlargement with the same resoluteness as the former one: the vision of European integration should continue. According to Mr. Verheugen, this would only be possible if the following outstanding questions could be resolved.

What are the difficulties?

The accession of the countries from Central-and Eastern Europe is very exceptional as for the political aspects as well as for the economic and social ones. As far as the development is concerned, these reform states are still in arrears which is the consequence of the socialist mismanagement during four decades and of an isolation for more than forty years. The reforms have to be carried out consequently, since after the accession every country would have to face the full competition of the European market.

¹⁴ Source: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage

To reach the standards of the EU, the candidate countries would need investments with the total amount of 120 thousand million ECU within the next ten years.

Furthermore, membership of the EU brings about not only rights but also duties. The applicant states are obliged to transpose and apply the whole acquis communautaire (20.000 Community acts) at the latest by the time they accede. In Luxemburg the rules are getting set. The most important rule says that all states are participating in the process of accession with the same rights and assumptions. The negotiations for adhesion are individual and could be concluded with every candidate at a different moment. Last Monday, Germany has announced the new eight chapters regarding negotiations. But even at the end of the German Presidency, the most difficult negotiating issues such as agriculture, freedom of movement, environment, justice and home affairs would only be visible approximately. But it is not possible yet to mention a final date for these negotiations. An appointed time for such a final date could only be set when the problems in all the chapters could be estimated after starting the negotiating process. Mentioning a final date for adhesion at the moment should be avoided, since this would entail an internal disappointment if the time schedule could not be kept. As far as the adhesion is concerned, the epigraph should not be the earlier, the better, but: the better prepared, the earlier.

Nevertheless, there is no alternative decision for the enlargement. Less integration of the Eastern neighbours would signify less cooperation within a lot of important areas for the German state such as free trade on a trans-frontier basis, prevention of crime and common border control.

Finally, Mr. Verheugen pointed out that the European Union being reinforced by internal reforms would be able to extend the successful policy paper of peace, democracy, prosperity and stability towards large parts of Europe. At the edge of a new millennium, a unified Europe will be created that would be able to stand the global challenges.

On December 15th 1998, the German Government held the press statement: "Objectives and priorities of the German Presidency in the Council of the European Union".¹⁵

As far as the process of accession in the European Union is concerned, the objective of the German Presidency would be to encourage the enlargement of the EU. The task of the Presidency would be to conduct negotiations in the context of the accession negotiations. Germany would like to achieve early success in the negotiations in order to make the proceedings more dynamic, while bringing the candidate countries closer to the acquis communautaire within the individual policies. Probably already during the German Presidency, the Accession Partnerships with the ten countries in Central-and Eastern Europe should be verified.

The German Presidency is going to work for an operational pre-accession strategy and the joint and several support in order to contribute to the economic and democratic

¹⁵ Source: <http://www.bundesregierung.de>, the whole document available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage

stabilization of the countries in Central-and Eastern Europe. The decisions concerning the financial framework of the pre-accession aids would be made within Agenda 2000. Furthermore, Germany is going to assist the European strategy regarding Turkey throughout the Presidency.

According to the German press statement, issues of justice and home affairs relating to countries from Central-and Eastern Europe are as important as economic and social issues. By means of the Maastricht Treaty and the Amsterdam Treaty, the European Union also became an area of freedom, security and law. This signifies that the Union has to be a security community whose main tasks should be the protection of its citizens in the fight against organized crime and illegal immigration. Therefore, this field should have a high priority within the accession negotiations. The fundamental assumption for the membership in the European Union is, that every candidate country would accept the obligation to assume the acquis communautaire including the Schengen acquis within the areas of justice and home affairs as well as the obligation to prove its capability to apply this acquis.

It is also provided for the German Presidency to screen the acquis communautaire in the field of justice and home affairs together with the candidate countries. Attention should be paid to those fields in which efforts to implement measures would still be necessary.

On January 4th 1999, the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder held an interview in the German magazine "Der Spiegel" regarding his attitude on Europe, the German Presidency and the enlargement of the European Union.¹⁶

According to Mr. Schroeder, the joint currency, the deepening of the integration and the enlargement of the European Union are leading to a market having more consumers than the USA. His country still has to see how to use this additional economic power in a political way. Therefore, Germany has been endeavouring to establish an identity concerning security and foreign affairs especially a common policy concerning Russia and the Orient.

Furthermore, the German Chancellor was asked how he is going to approach to the most difficult task since the "foundation of the Community": the enlargement of the European Union, while under time pressure. Mr. Schroeder replied that if it is not possible during the German Presidency to bring the financial relations into line in order to enable the enlargement, the time limit will have to be rescheduled. Those countries in favor of launching the Agenda 2000 are the real allies of the applicant states. Moreover, the German magazine "Der Spiegel" pointed out that probably the enlargement would not take place before the year 2006. Mr. Schroeder explained that he is refusing to notify any dates of accession.

This is a very difficult economical and political process. Five of the first applicant states from Central-Europe have to get ready to join the community which would require the enhancement of internal reforms in these countries. On the other hand, the European

¹⁶ Source: Interview given by the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder in the German magazine "Der Spiegel" on January 4th 1999

Union has to be capable of accepting new members which would call for measures within the Agenda 2000.

In connection with this, the German magazine "Der Spiegel" brought to the notice of Mr. Schroeder that he is not only aiming to enhance reforms in favor of the enlargement, but also to reduce the contributions of his country to the EU. The German Chancellor replied that the financial framework of the EU should be maintained. In case that this would not be possible, the Cohesion Fund in favor of the poorer member states would have to be reduced. All the countries in southern Europe should be aware of this. Besides, the Structural Fund would be in trouble, too.

Then, the German magazine "Der Spiegel" carried on that Mr. Schroeder has been warning of a delay of the enlargement if Germany's contributions are not reduced, but that this fact has not been hardening countries like Spain that consider Germany as the usufructuary of the enlargement. Mr. Schroeder declared that his country came to an understanding with France to see that the process of negotiations would be carried out quickly. On the other hand, the German Chancellor would not contest that different considerations exist elsewhere which stand in the way of enlargement. Even Spain and Portugal have been considering the question "what could happen if nothing happens?". Therefore, Mr. Schroeder is not going to complain about a lack of cooperation within these countries, then he added that he is not going to complain, yet.

Finally, the German magazine "Der Spiegel" asked Mr. Schroeder whether the enlargement would only be feasible if the German contributions would be reduced. He expounded that it would be wrong to only focus on this matter while negotiating.

On January 12th 1999, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Joschka Fischer held the speech "the priorities of the German Presidency" in the European Parliament in Stras- bourg.¹⁷

The introduction of the Euro as the single currency has been a historical step towards the European process of integration. But this implementation would pose a serious risk if this move is not followed up by more steps such as the enlargement of the European Union.

Moreover, the German Foreign Minister highlighted that it is necessary to implement this enlargement: the main terms of the European idea of integration are orientated towards the whole European continent. Furthermore, the geopolitical realities do not allow any alternative. If this is true, in 1989/90 the history decided already about the "IF" of the enlargement, only the "HOW" and "WHEN" still need to be set up.

The southern enlargement of the EU was a big political and democratical success. Economic prosperity and democratic stability have been the results of the southern enlargement for these former applicant states, and exactly this success should be sought in the case of the eastern enlargement. The enlargement is the only way to establish lasting prosperity, peace and stability in Europe.

¹⁷ Source: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage

The German people will never forget about the valuable contribution of the people in Central-and Eastern Europe to the process of overcoming the division of the German state.

An unstable zone beyond the borders of the present EU is not politically acceptable because of the experiences in the Balkans. Therefore, every delay or prevention of the enlargement would end in a diversion being dangerous and expensive that would finally dispose of a forced enlargement. For this reason, there is no alternative to enlargement.

To establish the enlargement process, it would be necessary to have both a strategic vision and practical realism. It should be made a practical success of the negotiations of enlargement as soon as possible.

Concentrating on the capability of amplification within the EU structures including the successful conclusion of Agenda 2000 does not stand for a delay in the enlargement process. On the contrary, the sooner the EU is going to implement the reforms and the sooner the applicant countries will enhance their internal reforms, the faster the process of enlargement will proceed.

For all of these reasons, Germany is going to be the broker of a fast enlargement of the EU. Those applicant states that have not been negotiating, should get a fair chance in order to get closer to the other countries. But it is still too early to fix a final date of accession. Nevertheless, after a lot of progress within the negotiations and provided that the Agenda 2000 would be concluded successfully in the end of the year 1999 or in the year 2000, it would make sense to mention a final date of adhesion in order to conclude the negotiations rapidly.

On January 16th 1999, the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer held the interview "the history has decided about the enlargement of the EU, we have to proceed this now" in the Swiss newspaper "Neue Zuericher Zeitung".¹⁸

Asked by the Swiss Newspaper whether he is really demanding a European constitution, the German Foreign Minister replied that the more Europe is growing, the more pressing the question about its objective becomes. Therefore, the enlargement being the next historical move, would require institutional reforms. How should a European Union of 21 member states work? This question has to be answered: given this background, the discussion is resulting more and more in a constitutional question.

The Swiss Newspaper brought to the notice of Mr. Fischer that he had talked about a bicameral system for Europe. As far as the German Foreign Minister is concerned, this reference has caused misunderstandings.

Moreover, the Swiss Newspaper pointed out that when highlighting the priorities in Strasbourg, it looked like Mr. Fischer had supported a fast enlargement. For this reason, it seemed like his opinion towards Europe is closer to Mr. Helmut Kohl than to the acting German Chancellor, Mr. Schroeder. The German Foreign minister explained that in Strassburg he had stated the position of the whole government and that both Mr.

¹⁸ Source: Interview given by the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer in the Swiss Newspaper "Neue Zuericher Zeitung" on January 16th 1999

Schroeder and himself want the enlargement towards Eastern Europe as soon as possible. But it is necessary that the conditions to fulfill are set out. But since the negotiations with the candidate countries have recently started in November, it is still too early to fix an exact date of accession. Nevertheless, Mr. Fischer stressed again that history has already decided about what Europe has to implement now. This is the second condition.

Another issue brought up by the Swiss Newspaper was the capability of the EU for enlargement. In connection with this, the German Foreign minister explained that the transition from the present Union towards a Union of 21 members would create new conditions posing questions about the legal capacity and the financial framework. This should be ensured by the reform of the financial structure, the agricultural policy and the Cohesion Fund.

According to Mr. Fischer, as far as fair burden-sharing is concerned, Germany is going to remain a net contributor. On the other hand an imbalance exists in the EU regarding the burden-sharing. Some member states have a higher income per head of population than Germany does, but nevertheless they are paying less.

The Swiss Newspaper carried on asking whether his argument does not seem to be contradictory, since on the one hand losses should be accepted by all the member states, but on the other hand Germany is expecting to shed some of the burden. Mr. Fischer explained that Germany would like a proportional lessening of its contribution. The system can only work if the burden is fairly distributed. But this does not stand for a financial reform that would get carried out at the expense of the poorest countries.

On January 20th 1999, the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer held a speech in the National Assembly in Paris.¹⁹

The German-French cooperation is getting more and more important because of the impending enlargement of the EU: a Union with 21 and more member states could not grow together unless Germany and France will be acting as internal motor. In order to realize this, the German-French relationship should be based on confidence which still could be completed. Therefore, both countries together are responsible for Europe.

As far as Mr. Fischer is concerned, the European Union has four future tasks, such as the modernization of the European "contrat social", the enlargement of the European Union, the strengthened capacity for political action and the enforcement of its democratic legitimacy. Germany and France should concentrate on solving these tasks now, not as an "entente exclusive", but as an "entente élémentaire".

The enlargement is the next historical step following after the introduction of the Euro. By opening up the EU towards Eastern Europe, the EU is responsible to being a cultural area for Europe as a whole.

The enlargement should be supplemented by a deepened Mediterranean Policy. Nevertheless, the epigraph: Germany is going to "serve" the east and France is going to "serve" the south should not be carried out. Stabilizing Eastern and Southern

¹⁹ Source: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage

Europe is intended to safeguard both, the French and the German interests as well as the interest of Europe as a whole.

The capability of enlargement and the capability of adhesion should be carried out simultaneously. The sooner the EU is going to launch the reforms that are necessary and the intenser the applicant states will enhance their internal reforms, the faster the process of enlargement will continue. Two requirements are forming part of the capability of enlargement such as a successful agreement of the Agenda 2000 as well as institutional reforms of the EU. Mr. Fischer pointed out that he would be optimistic that the negotiations within the framework of the Agenda 2000 would success achievements until March 24th and March 25th 1999. His confidence is based on the fact that after the great start of the Euro none of the partners would be interested in representing the picture of Europe being weak.

Besides, a reform of the CAP (common agricultural policy) could not be avoided any longer because of the enlargement. Mr. Fischer is aware of the French concerns regarding this issue. But without a reform program regarding the CAP, the costs of the enlargement could not be born.

Furthermore, in order to enlarge the EU, reforms of the EU-institutions would be necessary. In connection with this, Germany and France would have to cooperate together to prevent the misunderstanding that the institutional reforms could be seen as a new condition or brake of the enlargement. On the contrary, since being the founder members of the EU, France and Germany should be interested in carrying out the institutional reforms before the accession negotiations would be concluded.

The reform program should be aiming at a higher efficiency of the European Commission, an expansion of the decision-making by a qualified majority and a more democratic weighting of the votes.

On January 21st 1999, the German Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guenther Verheugen held the speech "the challenges of the German Presidency" during a debate with the French Minister with responsibility for European Affairs, Mr. Pierre Moscovici in Paris.²⁰

At the moment, Europe is forming part of an important decision-making process for the next two years. These decisions will have consequences for Europe until the next millenium.

The German Presidency will have four priorities, such as the Agenda 2000, the European employment policy, the progress achieved on the way of the enlargement and the reinforcement of the capacity for foreign trade of the EU.

Since 1989/90 there have been no more doubts about the necessity of enlargement. Nevertheless, it is still too early to set a time limit for the accession. But as far as the German point of view is concerned, it would make sense to talk about a concrete final date of the negotiation round on enlargement after the completion of the Agenda 2000 and a substantial progress within the accession negotiations.

²⁰ Source: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage

At the moment, practical progress within the current negotiations are very important. Furthermore, the candidate countries that are not yet forming part of the negotiations should get a fair chance to catch up.

Mr. Verheugen highlighted that the capability of enlargement and the capability of adhesion should be carried out simultaneously including internal reforms of the EU. Particularly the applicant states are interested in joining a community that is working well.

On February 5th 1999, the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer held a speech during the foundation of the German-Ukrainian Forum.

The German-Ukrainian relationship has been improving a lot after the Ukraine got independent. But in the general public, this country still does not have the significance that it deserves. As far as Mr. Fischer is concerned, the Forum should contribute to improve the importance of the Ukraine for Europe. Germany is aiming to extend contacts focused on regional forces as well as on economical and cultural elites since it is only possible to cooperate efficiently on such a basis. The progress towards democracy regarding the German relations with all the states in transition is forming part of the goals of the new German government. The most important task of the Forum would therefore consist in the reinforcement of the Ukrainian society. Establishing a structure with rules of law including democratical checks and balances would be the only way how democracy and free market economy could last on a long-term basis.

The Ukrainian interests should be protected in the future, thus the country could be integrated in Europe. The Ukraine has become one of the most important states involved in partnership and plays an integral part in establishing a peace settlement for Europe as a whole. The country is endeavouring to succeed in the integration process towards Euro-Atlantic structures and to establish great relations with Russia.

The enlargement of the European Union has been a historical task and therefore, it would not be okay that a new crack will be segregating the Eastern borders to be built up. Europe does not end at the borders of Poland or Hungary- this should be expressed in a way that the enlargement of the EU will be completed by growing and deepening relations with the Ukraine. In connection with this,

Mr. Fischer pointed out that practical steps should be carried out instead of accession debates.

Europe is also a community of values. It is very important for the future relationship that the Ukraine is going to fulfill the conditions such as the abolition of the death penalty that the country has taken on commitments by its membership in the Council of Europe. Furthermore, the shutdown of Chernobyl is another important objective of the German government.

In March 1999, the German Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guenther Verheugen made a declaration for the Czech newspaper "Zapadoceske Noviny" regarding the German-Czech relations.²¹

In this century, the German-Czech border constitutes a sensitive interface in the center of Europe.

Because of the historical perspective there is no question, why the German-Czech neighbourhood is not always easy even after the established unification in Europe.

On a political level, the German-Czech declaration from January 21st 1997 became the essential starting point in order to renovate the relationship. The German side admits the historical responsibility for the grief that the Czech people had to suffer under the Nazi government. On the other hand, the Czech Republic regrets the expulsion of the German people after the Second World War.

Since the German people really need the Czech Republic in order to build up a peaceful Europe, the German interests are focused on the enlargement of the European Union towards the Czech Republic. As far as Mr. Verheugen is concerned, this task takes priority in the German Presidency. This enlargement of the EU as well as the establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union are the biggest challenges for Europe at the eve of a new millenium. The process of opening up the Union towards Eastern-and South-Eastern Europe is much more than just an enlargement, since this will finally overcome the post-war period and its separation line. Therefore, the enlargement does not have any alternative decision. Nevertheless, the process of opening up the Union towards Eastern-and South-Eastern Europe is not only a moral obligation, but in particular a fundamental judgment corresponding to the political and economical interests of the applicant states. According to Mr. Verheugen, peace and democratical stability would be saved for Europe as a whole on a long-term basis. For this reason, enlargement represents a prevention of conflict par excellence. The values that Europe stands for are getting reinforced. The resultant benefit is one of the most importants conquests that Germany and Europe could expect from integration of the applicant states.

Regarding the reform program that the present European Union would need, it is obvious that most of these reforms would have been necessary anyway in order to succeed in the world-wide competition.

Moreover, Mr. Verheugen explained that the candidate countries and therefore the Czech Republic would have to carry the principal loads in order to prepare the accession to the EU. In connection with this, the German people would like to help. He is convinced that concerning the reforms, the Czech Republic does not have any alternative decision, since the reforms are of big significance independently of joining the EU.

²¹ Source: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt>

On April 23rd 1999, the German Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guenther Verheugen held the speech "The German Presidency: an interim accounts" during the conference "Getting from the Europe of economic affairs to the Europe of its citizens" in Bonn.²²

Due to Mr. Verheugen, dealing with four priorities such as the Agenda 2000, the European Employment Pact, the progress achieved on the way towards enlargement and the reinforcement of the capacity for foreign trade of the EU, the German Presidency belongs to the most pretentious one that his country will ever hold.

Already now, Mr. Verheugen is able to say that the process of enlargement has obtained more speed and quality. During the German Presidency three signs are getting set:

- Because of the reform of the Agenda 2000, the European Union has become capable for enlargement. 22 thousand million Euro will be allocated in order to pre-accede the applicant states and 58 thousand million Euro will be allocated for expenses of enlargement.

- The institutional reforms referring to enlargement will be launched in Cologne. Germany will also be able to obtain the objective of concluding the reforms before the first accessions will take place.

- Until this summer all chapters concerning enlargement will have been introduced in the negotiation process.

According to Mr. Verheugen, for these reasons it is obvious that the enlargement is considered to be the first priority by the member states and primarily by Germany. Unfortunately, it is not possible yet to make a prediction regarding the time that would be needed. Nevertheless, the applicant states are aware that none of the member states would like a delay.

The war on the Balkans has taught the following: only in those parts of Europe where the principle of integration has been carried out already, democracy, human rights and freedom will be guaranteed.

As for this background the idea of the European integration appears more important than ever before.

²² Source: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage

ESPAÑA²³

El 26 de Febrero de 1999, el Presidente del gobierno Don José María AZNAR, ofrece una conferencia de prensa despues de la reunión informal de Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de la Unión Europea en Petersberg (Alemania).

El Presidente del Gobierno manifiesta que uno de los objetivos de la Agenda 2000 es tener recursos suficientes para preparar la Unión Europea para la ampliación. Desde la doble perspectiva de una Unión más fuerte y más amplia, y considerando la Agenda 2000 como base de la negociación, el Presidente define la posición española en torno a dos principios básicos : buscar soluciones respetuosas con el Tratado y buscar soluciones cuyo coste no sea discriminatorio para uno u otro Estado miembro.

En relación con el problema que tienen y pueden tener algunos estados miembros desde el punto de vista de la presión migratoria de países de la Europa Central y Oriental el Presidente afirma que se pueden intensificar en el marco de la ampliación.

Intentando buscar fórmulas de aproximación para futuros compromisos en el ámbito de la reforma de la Agenda 2000, el Presidente ha presentado la propuesta española para la creación de un programa comunitario que tenga en cuenta las dificultades de las regiones menos desarrolladas de la Comunidad, a su vez fronterizas con los países candidatos a la adhesión y, por lo tanto, muy sensibles a las presiones migratorias. Se trata, según el presidente Aznar, de una solución positiva y solidaria.

Esta propuesta tiene como precedentes los « programas integrados mediterráneos » creados para resolver los problemas que la ampliación a España y Portugal generó en determinados países. Por otra parte, esta iniciativa estaría incluída por la Rúbrica 2 de los Fondos Estructurales y la Rúbrica 3 de los gastos internos, contando con una fórmula en la que todo el mundo contribiye en función de lo que le corresponde.

En la tanda de preguntas, el Presidente aclaró que había calificado de « completamente inaceptable » la propuesta de la Presidencia alemana para la Agenda 2000 porque España discrepa en muchos puntos de ese documento (37 exactamente, según una carta del Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores español a su colega alemán). No obstante, según el Presidente Aznar, todo está abierto y hay que seguir trabajando y buscar fórmulas de compromiso.

En cuanto al tema de la agricultura, declaró que el mantenimiento de la línea directriz agraria en torno a 45 millardos de euros es negociable, pero no acepta la propuesta de 40,5 millardos de euros que figuraba en algunos documentos. A España le interesa una conclusión positiva respecto de algunas Organizaciones de Mercado que estaban pendientes como el vino, el cultivo de herbáceos o la cuota láctea.

²³ Página Internet: <http://www.la-moncloa.es>

El 1 Marzo de 1999, el Primer Ministro Finlandés Paavo LIPPONEN ofrece en Helsinki (Finlandia) una conferencia de prensa conjunta con el Presidente del Gobierno Don José María AZNAR.

Según el Presidente del Gobierno ha habido tres bloques fundamentales en las conversaciones con el Primer Ministro Lipponen : la relación bilateral, fundamentada en conversaciones en tres capítulos : cultural, cooperación científica y técnica, y defensa ; Agenda 2000, con una fuerte identidad de criterios entre ambos países ; y la Presidencia finlandesa del próximo semestre, a su vez con varias cuestiones : dimensión septentrional y mediterránea, Consejo Extraordinario en Tampere sobre cuestiones de seguridad y justicia, y ampliación, fundamentalmente.

El Presidente define la posición española con respecto a la financiación de la Agenda 2000, resumiéndola en 5 objetivos : primero, financiar la Unión Europea a quince, del año 2000 al año 2006 ; segundo, financiar las políticas comunes –que tienen que seguir siendo comunes ; tercero, hacerlo con dos perspectivas : la ampliación y la integración ; cuarto, no perder como objetivo el empleo ; quinto, todo esto se debe realizar en términos jurídicamente respetuosos con el Tratado y políticamente asumibles por todos.

En relación con la política agraria, establece que el gasto tiene que estar en la línea directriz agraria, es decir, en torno a los 45 millardos de euros, y no 40,5 millardos de euros. Además, considera la propuesta austríaca interesante, según la cual, si hay que hacer alguna reducción, que recaiga sobre los agricultores más ricos, más grandes, y no sobre los más pequeños.

Según el Presidente del Gobierno, España y Finlandia son dos países que están bien dispuestos a tirar del carro de la integración europea. En este sentido, afirma que es una decisión política muy buscada el que España apoye la dimensión septentrional de la Unión Europea y en la Presidencia finlandesa se dote de contenido la estrategia mediterránea, por ejemplo.

Para el Presidente, el problema de las contribuciones de algunos países no está en el Fondo de Cohesión, sino en que otros países no pagan lo que deben. España paga lo que representa (7,1 por 100), pero hay países que representan el 17 por 100 del producto Bruto de la Unión europea y pagan el 11 por 100, es decir, que no pagan lo que les corresponde. De lo que se trata es de buscar una solución política homogénea para todos. En este sentido, en la reunión informal de Petesberg, cada país defendió su posición y hubo una propuesta nueva que fue la española.

Ambos dirigentes insistieron en la necesidad en el futuro de una Comisión Europea fuerte y con capacidad de iniciativa.

El 30 de Marzo de 1999 del Presidente del Gobierno, Don Jose María AZNAR, interviene en el pleno del Congreso de los Diputados para informar sobre el Consejo europeo de Berlín y sobre la situación creada por la intervención de la Alianza Atlántica en Yugoslavia.

El Presidente del Gobierno destaca que con respecto a la situación en Kosovo, el Consejo ha aprobado una declaración en la que manifiesta su preocupación por el fracaso en la consecución de un acuerdo de paz y respalda la intervención de la Alianza Atlántica. El Presidente responsabiliza a Milósevic de esta intervención y desea fervientemente que haya un cambio radical en su actitud. Por otra parte, el Consejo ha aprobado por unanimidad la elección de Romano Prodi como nuevo Presidente de la Comisión.

El Presidente hace una valoración de carácter general positiva de las negociaciones de la cumbre.

El Presidente estima que se ha alcanzado un acuerdo equilibrado en el Sistema de Recursos Propios de la Unión. Por un lado, la sustitución del recurso IVA por el recurso PNB irá eliminando los elementos regresivos del Sistema, tal y como solicitaba España. Por otro, se ha evitado introducir un sistema de topes máximos a las contribuciones de los Estados al Presupuesto, que tan negativos efectos podría haber tenido en el desarrollo futuro de la Unión.

En cuanto al gasto agrario, la línea directriz agrícola no sufrirá modificaciones. Antes de que se produzca la primera ampliación de la Unión, se revisará sobre la base de un informe que la Comisión habrá de presentar al Consejo con el fin de introducir los ajustes que se consideren necesarios.

En lo que se refiere a España, según el Presidente Aznar, la reforma de la política agraria común ha venido a remediar algunas injusticias históricas padecidas en los sectores del cereal, vacuno de carne y lácteo. Respecto al cereal, se han corregido discriminaciones que afectaban a su «rendimiento histórico», base del cálculo para la percepción de ayudas, fijado hasta ahora en 2,6 toneladas por hectárea para situarlo en 2,9. En el sector vacuno, el número de animales primables se incrementa en un 20 por 100. Por último, la cuota láctea, fijada en 5,567 millones de toneladas antes de Berlín, recibe ahora un suplemento de 550.000 toneladas para romper el tope artificial de la inicial negociación de 1985. Por otra parte, la nueva reglamentación del vino nos permite, según el Presidente, la ampliación del cultivo y una ayuda de 21.500 millones de pesetas anuales para mejorar las viñas.

El Consejo ha considerado que esta reforma puede llevarse a la práctica con unos recursos medios anuales de 40.500 millones de euros, más otros 14.000 millones de euros destinados al desarrollo rural y a las medidas veterinarias y fitosanitarias a lo largo del período.

Por lo que se refiere a los Fondos Estructurales y de Cohesión, el Consejo ha aprobado un total de 213.000 millones de euros para el nuevo período de perspectivas financieras. La mayor concentración de los Fondos en las zonas más necesitadas se logrará mediante una reducción sustancial del número de objetivos a tres.

El Objetivo 1 consistirá en la promoción del desarrollo y ajuste estructural de las regiones de desarrollo más lento : serán regiones con un Producto Bruto per cápita inferior al 75 por 100 de la media comunitaria y las regiones ultraperiféricas.

El Objetivo 2 respaldará la reconversión económica y social de las zonas que se enfrentan a problemas estructurales : cambios económicos y sociales en los sectores de la industria y los servicios, las zonas rurales en declive, las zonas urbanas con dificultades y las dependientes de la pesca en crisis.

Las acciones relativas al sector de la pesca que se lleven a cabo fuera de las regiones del Objetivo 1 recibirán una aportación del Instrumento Financiero de Orientación de la Pesca (IFOP), que ascenderá a 1.100 millones de euros a lo largo del período. Se prestará también apoyo transitorio (hasta el año 2005) a las regiones y zonas que ya no reúnan los criterios pertinentes para recibir ayudas de los Objetivos 1 y 2.

Se consideran una serie de situaciones particulares, para el período 2000-2006, que han sido fundamentales para llegar a un acuerdo de cierre de la Agenda 2000. La cantidad asignada a España como consecuencia de estas situaciones particulares asciende a 200 millones de euros.

Para el Objetivo 3 el desglose por Estados miembros se hará principalmente en función de la población destinataria, la situación del empleo, la marginación social, los niveles de educación y formación, y la participación de la mujer en el mercado laboral.

El nivel global de recursos disponibles para el Fondo de cohesión será de 18.000 millones de euros. La dotación de la ayuda para los Estados miembros participantes en el Euro se adaptará con el fin de tener en cuenta el incremento de la prosperidad nacional conseguido en el período anterior. En razón de este principio, España participará en la dotación del Fondo con un porcentaje del 62 por 100, en vez del 55 por 100 actual.

Durante el período 1993-1999 España ha tenido un saldo neto positivo de 43.228 Meuros (a razón de 6.175 Meuros por año), es decir, 1'025.050 billones de pesetas. Para el período 2000-2006 tendrá 49.693 Meuros, es decir, un incremento del 15 por 100 (7.099 Meuros por año), lo cual supone 1'178.434 billones de pesetas.

Respecto a los retornos totales, España percibió en el período 1993-1999 unos retornos de 80.440 Meuros, y en el período del 2000 al 2006 percibirá 95.443 Meuros, es decir, un incremento del 18,5 por 100. Estos retornos se distribuyen como sigue:

- Política Agraria Común: en el período 1993-1999 España percibe 33,129 Meuros y en el período 2000-2006 percibirá 34.915 Meuros (incremento del 5 por 100).
- Fondos Estructurales: en el período 1993-1999 España percibe 43.771 Meuros (1'037.900 billones de pesetas) y percibirá en el período 2000-2006 45.955 Meuros (1'084.790 billones de pesetas).
- Fondo de Cohesión: entre 1993-1999 España percibe 10.289 Meuros y en el período 2000-2006 percibirá 11.160 Meuros. En relación a los retornos totales de los Fondos Estructurales y Fondo de Cohesión esto supone un incremento del 5,6 por 100, es decir, pasar de 1'283.180 billones de pesetas por año a 1'354.441 billones de pesetas.

Por último, se produce una nueva redistribución del "cheque británico", en el que España aporta un porcentaje algo superior del que venía aportando hasta este momento.

El 7 de Abril de 1999, el Presidente del Gobierno, Don Jose María AZNAR, ofrece en Budapest (Hungría) una conferencia de prensa conjunta con el Primer Ministro de Hungría, Viktor ORBAN.

España apoya la ampliación a Hungría y desea que el proceso negociador con la Unión Europea sea culminado en el tiempo más breve posible.

Conferencia de prensa ofrecida el 4 de Junio en Colonia (Alemania) por Presidente del Gobierno, Don Jose María Aznar, después de la reunión del Consejo Europeo.

El Presidente ha querido lanzar un mensaje positivo a Turquía, expresando su convencimiento de que tiene que ser un país candidato a la adhesión de la Unión Europea en cuanto cumpla todos las condiciones. El Presidente lamenta que la posición que ha defendido España favorable en la relación con Turquía no haya prevalecido en este Consejo, donde se ha dado un veto expreso para esa aproximación con Turquía por parte de Grecia.

Conferencia de prensa en Madrid (España) el 13 de Julio de 1999 del Presidente del Gobierno, Don José María AZNAR, y del Presidente de Bulgaria, Peter STOYANOV.

La posición española para el Consejo Europeo de Helsinki es defender que las negociaciones de adhesión de los países que en este momento son candidatos o precandidatos a la Unión Europea deben realizarse de forma conjunta con todos. No deben formarse grupos o paquetes de países, sino que debe utilizarse la llamada “fórmula regata”, en la que todo el mundo sale y, se avanza en función de sus méritos.

España es partidaria de que en el Consejo Europeo de Helsinki, a finales de este año 1999, la Unión Europea comience oficialmente las negociaciones con Bulgaria.

Conferencia de prensa en Madrid (España) el 20 de Septiembre de 1999 del Presidente del Gobierno, Don José María AZNAR, y del Primer Ministro de Polonia, Jerzy BUZEK.

Polonia es el único país candidato con el que España tiene un mecanismo de consultas periódicas institucionalizadas de carácter permanente, lo que da una especial significación a las relaciones entre ambos países de cara al futuro.

España ha manifestado siempre su apoyo al ingreso de Polonia en la Unión Europea y ratifica ese apoyo, esperando que eso se pueda materializar en el plazo de tiempo más breve posible.

THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

On June 23rd 1998 the Irish Prime Minister, Mr Bertie Ahern, gave a statement at the Cardiff European Council of June 15th and 16th on among other things regarding the enlargement of the European Union (and Turkey).²⁴

Concerning the discussion about the future financial framework, Mr Ahern stated that the 1,27 % ceiling is acceptable to Ireland on the basis that it will be necessary to guarantee that the EU is adequately resourced to meet both the costs of maintaining and developing Community policies in existing Member States as well as of Enlargement.

Mr Ahern expressed his satisfaction at the good progress being made in the screening process, particularly regarding the so-called “pre-ins” – Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia – in terms of beginning the analytical screening of their adoption of the Community acquis, i.e., the whole body of legislation, obligations and objectives that have been agreed or developed within the Union.

The Irish Prime Minister believed that the Conclusions concerning the development of improved relations with Turkey are very welcome and reflect exactly the concerns of the EU to develop and deepen those relations. With regret, Mr Ahern stated, they could not progress on the issue of unblocking financial assistance for Turkey. The Conclusions welcomed the Commission’s confirmation that it will submit, at the end of 1998, its first regular reports on each candidate’s progress toward accession. The Conclusions also stated that in the case of Turkey, reports would be based on Article 28 of the Accession Agreement and the Conclusions of the Luxemburg Council. Furthermore, Mr Ahern believed that the Irish Government’s decision to establish an embassy in Ankara will prove to be a significant step towards the deepening of bilateral relations and improved EU/Turkish relations.

In an address given by the Minister of State, Tom Kitt, to the Central Eastern Europe Seminar organised by the Irish Exporters Association on November 19th 1998 he pointed out that the CEEC’s are a major source of opportunity and partnership for Ireland.²⁵

Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are going to be Ireland’s partners in the European Union and the Irish Government has supported their application. The process of negotiation is already under way. It will be a complex process, which possibly takes longer than originally planned. However, it is clear that Ireland can plan on all three countries being full members of the Union early in the new millennium.

According to Mr Kitt, there has been an increasing interest of Irish business in Eastern Europe in recent years. “Several hundred Irish companies have put down significant roots in the region through investments, acquisitions and joint ventures. Irish companies are

²⁴ Source: <http://www.irlgov.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.euoparl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage <http://www.euoparl.eu.int/enlargement>.

²⁵ Source: <http://www.entemp.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET or INTERNET homepage.

active in a diverse range of economic activities ranging from financial services and construction to commercial radio and public relations consultancy.”

In a statement given by the Irish Prime Minister, Mr Bertie Ahern, at the EU Council Meeting in Vienna on December 11th and 12th 1998 he highlighted the key issues of the meeting.²⁶

The Irish Prime Minister also took the opportunity of the meeting with the Leaders of the Applicant Countries to have a short bilateral meeting with the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Mr Ivan Kostov, and promised him Ireland’s full cooperation throughout the accession process. According to Mr Ahern, Irish agencies and private sector companies have a small but growing presence in the Bulgarian market, and he expressed the hope that this growth would accelerate together with the transformation of the Bulgarian economy. In Mr Ahern’s eyes, the European Conference, which was inaugurated in March 1998, provides a useful forum for political consultation with participant countries, and a further meeting, at Foreign Minister level, will take place during 1999. He believes it is a potentially beneficial forum for the improvement of EU/Turkish relations, and he hopes that it proves so during the course of 1999. However, Mr Ahern thinks it is right that they should review the role and functions of the Conference in Helsinki in December 1999, in order to guarantee its effectiveness. Finally, in relation to the European Conference, he welcomes the extension of an invitation to Switzerland to become a “*member elect*”.

In the “Annual Competitiveness Report 1999” - published by the Irish National Competitiveness Council (NCC) and intended to provide a status report on the competitiveness of the Irish economy - the NCC also stated its view on EU enlargement.²⁷

According to the NCC’s report, the final outcome of the Agenda 2000 process will have a major influence on the competitive environment for the Irish economy. “Ireland should recognise the desirability of EU expansion and of CAP reform that takes cognisance of the development needs of the Irish economy and the unique adjustment problems faced by Irish agriculture. It is essential that Ireland positions itself to take advantage of the opportunities provided by EU enlargement. Trade and investment links with Eastern Europe should be strengthened.”

The competitive threat to Ireland’s foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade, which is likely to be presented by Hungary in the future, can be considered as an example of the nature of the prospective competition that will emerge from the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) in the following years. The leading CEECs, which have made good progress in their transition process and, even more important, have established political stability, are very well positioned to compete aggressively in the future against Ireland for the major part of inward investment projects coming into the

²⁶ Source: <http://www.irlgov.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage.

²⁷ Source: <http://www.forfas.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET and INTERNET homepage.

EU. "Ireland may experience losses in manufacturing capacity to these countries as pressures to consolidate manufacturing activities across Europe intensify over time. The main message for Ireland is that there is a prospect that Ireland's economic growth will not be supported in the future to the same extent as heretofore, by continuing very strong flows of inward investment."

In an address given by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, on the occasion of the 21st Jean Monnet Lecture at the European University Institute in Florence on February 9th 1999 Ms McAleese spoke about the challenges Europe faces in the new millennium.²⁸

According to Ms McAleese, one of the major challenges facing the EU in the new century is to remain open to the wider world and to play an external role that corresponds to the EU's potential and responsibilities. If the EU were seeking its own closer integration without regard to the wider European continent or without a willingness to play a constructive role in the family of nations, the EU would be failing not only its neighbours but itself.

The EU's most immediate responsibility is towards those of its neighbours on the European continent who have applied to join the EU. Ms McAleese further stated, that we as citizens of the EU may have a tendency to see the more negative aspects of the process of integration. "The bargaining and the huxtering, the jargon and the bureaucracy may on occasion seem a far cry from the vision of Jean Monnet. If, however, such a disposition towards self-criticism is essential for the long-term well-being of any institution, it is salutary to remind ourselves ... that the Union is increasingly recognised by its neighbours and indeed further afield as a source of political, economic and now monetary stability"

In Ms McAleese's eyes, the EU is not an exclusive club. The door is open and must remain open to its democratic neighbours as and whenever they want to join. The further enlargement, which faces the EU in the following years, is the most significant thus far. However, the difficulties of the challenge are transcended by the volume of the opportunities. "It is an enlargement, which will be measured by geography but judged by history."

According to Ms McAleese, the EU's external responsibility is by no means limited to those who have applied to join the EU or indeed to the European continent.

²⁸ Source: <http://www.irlgov.ie/aras/speeches/monnet.htm>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET or INTERNET homepage.

On February 19th 1999 the Irish Minister for Agriculture and Food, Mr Joe Walsh, gave a keynote address at the European Movement Conference on “Agenda 2000 and its relevance to the regions of Ireland “.²⁹

Mr Walsh stated that the enlargement process is already underway with six of the so-called “*ins*” already negotiating directly with the Commission and another five “*pre-ins*”. This means that future enlargement will include eleven countries with another 100 million consumers. Ireland, having taken a positive approach to enlargement, is of the view that enlargement can bring greater prosperity to existing and future Member States by increasing trade and investment opportunities. Mr Walsh is convinced of the positive part enlargement will play in the future peace and security of Europe.

On February 21st 1999 the Irish Prime Minister, Mr Bertie Ahern, gave a statement outlining Ireland’s stance in relation to the Agenda 2000 negotiations.³⁰

Reviewing Ireland’s economic performance Mr Ahern said that despite current high growth levels Ireland is some way off the average EU income as yet, and has much further to go in terms of its stock of wealth and infrastructure. Therefore, he is asking his Partners in the Agenda 2000 negotiations to look beyond the statistics on Irish economic growth and to recognise Ireland’s need for consolidation of its recent achievements in order to complete the “catching-up” process.

From Mr Ahern’s point of view, Ireland should continue to be a net beneficiary under Agenda 2000. However, the combination of drastically reduced Structural Funds transfers and increased EU Budget contributions will mean that by 2006 the gap between Ireland’s receipts and contributions will have narrowed sharply. Taking account of present indications and trends, and assuming enlargement goes ahead as planned, Ireland is likely to become a net contributor during the EU multi-annual Budget round beginning in the year 2007.

Mr Ahern fully recognises that the next Enlargement will put a significant financial burden on all current Member States, including Ireland, and this places limits on what can be provided for in the period 2000-2006. Nevertheless, adequate transition arrangements must be obtained for those areas no longer eligible for Objective 1 treatment. There must be also a continued eligibility for the Cohesion Fund, incorporating a mid-term review. In relation to Agriculture, Ireland needs to see an adequate CAP reform, taking due account of resource constraints, which is fair to Irish farmers, helps preserve rural communities and prepares the EU for Enlargement and the next round of the WTO negotiations.

²⁹ Source: <http://www.irlgov.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET or INTERNET homepage.

³⁰ Source: <http://www.irlgov.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET or INTERNET homepage.

On April 12th/13th 1999 the Irish Deputy Prime Minister, Ms Mary Harney, made a two day visit to Poland in order to foster improved bilateral political and trade links between the two countries, and to encourage greater awareness of investment opportunities for Irish companies in the Polish economy.³¹

Speaking with the Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Prof. Balcerowicz, Ms Harney said, “Ireland remains fully committed to EU enlargement. The opening of accession negotiations is a major step forward on the road towards Poland’s membership of the Union. Clearly we need a new Europe and I see enlargement as a necessary part of creating a more prosperous and peaceful group of nation states.” Ms Harney discussed with her Polish colleagues the prospects for increasing bilateral trade and in particular how the considerable trade gap in Ireland’s favour might be reduced. The trade between the two countries stood at IR£244 million in 1998. However, Irish exports were up 43%, at IR£192 million in 1998 over 1997 levels, while imports from Poland were only up 2% at IR£52 million over the same period. Poland’s membership of the WTO and its candidature for EU membership will, Ms Harney believes, greatly facilitate increased trade flows.

³¹ Source: <http://www.entemp.ie>, the whole document is available on the INTRANET or INTERNET homepage.

Italy

On June 10th 1998, Mr. Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, presented the point of view of Italy on “ Europe and Latin America in the age of globalisation” to an auditorium in the Alma Mater University in Havana, Cuba.³²

In his opinion, the most important change in Europe, as well as in all other continents, is the globalisation of the market and the end of national isolation. Nevertheless, globalisation cannot be seen as a new metaphysics or a new religion. It is a source of greater well being and prosperity, but it can also cause a loss of security and identity. Globalisation in that case, far from marking the end of politics, gives politics new tasks. It is forcing Europe and Latin America to respond in purely political terms, with both national and supranational dimensions on both continents.

Mr Dini holds the view that the European countries, particularly within the European Union, have understood that globalisation requires the establishment of structures that are capable of taking on competition and the modernisation on an increasingly vast market. It demands efficient governance, and a society based on the primacy of the individual and the person.

Adopting the single currency, the members of EMU have accepted very severe financial stringency, labour flexibility, reduced government authority, more efficient bureaucracies, and an overhaul of the welfare state.

The countries of central and southern Europe also wish to apply these same criteria as they knock on the doors of the Union and, in order to join it, have agreed rigorous assessments of their efficiency, democracy and competitiveness.

Lastly, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy points out that the countries of Latin America, in which economics and politics are radically linked in an original manner, have also understood the importance of globalisation. Europe is following these changes with great interest and it is now seeing its own problems reflected in Latin America, if magnified and aggravated. Latin America is now “the Far West” as opposed to the “Far East”.

The ongoing integration processes on both sides of the Atlantic mean for Mr. Lamberto Dini that Europe and Latin America must work together. If not, he sees the danger that Europe will be too far away to be able to act, not as an alternative but at least to complement North America in relations with Latin America. The Minister emphasises that this is all the more true when one considers that the European Union is running the risk of being monopolised by eastwards enlargement, and might therefore weaken its commitments to Latin America which it sometimes likes to see as a “Europe in exile”. However, an enlightened strategy would induce the European Union to absorb the Central European countries, encourage the westernisation of Latin America, welcome China into the international institutions, and accept Russia with all her distinctive features and lawful priorities, into the circle of the more industrialised nations.

³² http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/june98/d100698e.htm

On August 31st 1998, Mr. Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave a speech on Immigration to the members of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lecce, Italy.³³

The Minister started his speech by pointing out the recent changes for Italy, which has now suddenly had to face the challenge of becoming a country of immigration instead of emigration. As a natural crossroads between the Mediterranean basin and northern Europe, with the East on one side and the West on the other, Italy sustains the first impact of population movements away from the world of poverty to a world of hope. By virtue of its geographical shape, Italy is more than any other country exposed to the continual attempts to bypass national and supranational measures designed to control the entry of immigrants into Europe.

Facing this immigration problem, the Minister of Foreign Affairs names two different solutions: on the one hand the integration, within the limits of the labour market, of foreigners residing legally in Italy, and on the other hand, the need to combat illegal immigration. All government action follows a coherent plan that is an integral part of the Italian foreign policy, both in multilateral relations, particularly within the European Union, as well as in bilateral relations with individual countries.

As regards former Eastern Europe and, in particular, the Balkan area, Italy undertakes a wide range of agreements and instruments to deal with nearly all of these countries.

At the same time, the Italian interlocutors are realising in this area that uncontrolled immigration movements, which are not kept in proportion to precise social and economic criteria, and that are regularly tainted by the “invasion” of mass influxes organised by criminal groups, are completely incompatible with the integration of immigrants residing legally.

Speaking for Italy, Mr. Lamberto Dini cannot stress enough to the authorities of these countries that unless an incisive common policy on the flow of illegal immigration is adopted, it will be extremely difficult to restore good relations with Italy – one of their leading “advocates” in negotiations with the European Union. Immigration, however, is for Italy a crucial theme as regards the enlargement of the European Union. It was also due to Italy’s initiative that when the Treaty of Amsterdam came into force, matters concerning immigration, asylum, border control and, in part, visa policy will be entirely subject to Community methods and procedures.

The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs demanded to make it clear to the countries of departure of migration flows that the spirit of solidarity and collaboration Europe has shown them in the past must necessarily give rise in the future to an equally constructive attitude from them in the area of immigration. In his eyes, stability and development are the keywords in Italy’s effort to develop the Adriatic and the Mediterranean into an area of co-operation and growth, in other words into a model of European solidarity. This strategy to promote stability will be put into practice through projects such as the construction of transport corridor number 8, which will depart from the Italian Adriatic coast with a maritime connection to Albania and then cross the Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria up to the Black Sea. This corridor is of great interest to Italy in terms of its economic development, especially in the Italian South, which is eager to develop trade and investment in the countries of Southeast Europe.

³³ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/august98/d310898e.htm

Mr. Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, spoke about the changing role of Italy to the Ambassadors represented in Farnesina, Italy, on September 1st 1998.³⁴

Firstly Mr. Dini names the new upcoming challenges that Italy has to face as a part of Europe, such as:

The collapse of ideologies and the end of the bipolar world; the restructuring of the international institutions in terms of substance, geographical dimensions and internal equilibrium; the emergence of new protagonists and of new hierarchies; the difficult path of the market and democracy in countries which, until yesterday, were prisoners of totalitarianism; globalisation and interdependence, which minimise space and time; the risk of new stand-off, not between East and West this time, but between the northern hemisphere and the southern hemisphere and the new millennium, opening up with massive migration flows.

Europe should be able to confront to all these challenges by expressing a reasonable and real will to exert power, the power it has achieved through the locomotive role of the single currency, the strongest and most pervasive of all federal elements. Italy demands of the European Union the creation of an authentic political power, with the compactness of monetary might to enhance the Union's external action capability.

As regards European policies, the Minister of Foreign Affairs foresees that the cohesive policy will impose new equilibria, also in light of the future enlargement. As far as Italy is concerned, the narrowing of territorial gaps and discrepancies remains vital, and is perhaps the last opportunity southern Italy will have to build up a decent economy. Therefore Italy will be influenced in its choices and alliances.

Furthermore, Italy sees the accession of new members as a political and moral duty of Europe after the end of the cold war. In Mr. Dini's opinion the last parts of Europe are moving towards the Union and are requesting the Union for help. But the pace and the substance of enlargement, to be measured in terms of Italy's own specific interest, cannot ignore the objectives of bringing prosperity and stability to a continent in which there is a risk of new barriers, new waiting lists, dashed hopes, and potential outbreaks of violence. Mr. Dini is thinking of the explosive potential, which looms over the world's equilibria today in the wake of the Russian crisis. He supposed that, in order for security, Atlanticism has to be rediscovered, that an Atlantic Alliance has to be build up which can measure up to the challenges of the new world and expresses a more visible European identity, stabilising the area of crisis around the southern borders of the European Union, which is in the particular interest of Italy.

Due to the enlargement to the south-east of Europe, the Mediterranean is now rediscovering a central position it has never had before. Italy has obtained a locomotive role for gathering countries together at the regional level, as the avant-garde of the European Union, but also in implementing autonomous plans.

³⁴ <http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch-press/speeches/september98/d010998e.htm>

At the same Conference of Ambassadors on “A World in Movement: Challenges to Italy in Europe and in the Multilateral Organisations” Mr. Lamberto Dini spoke again one day later, September 2nd 1998, on International Organisations.³⁵

The Minister of Foreign Affairs summarised the reasons for the increased importance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as follows:

Italy is one of the founding members of the Community and Atlantic institutions. With the ending of the Cold War, it is to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs that Europe has mainly deputed the new equilibria. Shifting the borders of the European Union and the Atlantic Alliance, and the systematic co-operation with the adversaries of the past is replacing what the peace treaties did in the wake of the conflict in earlier periods of European history. According to Mr. Dini the rules of today need the foresight of Utrecht or Vienna, not the blindness of Versailles.

He noted that the internal equilibria within these institutions are changing, and even following enlargement there will remain a risk of cloaked manipulators, privileged alliances, and dissimulated hierarchies. Therefore it will be all the more important for the European Union to remain vigilant and to ensure that the institutions function properly, and be even enhanced.

In the multilateral organisations, more than in the past, Italy should prevent the institutions, particularly the European and Atlantic institutions, from losing their incisiveness following enlargement.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs mentioned again how important it is for Italy to maintain the level of structural and cohesive policies. The Italian government will insist that funding not be reduced, and that the spread of expenditure between the various objectives and the different regions is fairly balanced. Here one can notice Italy's fear that solutions to the financial problems of the enlargement of the European Union will deprive the Mezzogiorno of financial aid. Mr. Lamberto Dini reminded us that enlargement will enter a sensitive phase at the end of the year: according to him it will firstly be necessary to define the pace of negotiations with the countries that are nearest to accession. Italy's position is that, even after partial examination, all-out negotiations should begin at all events. This will meet the expectations that have been held for so long, and encourage the candidates to make the necessary adjustments in the meantime.

It will be even more sensitive to deal with the progress of the five countries that do not belong to the first group chosen by the Luxembourg European Council. Mr. Lamberto Dini advised the adoption of a selective policy for these. He forewarned not to turn a blind eye to the outstanding differences between their political and economic maturity levels, just for the sake of drawing these countries closer to the Union simultaneously with the first group.

³⁵ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/september98/d020998e.htm

The same day, September 2nd 1998, Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated the concluding address to the Conference of Ambassadors in Faresina, Italy.

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At the end of the Conference the Minister of Foreign Affairs highlighted Italy's intention to set up Europe as a "power" in addition to being a "market". He advises the European Union to proceed pragmatically, combining consistency of principles and great objectives, to which Europe must remain steadfast, with all opportunities and difficulties. All of the present member states have interpreted the transition to the Euro as a political act, and therefore must accept the consequences.

Italy is ready for the enlargement of the European Union. It is not a threat to Italian interests, but the Minister reminds us to take account of the complexity of the anchorage of the newly democratic countries, which will take a long time. Hence the need to reflect more thoroughly on the transitional phase which is essential to protect Italian interests and those of others. The institutions of the European Union have to be strengthened for guiding, outside of the Union in such places as the Balkans, these countries to a common future while awaiting full entry into the privileged area of the European Union.

First of all the problems of Agenda 2000 have to be solved. This will test the capacity to define European interest against the background of re-emerging national egoism and it will furthermore prove the ability of the General Affairs Council to give consistency and continuity to the work of the Union which is all the more necessary in an enlarged Europe.

Furthermore, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs advised that symmetries and asymmetries, and the two-way interference between the enlargement of the European Union and the enlargement of the Atlantic Alliance should be watched closely. He is thinking for example of Turkey on the one hand and the Baltic States on the other. The special task of Italy will be to ensure that the awareness of the Mediterranean problems within the European Union remains high, because the risk of inertia and delay, and hence further disappointments, have not yet been fully overcome. Mr. Lamberto Dini asked for immediate action on the part of the European Union, which means the prompt implementation of those economic, cultural and migration co-operation agreements that have been or are currently being concluded with the countries of the Mediterranean and in the Balkans.

During his stay in Egypt, Mr. Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, was invited by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to talk at the Diplomatic Institute in Cairo on Italy's Mediterranean Policy, on September 9th 1998.³⁷

Italy is rediscovering the value of the Mediterranean, and the importance of the region where two hemispheres overlap and merge; a place through which vast flows of migrants pass, a vital source of energy; the homeland of the world's most ancient cultures and the main gate of access to the Middle East.

This newly found awareness has set in motion a wide-ranging process of co-operation, linking both shores of the Mediterranean. The Barcelona process, with the participation

³⁶ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/september98/d020998e.htm

³⁷ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/september98/d090998e.htm

of all the countries of the European Union and all the countries in the Mediterranean area, is building up a vast ambitious integration project, conference by conference. Mr. Dini hopes that thereby the lack of communication between both shores of the Mediterranean could be changed into close, continuous dialogue.

In Italy's case, the Barcelona process is closely tied up with the other more specifically national project of development of the Italian Mezzogiorno. The Foreign Minister insisted that the Italian Mezzogiorno is not only the southern border of the European Union. It is also a region that is increasingly looking outwards, thanks to the dynamism of its small and medium enterprises, anxious to contribute to its own modernisation and that of the whole Mediterranean Sea. The Mezzogiorno, like the rest of Italy, is building up the new Europe. But it is in the same situation as the whole of the Mediterranean, facing both the risks and the opportunities of being exposed to the competition from what is now a worldwide economy. Italy profits from the enlargement as it is the largest or second trading partner of virtually every country in the Mediterranean, the gateway from the South to Central Europe.

The main task for Italy in the European Union, which is currently dealing with enlargement towards Eastern Europe, is firstly to work with its other partners, primarily with France and Spain, to see that Europe's expansion is balanced. And to ensure that sufficient economic and human resources are being channelled towards the Mediterranean and not being financially forgotten for the sake of eastwards enlargement.

Soon after the establishment of the new government the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamberto Dini, gave a statement on Italy's Foreign Policy to the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Senate of the Republic in Rome on November 4th, 1998.³⁸

Italy's foreign policy, although based on continuing values and principles, aims at protecting national interests for the future. These interests must be redefined in a rapidly changing international context and within the framework of European, Atlantic and universal institutions, which are also subject to significant changes. As regards a wider Europe, Italy is concerned that the Union is creating a Europe with permanent exclusions, with indefinite waiting lists, and supposes the adoption of criteria of selection without discrimination.

A further interest of Italy's foreign Policy, also because Italy was at that time the President of the WEU, is to contribute to guiding the Union's policy towards new objectives. While NATO has the monopoly as regards collective defence, it is possible and desirable for the Europeans to proceed alone in peace missions, if the main ally intends to remain outside. The stabilisation of the other Europe, as Mr.Dini calls it, is another immediate priority: to lead the Balkan region back to normality, to a different cohabitation, as it would otherwise besiege Italy, with its instability and the looming threat of mass departures. Once more the Minister of foreign Affairs stressed here the geographical position of Italy as a gate between Southern, South-Eastern and Central Europe.

³⁸ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/november98/do41198e.htm

At the conference organised by the Banco di Sicilia “Europe’s Mezzogiorno regions – The Development of regions in the Mediterranean Area” Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs delivered a speech in Palermo on November 28th, 1998.³⁹

The Minister of Foreign Affairs explained the development of the Mediterranean as twofold: firstly, European cohesion has grown tighter and there is an increasing tendency for Europe to stretch beyond its borders, especially in its southernmost periphery. Secondly, countries on the other side of the Mediterranean are becoming more and more aware that they must participate in the global economy and learn new techniques and rules.

Italy’s priorities are thus dictated by its commitment to Europe and the stringent conditions that that entails such as strict budget policies, more sustainable systems of wealth redistribution and up to date pacts on citizenship status. The European model in question encompasses a modern form of solidarity, between those who benefit from the protection of the old labour system and the newcomers who are excluded from it, while nonetheless maintaining the principles of competitiveness and innovation.

Mr. Lamberto Dini sees the Italian Mezzogiorno as the most important thoroughfare linking Europe to the other shores of the Mediterranean, where some 300 billion people are now emerging from under-development, calling for investments and proposing large new markets.

Investment and the movement of goods and capital are being extended southwards. The Foreign Minister supports the use of any factors that are liable to promote reciprocal integration, on both sides of the Mediterranean. Italy is therefore pushing for greater regionalisation to build up economic integration between neighbouring countries. Mr. Dini calls it horizontal integration, which should be possible even between countries of opposite shores, by means of infrastructures in the fields of transportation, tourism and information technology.

The part of the European Union fostering such complementary is, as Mr. Dini says, on the one hand to develop regional co-operation, especially in the field of food and agriculture, and on the other hand, to extend and improve infrastructures.

The problem in pushing forward the intense relation between individual countries is for Italy the immigration crisis that arose out of this development. Italy sees itself at the forefront of the European policy for the Mediterranean, which includes dialogue and on-going political consultations, close-knit networks of economic and trade agreements established by Italian enterprises, cultural promotion using the full potential of institutions, the consolidation of democracy; the control of migratory phenomena, and the fight against international crime. All these are the tasks of Europe and Italy, as the European Union enlarges into the South of the Mediterranean.

³⁹ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/november98/d281198e.htm

On December 3rd, 1998, Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, had the opportunity to speak on some characteristics of Italy's foreign policy to the members of the Institut Français des Relations Internationales at Paris.⁴⁰

First the Minister mentioned the new international equilibria that are replacing those of the cold war. These equilibria are for Italy centred essentially on the contextual enlargements of the European Union and of the Atlantic Alliance, the redefinition of Euro-Atlantic relations and the rediscovery of the Mediterranean.

As regards economy, Mr. Dini feels that the Euro entails a broad shifting of responsibility, at the level of world leadership. Europe thereby accepted the challenge to reclaim its own unity and created the conditions for a new identity. The risk of exclusion can be avoided through integration, which is not only economic. The Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that the time has come to define Europe's final boundaries, not only from a geographic, but also from an institutional point of view. Therefore Mr. Dini demands that the process of enlargement must be complied with strict political and economic criteria, as Europe is about to define its Eastern and Southern limits and will for the first time cross the limits of the cold war. Italy feels the uncertainty due to Russia regarding European enlargement and firmly suggested continuing to follow the path towards democracy and the market, without removing European commitment in the face of a calculated risk.

The Union must be open to the world, be competitive on a global scale and try to finish the Agenda 2000 negotiations. This is a topic, which the Foreign Minister had not dwelt upon, except in terms of the Union's enlargement and in which, however, divergences exist between Italy and France, especially as far as the Common Agricultural Policy is concerned. Italy feels it is up to Europe and the United States to play a guiding role in the revision of rules and instruments of international finance, and encourage development and stability.

Italy's main task, through culture, the economy, and political stability, is to prove that development and identity can go hand in hand, that peace is the most convenient choice for all Mediterranean peoples, that those who are on the other shore have not only something to learn but also something to teach. Europe should give economic collaboration a nature, which is no longer only bilateral, but also transversal and regional, and the Barcelona process should certainly continue in order to sustain the development in the Mediterranean. Italy will observe carefully that the European Union enlarges in a balanced way also to the South. From Cyprus to Malta, and in the future possibly Turkey. Furthermore, Italy will watch also the democratic transition in Algeria.

On this basis, Italy, and also France and other countries along the Union's southern borders, will become the obligatory bridge in the relations between three continents and three religions. Therefore, it must be possible for the Mediterranean to achieve a civilisation based on commerce and solidarity among different peoples and to create trade and enterprise.

⁴⁰ http://www.esteri.it/archives/arch_press/speeches/december98/d031298e.htm

At the Opening Ceremony of the Mediterranean Chair of the European University Institute in Florence, January 15th 1999, The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamberto Dini, expressed his pleasure about the visible link between Mediterranean and European policy.⁴¹

In the eyes of Mr. Dini, the Mediterranean is possibly more than any other European Region touched by the impetuous currents of change in the world. Without a harmonised strategy, with Europe at the forefront, the problems of that region can only be postponed and enlarged, instead of being solved. Italy strongly supports the philosophy of human rights and an intensive dialogue among cultures as an all-important pillar of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Apart from culture, challenges on the Italian side of the Mediterranean can be met especially by increasing the European Union's capability to act, granting it that political power which it is still lacking.

Mr. Dini pointed out that it is not by chance that the European Council of Vienna decided to include the Mediterranean among the first topics of the Union's common strategies to be drawn up in the enforcement of the Amsterdam Treaty. Beyond that, in the negotiations on resources (Agenda 2000) the Italian government is pushing for an adequate consideration of the Mediterranean, both within the Union, in terms of re-equilibrium of the agricultural productions, and externally, as a measure of the commitment towards the countries of the other shore.

Italy sees its role as a bridge between the two shores of the Mediterranean and the country has to rediscover its identity in a singular connection between Mediterranean and Europe. This link is important to prevent the Italian Mezzogiorno from becoming part of a second-class Europe as the passage of all the immigrants crossing the Sea every day seeking better shores.

Italy's main task is therefore to prove that development and identity can coexist; that peace is the most convenient choice for all the people of the Mediterranean and that those who are on the other shore not only have something to learn, but also something to teach.

On March 8th 1999, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamberto Dini, gave a speech at the opening ceremony of the School of Public Administration on "The role of Italian Foreign Policy" in Florence.⁴²

During his speech, Mr. Dini recalled the four essential objectives of Italian Foreign policy: firstly, to finalise the geographical and institutional aspects of the European Union, which effects above all the enlargement; secondly, to bring the transatlantic relationship up-to-date on the new challenges Italy faces; thirdly, to contribute to the transition towards democracy and a market economy in some countries of fundamental importance for general stability, and finally to reduce, if not entirely eliminate, the gap between the industrialised world and lesser developed countries.

The future tasks of European policy are, according to Mr. Dini, the construction of an economic government, the revision of the decision making processes by the adoption of majority rule within the Council, the identification of the security and defence levels

⁴¹ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/january99/d150199e.htm

⁴² http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/march99/d080399e.htm

which Europe must guarantee in co-operation with the Atlantic alliance, and the co-ordination of multinational institutions and national-regional bodies, based on the principle of so-called complementarity.

On May 7th 1999, The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamberto Dini, gave a reply to Parliamentary Questions on the Situation in the Balkans before the Senate in Rome.⁴³

In the Europe of the next century, as he said, a new common awareness is emerging slowly and with difficulty, but clearly and distinctly: it will not tolerate the systematic violation of fundamental freedoms. The real issue is not whether Kosovo will be part of Serbia, but whether Kosovo and Serbia and the other States in the region will be part of the new Europe.

Italy has all the more reason for continuing to intervene militarily against the outrage it is witnessing there, because of the country's geographical and historical proximity which makes it particularly threatening and immediately perceptible to Italy. Globality exists not only in a peaceful version, and therefore Italy strongly supports international courts of law for example to sustain human rights

As regards the economy and enlargement, the International Monetary Fund has forecast a very serious impact of the Kosovo crisis throughout the whole of southeastern Europe. Hungarian, Romanian and Bulgarian economies will be affected and countries like Italy with particular economic ties to that area will also be affected. A huge reconstruction programme will thus be necessary for which the precedent of the Marshall Plan has been suggested as a model: a plan of political stability, based on the principles of democracy, respect for fundamental freedoms, and political and economic co-operation. Gradual rapprochement with the European Union through ever-closer forms of co-operation should follow this for –although this is in the distant future – total integration. Italy is not only working on this plan, but also intends to play a front line role in it.

After the silence of weapons in Kosovo, Mr. Lamberto Dini, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, spoke about the diplomatic developments for resolving the crisis in the Balkan region at the joint meeting of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate in Rome on June 16th 1999.⁴⁴

Firstly the Minister of Foreign Affairs reflects upon the final chapter of the tragedy of the Balkans that surely touched upon the whole Europe, though especially the entire Mediterranean Area. He proposed that Europe should play a dominant role in the reconstruction and that the structure should be organised in departments responsible respectively for refugees, democratisation and human rights, elections and the police and judicial system. Mr Dini hereby stressed the importance of being aware of the fact, that this is just a temporary management during the transition to self-government by freely elected bodies.

Mr. Dini accepted the enormous monetary resources that will be required for the reconstruction, for incorporating the Balkan region into the European Union. In his eyes

⁴³http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/may99/d070599e.htm

⁴⁴http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/june99/d160699e.htm

there exists no other alternative to prevent inevitable, massive, resumption of refugee flows, and the consolidation of criminal links between both sides of the Adriatic, influencing and damaging foremost Italy.

Italy has offered to act as Action Co-ordinator of the work to be carried out in the domain of the Stability Pact, the strategy of which already foresees Association and Stabilisation Agreements between the EU and the countries of the former Yugoslavia and Albania, so that these countries are gradually anchored to the European continent, their trend of fragmentation is inverted, and the foundations for access, in a not too distant future, to the European Union itself are laid down. Italy thinks, however, of an even wider enlargement of the European Union.

On March 8th 1999, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamberto Dini, was invited at a meeting of the members of the organisation Villa Favard in Florence to talk about the Agenda 2000 and the European integration process.⁴⁵

The Minister of Foreign Affairs presented the future programme of the European Union, splitting it up into three phases: firstly Agenda 2000, which consists of the reform of the policies of the Union. Secondly the enlargement to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic states, Cyprus, Malta and eventually Turkey; lastly, the debate on the political and institutional framework of the Union.

Because of the close link between these three major areas of commitment, Mr. Dini thinks that the process will be very wide-ranging. Therefore, it cannot be embarked upon without a realistic and purposeful organic view of the way in which Europe is to evolve.

Agenda 2000, enlargement, and “deepening” form part of a single whole in Mr. Dini's eyes and must be subject to the priorities set out in a jointly agreed plan. This is a challenge Italy takes up and deals with using a well-defined working method and with a strategic vision.

As far as Europe is concerned, method and strategy presuppose the need to ensure the consistency of Europe's policies with the availability of the necessary resources, the dovetailing of Europe's structures and broadening the functions of the Union.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs advised, as regards resources, the European Commission to move gradually away from a price support-based system to a system of providing direct assistance to farmers, unrelated to production. The purpose of this strategy is not only to strengthen Europe's bargaining hand in future multilateral trade negotiations, but above all to make it possible to incorporate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the Community economy. A mere extension of the present mechanisms of the Common Agricultural Policy to these latter countries as they stand, particularly common pricing, would have two damaging effects: expenditure would no longer be controllable, and the newly admitted countries would produce surpluses of the kind that Europe built up in the seventies and eighties.

The structural funds policy is another area for review, to make measures more effective as a result of geographical and thematic concentration. According to Italy, particular care must be paid to the regions where development is slowest, bearing in mind that it is necessary to focus efforts on these regions in view of future enlargement, when the Community will be joined by member countries whose incomes are two-thirds below the

⁴⁵ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/march99/d080399e.htm

Community average. It is above all the concept of stabilisation that holds the key to funding the Union's policies, said Mr. Dini.

The principles underlying Italy's efforts in the present phase of defining the new financial arrangements as regards enlargement are as follows:

First of all the CAP must be reformed in a way that will enable progress to be made with facilitating the integration of the Central and Eastern European Economies into the Union.

Then the external initiatives of the Union must be redirected, to take account of geographic priorities and the implementation of common strategies, with specific reference to the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs further believes that it is only in a comprehensive framework, in which the larger countries above all have to be ready to accept their fair share of the sacrifices involved, that a satisfactory solution can be found to the Agenda 2000 issues.

On the subject of structures, Italy thinks that enlargement and "Deepening" are two closely related issues and that it is indispensable for the European Institutions to be strengthened to conclude the first accession negotiations successfully. It is according to Mr. Dini certainly necessary to reform the institutions if enlargement is to take place, for otherwise it would be impossible to adopt decisions binding on all in an enlarged Europe. Current treaties will certainly have to be amended, but procedural changes will also have to be introduced in a Europe, which is destined to extend its membership to a total of thirty states.

It is for this reason that Italy considers it important to extend the majority vote and abolish the unanimous voting rule, which is already hampering the development of the European Union in such important areas as taxation.

Another theme, which seems highly important to Italy, is to define a common European security and defence identity, because it will be difficult to sustain economic integration if it is not backed up a common foreign policy. Italy demands to have flexible instruments for acting and reacting and to clearly spell out the objectives Europe intends to attain. The Amsterdam Treaty thus provides for the definition of common strategies, and the areas for them have already been identified: Russia, Ukraine, the Mediterranean, and the Western Balkans.

As regards European identity, Mr. Dini stated that the idea of a Europe of nations can and must be countered by the concrete notion of the Citizens' Europe, as a dynamic political concept. It is in this direction that the Italian Foreign policy intends to continue working, in an attempt to strengthen the Community dimension of such issues as visas, immigration, asylum rights, and generally speaking other issues having to do with security and free movement.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamberto Dini, was invited to round off the discussion “After the crisis in Kosovo: Stabilisation and Reconstruction in the Balkans” at the seminar organised by the Centre for the Study of International Politics in Rome on July 9th 1999.⁴⁶

The Minister started his speech by talking about the history of the countries of the Balkans, which have been handed round for many years under Habsburg, Ottoman, and Soviet rule and are now, in his opinion, in need of a higher form of authority that obliges them to coexist and progress in civilisation. From the European Union they ask to be guided towards the Promised Land of healthy economy and democracy and Europe is offering its services to govern the post war period in Kosovo and the Balkans with the over-all task to build up peace. According to Italy this is perhaps the first real test for the European Common Foreign policy, without which – in Mr. Dini’s opinion - the European union could never reach maturity.

It is a challenge for Europe to prove that the Union is capable of becoming a political and economic guardian, of helping to guarantee free elections, of reconstructing the framework of civil institutions and of funding reconstruction. Here Mr. Dini demands the wealthy part of Europe to shoulder the weight of those parts of the continent that would otherwise go astray. It must show the population of those areas a possible future beyond the war and it must point out a path that can lead, albeit not in the near future, even the Southern Slavs into the Union. On the one hand, the Italian Foreign Minister warns Europe’s leaders of making concrete promises to such backward countries, especially in light of the fact that the accession of Poland, the Czech republic and Hungary is taking longer than expected.

On the other hand, the Minister criticises France and Great Britain for rejecting plans as soon as their sovereignty is threatened. For France the fact alone that the Treaty of Amsterdam puts border control into the hands of European institutions appears to be an insult to its national traditions. Further, Mr. Dini mentioned that Great Britain balks at the slightest progress towards tax harmonisation, an indispensable factor to prevent monetary union from being one-sided and unbalanced. The Minister of Foreign Affairs demanded that the European Union shows entity and is more active on its own continent in order to relieve the United States from being active there.

Mr. Lamberto Dini concluded his speech by pointing out the importance of involving also Russia in the task of establishing equilibrium in Europe as he sees the Russians, like the Serbs, as European peoples.

⁴⁶ http://www.esteri.it/eng/archives/arch_press/speeches/july99/d090799e.htm

Luxembourg⁴⁷

Le 4 février 1999, Monsieur Jacques F. Poos, Vice-Premier Ministre, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, du commerce extérieur et de la coopération a présenté une déclaration de politique étrangère à la Chambre des Députés.

A cette occasion, Monsieur Poos souligne l'importance pour la paix de l'intégration et de l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne. Il rappelle ensuite les démarches décisives accomplis depuis 1985 par rapport à ces deux actions: D'un coté l'Acte Unique, le Traité de Maastricht et d'Amsterdam et d'un autre coté, l'adhésion de différents pays occidentaux et l'ouverture de négociations pour de futures adhésions tracée au Sommet de Luxembourg de 1997. Mais selon M. Poos l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne n'est pas seulement indispensable pour relever le défi de la paix, mais aussi parce que l'Union Européenne a la responsabilité historique de poursuivre dans la voie de l'élargissement. L'unification de l'Europe est garante de paix, elle est historiquement nécessaire et profitable à l'économie.

Mais l'unification doit aussi réussir sur le plan technique. C'est pourquoi le réglage parfait du mécanisme du processus de l'unification - le "comment" - est plus important que son calendrier - le "quand" - .

Sur la question des conditions financières de l'Union Européenne le Ministre Luxembourgeois affirme que le compromis final sur le financement devra tenir compte des besoins essentiels des pays candidats, de la poursuite des politiques communes ainsi que de la nécessité de fournir à l'Union Européenne les moyens de mener une politique macro-économique en cas de crise économique grave.

M. Poos juge enfin que la décision de principe sur l'élargissement aura indiscutablement constitué le grand objectif des dernières années de ce siècle.

En août 1999 le nouveau gouvernement de Luxembourg a exprimé sa position sur l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne à l'occasion de la présentation de l'accord de coalition.

En ce qui concerne l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne, le nouveau gouvernement a l'intention de participer pleinement à ce processus, qui va, selon lui, renforcer l'importance de l'Europe dans le monde. Le nouveau gouvernement entend mener une

⁴⁷ Sources et contacts utilisés pour l'élaboration du chapitre:

*Site internet: <http://www.gouvernement.lu>

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Tél: (352) 478 21 81 Fax: 47 02 85/ 46 74 92

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Le texte complet de la plupart des documents cités peut aussi être consulté soit via INTRANET à l'adresse:

<http://www.europarl.ep.ec/enlargement> soit via INTERNET à l'adresse:

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement>

politique de solidarité pour promouvoir une plus grande cohésion entre les régions riches ou pauvres de l'Union Européenne.

Dans le cadre des débats sur les réformes des institutions européennes en raison de l'élargissement, le gouvernement luxembourgeois avertit qu'il convient d'éviter que sous prétexte d'une meilleure efficacité, le rapprochement entre les grands pays ne crée d'exclusions qui portent préjudice aux petits et moyens pays.

Le 12 août 1999 le nouveau gouvernement de Luxembourg a présenté sa déclaration gouvernementale devant la Chambre des Députés.

Le nouveau gouvernement confirme la conviction de la nécessité de l'intégration européenne. Pour le Luxembourg, il n'existe pas d'alternative à l'Union Européenne. Le gouvernement entend même investir davantage dans les relations bilatérales avec les autres Etats membres de l'Union Européenne. Le gouvernement luxembourgeois souligne qu'il va contribuer à faire avancer l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne vers le Centre, l'Est et le Sud, mais en précisant que "faire avancer" ne signifie pas précipitation, mais d'attendre que chaque pays soit prêt à rejoindre les autres.

Austria⁴⁸

Summary by the Austrian President Mr Thomas Klestil at the 1998 Central and Eastern European Economic Summit "Central and Eastern Europe on the eve of EU enlargement: the Conditions for Lasting Partnership" Summing-up of discussion with the Heads of State and Government, 24 June 1998

The President said he believed that EU enlargement was a historic process that would shape the face of Europe in the coming century and that the success of enlargement would require major efforts both by the candidate countries as well as by the Union. He pointed to the importance of involving the citizens in this process. Credible answers were to be found concerning the fears and concerns that existed on both sides. Greater attention should be drawn to the enormous benefits of this endeavor.

There were considerable differences in the various countries seeking membership in the Union. Enlargement would have to allow for differentiation without discrimination. Nevertheless, enlargement not only required efforts by the candidate countries but major adjustments in the Union as well as institutional reforms were required. The work of the Union on this extremely sensitive topic would severely test the political will of all member states.

DEBATE ON "THE STATE OF THE UNION '98" AND "THE FUTURE OF EUROPE" in the EP on 21 October 1998, SPEECH DELIVERED BY FEDERAL CHANCELLOR VIKTOR KLIMA

A few days before the informal meeting of heads of state and government in Pörschach Chancellor Klima spoke before the EP. He stressed that European integration had reached a new quality which posed new challenges to politicians and made it necessary to redefine the further road to integration.

He mentioned that one of the greatest challenges was enlargement. The process of accession, which started under the British Presidency in March, for the first time offered the citizens of the European Union and the citizens of the future member states the possibility to unite Europe in peace and freedom after countless conflicts.

The Chancellor said that a few years after the opening of the borders in Eastern Europe it seemed entirely normal that democracy and the rule of law should have taken firm root in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Undoubtedly, democracy and stability were due first and foremost to the peoples and political leaders of these countries. But surely

⁴⁸Sources that have been used to elaborate this chapter:

*<http://www.bmaa.gv.at>

*<http://www.austria.gv.at>

*<http://www.hofburg.at>

The whole documents are available on the INTRANET

homepage:<http://www.euoparl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET

homepage:<http://www.euoparl.eu.int/enlargement>

the perspective of becoming members of the European Union had also contributed its share. Now this process should be pursued speedily but also with the necessary care.

According to the Austrian Chancellor it has to be ensured that this process was an open one, conforming to objective criteria. Open for those states that, in the light of the Copenhagen criteria, met the conditions of the Luxembourg decisions. Objective in terms of the performance of the individual candidates in fulfilling the criteria of accession.

Mr Klima stressed that we should not disappoint the hopes of the citizens of the candidate countries, but that we had to remain realistic in the objectives. It had to be clear to everyone that enlargement of the European Union needed to be carried out so carefully that both the present member states and the candidates for accession could prepare themselves for it. In his view appropriate transitional periods would be necessary in sensitive areas, such as the free movement of labour and services.

The Union of tomorrow should and would look different from the Union of today. The future of the Common Agricultural Policy, a balanced structural policy, financial support for the candidates and the efficient allocation of the Union's financial resources in the first seven years of the next century were central issues. The negotiations on these topics were a crucial test for the Community and should be firmly based on solidarity.

On November 23rd 1998, the President of Austria held the speech: "The enlargement process - an unprecedented challenge to Europe, XIXth COSAC"

The Austrian Foreign Minister stressed in his speech to the XIXth Conference of European Affairs Committees of the National Parliaments of the European Union, the European Parliament and the Parliaments of the applicant countries (COSAC) that enlargement of the EU was an ambitious and historically unique process. It was a political necessity, the only alternative to which would be instability throughout Europe.

He said the European integration process was not a strategic re-orientation of the EU but rather the completion of the process of the unification of Europe in its natural geographical framework. As European countries, we had to follow this path together cautiously, however, without losing sight of the possible consequences. That is why Austria had made the enlargement of the EU one of the core themes of her presidency.

Substantial progress had been achieved in the enlargement process under the Austrian presidency, said Schüssel. Of special importance, in addition to implementing the accession strategy, especially as regards accession partnerships, was the beginning of substantial accession negotiations with six accession candidates on November 10. With regard to an actual timetable for the accession of the first candidate countries Schüssel stressed that the conclusion of the accession negotiations depended on the efforts of the candidates themselves. As the Commission rightly stated in its first regular report on the progress made by the accession candidates, these countries determined the support they get from the EU by their preparation efforts and, consequently, the timetable for the first accessions. All accession timetables mentioned to date are to be regarded as working

deadlines set by the candidates themselves and had by no means been specified by the EU, Schüssel explained.

Schüssel furthermore welcomed the progress made under the Austrian presidency with the accession candidates in the third pillar of the EU, justice and home affairs. The current examination of the implementation of the acquis communautaire, particularly in the areas of border control, asylum/migration and police and legal co-operation, would make it possible to evaluate the progress and shortcomings and to define ways of enhancing cooperation in these areas in the future. Fight against organised crime in all its forms could only succeed through joint effort.

In conclusion Schüssel stated that the enlargement of the EU would not be easy, neither for the EU and its citizens nor for the accession candidates. Suitable solutions would have to be found for many complex issues - such as in the areas of employment, environment and transport. Enlargement, however, should by no means become a project for the elite, he emphasised. The task was to allay the fears of the citizens of the European Union and of the accession countries by providing them with comprehensive information and an open, sober debate.

In respect of Germany's forthcoming presidency, Foreign Minister Schüssel expressed the hope that Germany would ensure continuity in the enlargement process. He said that today we were closer than ever before to achieving the peaceful unification of Europe on the basis of common values such as democracy, rule of law and respect for human and minority rights. Therefore the enlargement process had to be brought to a successful conclusion.

THE AUSTRIAN EU-PRESIDENCY AS AT 12 DECEMBER 1998

The Austrian Presidency regarded itself as a working Presidency: it held numerous ministerial meetings and two meetings of Heads of State and Government (in Pörschach and Vienna) at which it tackled Europe's management tasks and set the course ahead for central policy areas of special relevance for the people of Europe.

Under the Austrian Presidency there was a special meeting in Pörschach, giving the Heads of State and Government an opportunity to hold an open discussion on our common future in Europe.

On ENLARGEMENT it was said that EUROPE WAS GROWING CLOSER TOGETHER. The enlargement process was of particular importance to the Presidency, because of its geographical position and the close relations which had evolved between Austria and the countries applying for accession.

* Early in the Presidency the President of the General Affairs Council for the first time visited all the applicant countries, in order to present the Austrian Presidency programme in person.

* With the opening of substantive negotiations on 10 November 1998 with Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary and Cyprus, the enlargement process entered the practical phase.

* The first round of negotiations of Foreign Ministers had already managed to deal with almost a quarter of the chapters of the accession package. three chapters had already been provisionally concluded.

There had been marked progress in the analytical examination of the acquis with all candidates.

For the first time, the Commission submitted progress reports on all the candidates for accession, providing a good overall picture of the progress achieved in those countries.

* Agreement had largely been reached with regard to the instruments for financial support of the applicants.

European Parliament, Strasbourg, 16 December 1998, Report on the Austrian EU Presidency Statement by the President of the Council, Wolfgang Schüssel

On 16 December 1998 Mr Schuessel reported to the European Parliament on the work carried out and results achieved by the Austrian Presidency of the Council. The second half of 1998 was the first presidency for Austria.

Among many other topics Mr Schuessel stressed that in the run-up to the new millennium we were currently witnessing far-reaching global change and a new political order taking shape in Europe. With the introduction of the common currency and enlargement into a greater Europe, the Union was carrying out two projects that would redefine the physiognomy of our continent and its status in the world.

Concerning Enlargement and the Union's strategic approach Mr Schuessel said that the enlargement of the Union would lay the foundations for stability and prosperity in a greater Europe. The Union had a fundamental interest and Austria a particular strategic interest in enlargement (Austria shares borders with four applicants and one third of the EU's external borders with applicant countries are Austrian). Enlargement held out great opportunities, but also would involve appreciable risks. Austria therefore clear-sightedly advocated a dynamic process.

The enlargement process had made good progress during Austria's six-month term. The decision arrived at, in the face of considerable resistance, to open political negotiations with the 5+1 (the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Estonia and Cyprus) came at the right time and brought a timely greater awareness of the need for reform on both sides. The target at the start of negotiations had even been exceeded.

The Commission progress reports on the applicants were well received. The progress made in screening the acquis with the eleven applicants and in implementing the accession partnerships also showed energy and circumspection being displayed by the Union and our future partners in rising to the great challenge. The Vienna European Council set the beginning of 1999 as the date for the start of bilateral acquis screening with the "pre-ins" (preparation for the accession negotiations).

The Vienna European Council welcomed Malta's decision to reactivate its application for membership and confirmed the continuation of the European strategy to prepare Turkey for membership.

The Austrian Foreign Minister underlined that reform and further development of the Union also depended on improvements in the working of the institutions. He said the Agenda 2000 confronted the Union with the two fold challenge of both, effectively reforming EU policies and determining the financial framework for the further development of those policies.

**"REPORT ON THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING IN VIENNA"
Address by Federal Chancellor Viktor Klima to the European Parliament, 16
December 1998**

Mr Klima reported on the European Council meeting held on 11 and 12 December in Vienna. On enlargement he said it had become evident in Vienna that considerable progress had been and was being made in the accession process:

This was first evident in the Commission's reports and the Council conclusions submitted there on.

Secondly, it was possible on the occasion of the European Council meeting to deepen this impression in a direct exchange of views with the heads of state or government of the Central and Eastern European accession countries and Cyprus.

Under the Austrian Presidency, the first substantive accession negotiations have been initiated with six countries. At the same time, the progress made in preparation for accession negotiations with Romania, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania and Bulgaria, was explicitly welcomed in Vienna.

The aim of the European Council meeting in Vienna was to maintain the momentum of the accession process:

*The European Council therefore called on the states to continue with and intensify the current accession negotiations.

*In addition, a new element was introduced in order to step up the preparation for negotiations with the other five Central and Eastern European accession countries. As from the beginning of 1999 the bilateral phase of the examination of the acquis would be entered. The European Council invited the Commission to present its further progress reports with a view to the Helsinki European Council.

In this context, the European Council underlined again the central importance of a further development of the relations with Turkey and the further implementation of the European Strategy for Turkey.

Speech by Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schuessel at the "Central & Eastern European Issuers & Investors Forum" at the topic "Austria's contribution to the accession negotiations and the impact of EU-accession on the further development of this region" in Vienna, 19 January 1999

Mr Schuessel stressed that the enlargement process under the Austrian Presidency had two key moments:

- entering into the stage of substantial negotiations with the '5 + 1' and successfully closing the first round of these negotiations at ministerial level on November 10 of last year - discussion of the first progress reports prepared by the European Commission on each of the 10 applicant countries as well as on Turkey.

Based on its recent experience of its own accession negotiations Austria's attitude was guided by its conviction that the negotiation process could only keep a dynamic momentum if a swift transition from the phase of the acquis screening to the stage of substantial negotiations was maintained. Entering into the stage of substantial negotiations and closing at least three chapters of the acquis communautaire was therefore made one of the key goals of the Austrian Presidency's programme. During his visits to the capitals of the Central and East European states at the beginning of the Austrian Presidency in July of last year Mr Schuessel therefore put special emphasis on the necessity of a common approach of the "5+1" to this concept. He proposed a co-ordinated tabelling of position papers by the candidates within the first two weeks of September on 7 chapters of the acquis screened by this time, i.e.: common foreign and security policy; small and medium-sized enterprises; communications and information technologies; education, training and youth, science and research, industrial policy; culture and audiovisual policy. All the candidates followed this advice of the Austrian Presidency, Hungary tabelling 11 and Estonia even 12 position papers.

Not all member countries shared the Austrian approach concerning the transition to substantial negotiations. Only after a lively, sometimes even heated debate the General Affairs Council of 5 October in Luxemburg decided to enter into the phase of substantial negotiations. Main stumbling bloc was the question of Cyprus, in particular the issue of the participation of the northern part of this island in the enlargement process.

After two rounds on Ambassadors' level the member states of the European Union met within the framework of an Intergovernmental Conference with each of the six candidate countries on 10 November in Brussels. Out of the seven chapters mentioned, 3 (5 with Cyprus) were closed, "provisionally put aside" in the cautious language of diplomats, whereas for the remaining four additional information on some questions was required. The three chapters were: science and research, education, training and youth, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises.

According to Mr Schuessel Austria thus fulfilled its plans for its Presidency and gave a clear sign on its constructive attitude towards the negotiation process. Austria attached paramount importance to a permanent dialogue not only with the candidate countries but also with the institutions, with the companies from the member states working in Central and Eastern Europe. Vast "know-about" and "know-how" had been accumulated in

thousands of European companies, small and big ones, among financial institutions, among scientists and journalists about and on the candidate countries.

The Foreign Minister said the insight of people with decades of experience in business in Central and Eastern Europe, was necessary to make the enlargement process, a challenge of historic dimensions for all of Europe, a success. It remained to be seen whether suitable structures had been established to benefit from these treasures of "know-how" and "know-about". The moment was now and in the coming months when ground work was done for a Europe of 21, of 26 or even more members. There was a true need for an extensive and profound dialogue between the business communities and the administrations of the member and the candidate countries, not to forget the European Commission, on how to build our common Europe of tomorrow.

Trust of Foreign Investors in prospects of the markets of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe combined with an ever increasing trust of peoples of this region in their future would further strengthen political and economic stability, the precondition for bringing the enlargement process to a successful conclusion. Mr Schuessel said the European Union as well as the governments of the candidate countries were fully aware of their tremendous responsibilities in living up to the expectations of their populations by achieving the historic task of enlargement.

Sweden

On the 12th of February 1999, the Deputy Prime Minister Lena Hjelm – Wallèn and the Foreign Minister, Anna Lindh of Sweden, published the article “Beyond yes or no to the EU”, in the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter⁴⁹.

Europe, its politics and problems, are today important parts of Sweden’s national politics and can not be allowed to be disregarded. Far too long, the authors argue, the debate has focused on the positive and negative aspects of Sweden’s membership of the European Union. Unfortunately, this has hindered a constructive discussion of Europe’s future to take place and questions like how to unite Europe have been ignored. Sweden has to take advantage of its position within the European Union and use its membership to improve our society.

Today, a new Europe is developing. Six countries, Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Cyprus, have initiated negotiations and are making continues progress. The other applicant states are participating in a practical preparation procedure that presumably will result in negotiations for several of these candidate states. At the same time as the Swedish government is determined to continue its endeavours and proceed with the enlargement operation, it is prepared to deepen the collaboration and implement any institutional changes were needed. In addition, Sweden also intends to promote a stronger co-operation between the EU and Russia. All candidate countries shall be judged according to the same criteria and have the same possibility to unite with the union. Mrs Lindh and Mrs Hjelm-Wallèn move on by proclaiming that Sweden will act in order to open up the European market to products from the candidate countries and from Russia. They conclude their article by acknowledging that they believe in a fruitful debate far beyond the discussion about a yes or a no to the EU.

On the 10 March 1999, the Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson discussed the topic "Security in a changing world" at Swedish Institute of International Affairs/Central Defence and Society Federation (CFF)⁵⁰.

In his speech, the Prime Minister asserts that Sweden's current security situation has not been as promising as now for a very long time. Today, we are on the threshold to a new century where we have an authentic potentiality to achieve democracy, peace and increased prosperity throughout the world. Democracy has, for instance, replaced suppression and communism in Eastern and Central Europe and people are demanding improvements and reconstruction. It is nevertheless momentous to be mindful and understand that development, like in Africa, can be threatened and affected by setbacks. If people do not recognise the difference, if old conflicts erupt, if the burdens of debt are all too great and extortion takes away the ability to develop, democracy and its process will be threatened. It is important to co-operate and allow free trade and transparency to proceed over protectionism.

⁴⁹ Source: www.regeringen.se

⁵⁰ Source: www.ud.se/english, the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.euoparl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage:<http://www.euoparl.eu.int/enlargement>

At a meeting in Milan, Mr Persson continues, the Nobel price winner John Hume, described the EU as history's most successful peace movement. Through economic co-operation, people and countries have been woven together by mutual interests and this is way the Union serves as our most useful and powerful security policy instrument. A successful enlargement of the EU, is therefor, the most crucial task that Europe is facing at the moment. The Prime Minister proceeds to assert that Sweden's experiences in the EU, reinforce the government's view that international institutions and agreements are especially important for smaller countries and this is why the EU is so important to Sweden.

Of special importance to the Swedish Government, are the countries around the Baltic Sea area. In 1996, Mr Göran Persson, contemplated a broad offensive for development and renewal around the Baltic Sea, calling for the region to become a symbol for economic development and co-operation. The success has been immense with rapidly expanding trade and today, the opportunities around the Baltic Sea, are enormous. Estonia's import from Sweden in 1998, for instance, exceeded more than SEK 3.5 billion, their imports more than doubling in two years. In addition, co-operation has also grown quickly at the political and social level. This year, 1999, Sweden is particularly making a special effort in Poland but of course, collaboration is beneficial to all countries.

The logical consequence of co-operation around the Baltic Sea, the Swedish Prime Minister, proclaims, is the expansion of the EU. Sweden shall continue to support the necessary reforms and share its own experiences. Our position is clear and firm. Estonia is now negotiating for membership - Latvia and Lithuania should be allowed to begin negotiations as soon as possible. It should however be emphasised that the greatest benefit with Baltic Sea co-operation is neither economic nor social. The greatest benefit is that democracy is winning - and with that peace.

Mr Persson proceeds to discuss security relations and advocates that Sweden's non-alignment shall be maintained. Sweden's security approach contributes to stability in our vicinity and there is no external pressure for Sweden to change course. The non-alignment approach does not, however, prevent Sweden from participating in discussion on EU's role and responsibility for preventing and resolving conflicts and Sweden takes its full share of responsibility for peace in Europe.

Today, there is the willingness and the necessary preconditions to build common security throughout Europe but this can only be achieved through extended discussions and integration. Peace, sustainable ecological, social and economic development can only be created together. Cohesion is both a necessity and desirable.

On March 13th 1999, the Swedish Prime Minister, Mr Göran Persson and the Deputy Prime Minister, Mrs Lena Hjelm -Wallèn, published an article in the Sydöstran newspaper in relation to the forthcoming EU Parliamentary election. In their article they highlight the importance of the enlargement of the European Union⁵¹.

Mr Persson and Mrs Hjelm -Wallèn express their devotion to develop the EU into a union of the citizens, a union that puts its people in the forefront. At the moment there are millions of Europeans who are waiting to become members of the European Union and in order to allow the enlargement to proceed, the union has to open up its door to the candidate countries. The Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister subsequently argue that the integration of the new member states is one of the most important measures to create a peaceful and stable Europe – the fundamental idea of the European Union. Therefore Sweden will continue to work towards an enlargement of the union and for a stronger co-operation between the EU and Russia.

All this, however, requires a modernisation and a reformation of the EU. The decision making process needs to be open, efficient and democratic. In addition, Mr Persson and Mrs Hjelm -Wallén assert that Sweden will continue to play an important role in the process of abolishing all unnecessary bureaucracy and oppose all various kind of fiddling and double-dealing. Mr Persson and Mrs Hjelm -Wallèn conclude their article by recognising the importance of the European Parliament. A Parliament that has the might to accelerate the enlargement of the European Union is all but powerless.

Prior to the EU Summit in Berlin, the Swedish Prime Minister, Mr Göran Persson, on the 23rd of March 1999, published an article in the Swedish newspaper Göteborgs - Posten⁵².

In his article, Mr Persson, comments on some of the important Swedish issues and perspectives that he will promote during the Summit. One of the most significant concerns is related to the EU's budget and future expenditure. In order for the Union to be able to meet the costs of the enlargement, the EU's total output must be limited. Whereas the European Commission's proposed budget suggests an increase to 105 billion ecu, Sweden has recommended that the Union's output should be freezed at 85 billion ecu until the year 2006. It is not defendable to allow the joint expenditures of the union to increase, when, at the same time, the member countries are faced with domestic financial difficulties. By maintaining present costs at a low level, the EU will create the necessary revenue associated with the enlargement process. The Berlin Summit can not afford to falter with the budget negotiations regarding Agenda 2000.

⁵¹ Source: www.regeringen.se

⁵² Source: www.regeringen.se

The Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Mrs Lena Hjelm - Wallèn gave a speech to the Swedish Parliament on the 15 April 1999 regarding Sweden's Presidency in the Council of the European Union between 1 January to 30 June 2002⁵³.

In less than two years, Sweden will for the first time, hold the EU Presidency post. The responsibility of the EU Presidency is to work for the whole of the union and many times, unpredictable events will shape the procedures and priorities. The Swedish Government's main priority and strategy is to practice a competent, efficient and objective orientated Presidency that will enhance the EU agenda. If we accomplish this, Mrs Hjelm – Wallèn argues, our Presidency will be successful.

The Swedish Government will also take the opportunity to promote special concerns and Sweden's priorities are already outlined. First, the government's ambition is to contribute to a more open, modern and equal union. Further more, the Government seeks to create a union that is well adapted to the needs and requirements of its people and continue to pursue the importance of the unemployment question. Most importantly, Sweden will be working for the enlargement of the European Union and hopefully, there will be the possibility to conclude some of the candidate countries applications, during its presidency. Finally, the government aims to strengthen the relationship between the European Union and Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The Swedish Minister for Industry, Mr Björn Rosengren, gave an interview for the newsletter, EU-rapport, in May 1999⁵⁴.

In relation to the question about Agenda 2000, Mr Rosengren argues that never before has the EU faced a greater challenge than today. Ahead of us we have the enlargement process of the union and the chore of incorporating the Central and Eastern European countries with the rest of Europe. In order to be able to accomplish this task, the structure of the European Union and its way of working must be simplified and reformed. With the present political system prevailing, the expansion of the union, with additional twelve new countries, will be too expensive.

On May 9, 1999, the Foreign Minister, Mrs Anna Lindh, and the Minister for International Development Co-operation, Mr Pierre Schori, of Sweden published an article in the Swedish newspaper, Dagens Nyheter⁵⁵.

In the article they address the question over the European Union's lack of capability to deal with arising problems and conflicts in Europe. It was on the basis of people's hope of lasting peace that the EU was created but still in the spring of 1999, Europe has not been able to bring about peace and security to the region. The EU must evolve in order to prevent the history of war from repeating itself and instead of building fortresses, the different peoples and nations of Europe should be woven together.

⁵³ Source: www.regeringen.se

⁵⁴ Source: www.regeringen.se/info-rosenbad.eu

⁵⁵ Source: www.ud.se/english, the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.europarl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage: <http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement>

The common currency, Mrs Lindh and Mr Scori remark, implies a further deepening of the European peace project. Economic integration will increase the likelihood of peaceful settlements and co-operation and the fundamental direction of the union must be to extend to more countries and people. The enlargement of the EU towards the east is a significant historical procedure that lays the foundation for a stable and prosperous Europe. The integration will make it conceivable for former isolated communist states to re-establish their economic and social ties with Western Europe and to secure their position among other European democratic states. The resolution must be to allow the enlargement procedure to continue and to give an extended number of candidate countries the permission to negotiate for membership.

At the same time it is of vital importance that the enlargement does not create a new dividing line between west and east. Although perceived as external parts of Europe, it is essential to increase the collaboration between the EU and Russia and the Ukraine. Closer co-operation will increase the capability to prevent and deal with developing crises and conflicts.

The two ministers continue to discuss the Balkan War and its consequences. One of the most important lessons of Kosovo is that timely action is fundamental and that an early engagement in developing crises is more effective than later involvement. For this reason the Swedish government wants the EU to develop a stronger common foreign and security policy and implement a joint analysis unit that will increase the union's capability of taking the right measures. Moreover, the Kosovo crises have illustrated that the EU needs a long-term strategy for the Balkans and most importantly, the door to EU membership must remain open to all democratic countries in Europe.

At the Baltic Development Forum Conference in Copenhagen on May 17 1999, the Swedish

Minister for Trade, Mr Leif Pagrotsky, gave a speech on the subject, Barriers and opportunities for economic integration in the Baltic Sea Region⁵⁶.

Mr Pagrotsky commences by acknowledging that the main aim of the conference is to encourage and promote economic integration with the Baltic Sea Region. Trade, not only being the prerequisite for peace but also the engine for development and prosperity, is the most significant mechanism for integration in the Baltic Sea region.

Experience, he continues, tells us that most trade takes place between neighbouring countries. Sweden's export to immediate Nordic countries, for instance, accounts for approximately twenty per cent of Sweden's total export, valuing 130 billion Swedish kronor. Additionally, Sweden's imports from these countries account for seventeen per cent of Sweden's total import. Bearing in mind that Norway, Finland and Denmark only have a population of fifteen million people, an equally intense trade relation with the Baltic Sea area, with an estimated population of 100 million people, would open up new great opportunities. Sweden's trade with Estonia has for instance increased more than 300 per cent in 5 years.

⁵⁶ Source: www.ud.se/english, the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.europarl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage: <http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement>

Mr Pagrotsky proceeds by highlighting the danger of trying to develop economies behind trade barriers and instead, he argues that openness and flexibility is the way forward, not protection. Unfortunately, trade barriers already today exist in the region and serve as obstacles to economic development and integration. In order to enhance their development towards adequate market economies, we still need more reformation of laws and regulations. This can, nevertheless, not be achieved without sound democratic institutions, respect for human rights and social cohesion. The institutional framework, like property rights for example, has to be in place for a functioning market economy.

The Minister for Trade moves on by recognising that the integration in the Baltic Sea area is already on its way by the promoting of the European Union's enlargement process. An enlarged EU, with four new member states around the Baltic Sea, will utterly facilitate Sweden's trade in this region. Most certainly, the enlargement process will solve various present existing institutional problems but it is also of vital importance to establish and maintain close connections with Russia. This undertaking will require hard work during a long period of time, but there is no reason for halting the progress in trade relations just because all countries are not yet members of the European Union. We should act now, to take care of the obvious opportunities of our region, not sit around and wait.

The Baltic States and Poland have taken the lead in the reform process and they have shown remarkable progress in the last years with substantial economic growth rates. Unfortunately, these countries have not been able to avoid the effects of the Russian crises and some sectors as the food industry have been severely damaged. Although the current situation is promising and hopefully temporarily, Mr Pagrotsky reminds us that privatisation, investment, increased trade and structural reforms also include a social aspect. The depth of the enlargement process and integration is not only limited to an economic dimension but also effects all parts of our society. Sweden's relationship with the Baltic states show similarities with the co-operation between the Nordic States and constitute of close contacts at all levels and in most policy areas.

At the end of his speech, Mr Pagrotsky concludes by endorsing that never before has a Swedish government given higher priority to Baltic Sea co-operation and integration than at the present moment. The Baltic Sea Region has an enormous potential for growth and economic and social development. It is our generation's historical mission to let the vision of an integrated and prosperous Baltic Sea region come true. To do this we have to find the obstacles and barriers, whether they are big or small, and act to diminish them. In return, we will get a more prosperous, more secure and a more integrated Baltic Sea region.

In June 1999, the Swedish Minister for Democratic Issues and Public Administration, Mrs Britta Lejon, was interviewed for the newsletter, EU-rapport⁵⁷.

Answering the question why close co – operation in Europe is essential, Mrs Lejon explained that today there is a need for global and regional political solutions to our common obstacles. Criminality, culture, media and economics are all a part of the new globalised agenda where we increasingly are adapting the same patterns and values throughout the world.

⁵⁷ Source: www.regeringen.se/info-rosenbad

Mrs Lejon continued by acknowledging that the Swedish government is the giving highest priority to the enlargement of the union. To incorporate the former dictator states in East and Central Europe is a necessity if we are to safeguard peace, democracy and welfare in the whole of Europe.

On June 18th 1999, the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs Anna Lindh, addressed Democracy Forum of International IDEA on the topic, Peace and Democracy – a Challenge for the future⁵⁸.

Mrs Lindh commences by questioning what democracy is all about. Sweden has been fortunate enough to have a democratic system for extensive period of time and for many young people in Sweden, democracy is taken for granted. This approach can, however, be a serious mistake since democracy is a precious achievement that has to be reconquered every day and should never be taken for granted. In Europe today, democracy is not only threatened by obvious violations, as in Kosovo, but also by declining interest. The low turn out in the European Parliamentary election, was a democratic defeat. In order to regain trust, we must transform the European institutions and make them more relevant to the people.

The European Union is a prime example of how international co-operation and the creation of new institutions originates a new democratic arena, which transcends the nation state.

The enlargement process and the incorporation of the new EU candidate countries, as well as the insecure situation on the Balkans, have increased the necessity for the Union to serve as an arena for stability and peace.

The increasing demand for economic, social and cultural transformation in many countries can also jeopardise stability and increase dissatisfaction among marginalised groups. In order to prevent any eventual conflicts from erupting, Mrs Lindh, concludes, democracy must be strengthened and reinforced where needed.

⁵⁸ Source: www.ud.se/english , the whole document is available on the INTRANET homepage <http://www.euoparl.ep.ec/enlargement>, or on the INTERNET homepage: <http://www.euoparl.eu.int/enlargement>

FINLAND*

On 12th November 1998, the Foreign Minister of Finland, Ms Tarja Halonen, gave a speech on the topic "Finland in the EU - perspective of a small member state" at the European Institute in Nicosia, Cyprus.

The Foreign Minister estimated that since Finland's accession process is still rather fresh in people's minds, some experiences should be shared with present applicant states. Cyprus has actively been seeking EU membership and substantial negotiations are just about to start, but the Minister warned that it would not be an easy nor speedy process. She suggested that there will be difficulties, but at least Finland has the experience that it is worth the effort. Inside the Union, she said, even small countries have influence and the membership opens up a wide range of new opportunities. The Minister underlined the fact that adaptation to EU membership is a long process, and it is never unproblematic.

Ms. Halonen assessed the biggest challenges for the Union on the eve of the new millennium. One of the major ones will be to determine in which direction the Union is to develop. She stated that the efficiency of the EU-institutions would need to be improved, especially before the next enlargement. In the Amsterdam Treaty certain changes were made, but not yet enough in her opinion for the whole enlargement process.

According to the Amsterdam Treaty the Union can enlarge by five new members, each of the member states having their own Commissioner. In other words the five big member states would give up their second Commissioner on condition that they are compensated within the system of weighting votes in the Council. A more comprehensive intergovernmental conference should be organised when the Union gets more than 20 new members.

The Minister contended that another important question is the composition of the Commission. Finland finds it necessary that there will be also in the future a national from each member state in the Commission. This is needed also to ensure the credibility of the Commission in the eyes of the citizens.

However, Finland does not wish the agenda of the next IGC to be extended to many new issues, as this could lead to lengthy negotiations and thereby a delay in one of the historic challenges of the Union, the enlargement process launched about a year ago. The Union should solve its internal issues in a way which would enable future enlargements, she stated.

* Sources: <http://www.president.ee>, <http://www.tpt.fi>, <http://www.tpk.fi> and <http://www.vn.fi> .

Furthermore, Ms. Halonen affirmed that the enlargement necessitates in addition to institutional changes also other internal reforms in the Union. Reforms are needed especially in the agricultural policies and structural policies. The financing of the Union must be organised in a way, which covers the cost of enlargement.

The Foreign Minister assured, however, that despite the difficult questions ahead, the EU is politically fully committed to enlargement. It is seen as a historic opportunity and a necessity in responding to challenges faced by the whole continent. She proclaimed that common problems can better be solved in close co-operation in this era of interdependence, and a strong and large union can also better compete and develop in global competition.

Ms. Halonen said that when Finland takes up the Presidency of the EU in July 1999, one of the most important issues on the agenda will be enlargement, where the substantial negotiations are probably well under way by then. She assured that Finland will do its best also in that field to ensure an efficient process with all the applicant countries, Cyprus included. She added that a lot depends of course on the applicant countries themselves; how they advance in the fields of economy, legislation and administration as well as implementation of the so-called political criteria.

The Minister stated that Finland has noted that Cyprus is fully committed to undertaking the necessary reforms in order to apply the acquis by the time of accession and that Cyprus is already in many ways well prepared. However, she added, the division of the island presents a difficult problem. Finland hopes that accession negotiations could help bring about reconciliation on the island.

The EU believes that the accession of Cyprus should also benefit the Turkish Cypriot community. Ms. Halonen declared Finland's desire to encourage the Government of Cyprus to intensify its efforts to involve the Turkish community in the accession process. Membership in the EU certainly would be beneficial for Cyprus, she said, and wished Cyprus a lot of success in its efforts to join the Union.

On 9th December 1998, the President of Finland, Mr Martti Ahtisaari, gave an address to the National Assembly of Slovenia in Ljubljana.

The Finnish President focused on issues of European integration in his speech as the European Council's meeting in Vienna, where a further step forward in this process would be taken, was fast approaching. In addition, he touched on some questions of European security.

The President assured that supporting enlargement is the most central challenge to which the EU has to respond. In his opinion, enlargement will promote stability and security as well as prosperity and social development in Europe, and therefore Finland supports it. Mr. Ahtisaari stated that enlargement is a process that in itself allows all countries taking part in it to strengthen their position in Europe.

The President went on to say that reforming the Union's institutions and resolving issues connected with the Agenda 2000 are an essential part of developing the Union. In addition to these tasks, EU members also have to implement the Amsterdam Treaty and carry out the third stage of economic and monetary union.

Mr. Ahtisaari proclaimed that enlargement is a challenge not only for the present EU members, but also for the candidate countries. The starting point is clear, he said the applicants are seeking membership of the Union in its present form. Besides that, it must be possible to expect the applicants to be prepared to institute reforms also in conditions of deepening integration.

The EU Commission recently published reports on the progress that the candidate countries had made. These reports are intended to encourage the applicants on their journey towards meeting the criteria for membership. The President added that Finland knows from experience that joining the European Union is a tough challenge: quite a lot is demanded of a small country. In Finland, the pre-accession negotiations are still fresh in memory and the President affirmed that Finland should be pleased to share its experiences with Slovenia.

Mr. Ahtisaari went on to say that after geography and history separated the peoples of Europe, culture and economics have broken down the dividing barriers. He considered the European Union to be the main trailblazer in this change.

The President declared that Finland supports Slovenia's membership of the EU and wished the Slovenes the very best of success as they put the finishing touches to the work of making their society eligible for membership.

On 20th January 1999, the President of Finland, Mr Martti Ahtisaari, held a speech at the Upper House of the States-General of the Netherlands.

The President discussed issues relating to European integration, economy, unemployment, immigration and the Agenda 2000. He stated that in the year 1999, the EU would have to reach decisions that will affect its further development for years to come. One of the most important relates to the Agenda 2000. The President considered it important that the decisions concerning the Agenda 2000 emerge during the German Presidency. He estimated that in order for this to happen, all member states have to demonstrate a willingness to find a satisfactory solution together.

Mr. Ahtisaari also declared that it is absolutely essential that the momentum be maintained in the process of enlarging the Union. Enlargement, he said, is a key question from the perspective of peace and security in Europe and also essential for its vitality. The President affirmed that for Finland, the accession of the Baltic States is a central goal.

The President stated that it is essential that the enlargement process not be rendered difficult artificially nor on questionable grounds. It is important, he

said, to emphasise the point that membership is open to all applicants who meet the requirements set out by the EU.

On 2nd February 1999, the Prime Minister of Finland, Mr Paavo Lipponen, held a speech in the City Europe Lecture in London.

The Prime Minister discussed economic development in Finland and in the European Union before turning his attention to matters of EU enlargement. He sees the next enlargement as a process, which enables great nations such as Poland to take their rightful place in the EU.

The Minister reminded that less than a year ago the first European Conference was convened in London. Representatives from fifteen EU states and eleven applicant states gathered together in order to show their determination to widen co-operation in environmental policies, justice and home affairs and in other areas to include partners from other European countries.

A day after the Conference, he said, the European Union opened accession negotiations with Cyprus, Hungary, Poland, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Since then the enlargement process has been firmly on track and remains the key challenge to the Union in the coming years.

Mr. Lipponen considers the fundamental objective of enlargement to be to help democracy, human rights and the rule of law take root in the applicant countries. It will also contribute, he said, to stability and to the development of functioning market economies, which create the right environment for growth and better employment for all Europeans.

The Minister pointed out that the economic potential of enlargement is huge. It will bring more than 100 million new consumers into the single market; businesses and investors will benefit from a wider single market with common rules. Having the acquis communautaire applicable all over Europe is the only real alternative to social and environmental dumping. Mr. Lipponen affirmed that the accession of new countries and the enlargement of the area with four freedoms would strengthen Europe's ability to compete as an economic entity in the world market at the same time as it ensures more efficient use of resources within Europe.

The Minister declared that enlargement would be a priority issue for the Finnish presidency of the European Union. Finland wants to maintain the momentum in this process, but it is necessary to do much more than run a smooth negotiating process. As the Commission has noted in its assessment of the candidate countries, none of them are yet ready to join the Union. A lot of homework needs to be done before these countries are ready to implement the acquis and face the tough competition that is waiting for their industries and producers in the single market.

Mr. Lipponen concluded by stating that Europe must be made "whole and free". He said that his British colleague, Mr. Tony Blair, agrees with him in

thinking of Europe as a family of nations encompassing the whole subcontinent, open to its neighbours and the world.

On 2nd February 1999, the Finnish President, Mr Ahtisaari, gave an address to the Senate of Spain.

The President presented an analysis of the marked changes that have taken place in Europe in recent decades. The Cold War era is over; co-operation and integration have gained strength. His assessment was that changes have not been painless everywhere, but the trend of development has been positive overall.

Mr. Ahtisaari affirmed the Finnish support for the enlargement of the European Union. For Finland, it is important that applicant countries be supported to enable them to be ready for accession soon. He stated that membership on the part of the three Baltic States will have the effect of making the entire Baltic Sea region stronger and more united. Already now, all of the northern European countries are participating, on different levels and in varying compositions, in multilateral co-operation. The European Union is paying attention to its Northern Dimension for largely the same reasons that it pursues an effective Mediterranean policy. In Finland's view, the President declared, both dimensions are important and complementary.

On the 17th February 1999, the Foreign Minister of Finland, Ms Tarja Halonen, gave a speech on the theme "Finland in the New Europe".

The Foreign Minister gave a short analysis of the changes of the past decade in the political situation in Europe with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the birth of new nation-states in Europe. The building of the new Europe began immediately; the Council of Europe doubled its number of members and together with the OSCE began to strengthen democracy. The European Union began to strongly deepen its integration process and it too began to expand more dynamically.

Now the Union has a new enlargement as its goal once more. The Minister considers that the enlargement process which is currently underway is more demanding than previous rounds, because the integration of the union is much deeper now than before, and because the applicant countries conform less to the average of the union than in the previous enlargement. However, Ms. Halonen pointed out, if enlargement happens and is successful, Europe will be more secure and more affluent. In addition, she emphasised, Europe will be a much stronger global actor than before.

The Minister said that the first EU Presidency of Finland, starting in July 1999, is taking place at a time when the union is searching for a new and more robust role in a globalised world. She estimated that if the German Presidency's main task, the Agenda 2000, is concluded according to plans in

March, Finland will concentrate on furthering the EU's enlargement process with full force during its own Presidency.

Ms. Halonen stated that part of the issues handled during the Presidency would be closely connected to Finland's immediate neighbouring regions. Estonia has already begun to conduct substantial accession negotiations with the EU. The Minister affirmed that her country hopes that Latvia and maybe even Lithuania will reach the same stage during the Finnish Presidency. She considers that the process of becoming a member is a real guidance and fitness course in terms of developing both the economy and democracy.

The Foreign Minister emphasised the importance of Finland's initiative for a Northern Dimension policy, which aims to create a stronger place for the European Union in the north of the continent and also prepares the union for enlargement. The Northern Dimension seeks to create and increase political stability and economic well-being in the region by capitalising on the interdependency of the EU, Russia and the states of the Baltic region in a positive way.

On 20th April 1999, the Prime Minister of Finland, Mr Paavo Lipponen, gave a statement to the Parliament on the new Government Programme.

In the part of his statement to the Parliament that covered foreign policy, the Finnish Prime Minister stated that the aim of the new government's foreign and security policy is to strengthen Finland's security and international influence as well as to promote the country's interests in a world of deepening co-operation.

Mr. Lipponen affirmed that the new government is strongly in favour of the enlargement of the European Union. This will, in his view, allow the European Union to carry out its most important task, which is promoting integration. And this, in turn, has far-reaching effects in that it safeguards peace and welfare across Europe. The Prime Minister added that following the Agenda 2000 reform programme, the enlargement process must be speeded up by continuing to pursue institutional reforms within the EU.

On 10th May 1999, the President of Finland, Mr Martti Ahtisaari, gave a speech in honour of President Jacques Chirac and Mme Bernadette Chirac in Helsinki.

The President discussed the situation in the Balkans in the beginning of his speech and highlighted the fact that the international community will have to work with the countries of the region to devise a comprehensive plan for long-term peaceful development in south-east Europe. He assessed that the European Union bears the principal responsibility in this matter.

Mr. Ahtisaari pointed out that Finland would soon be shouldering the responsibilities of the EU Presidency. It comes at an interesting moment, as the political weight of the European Union is increasing due to its growing economic strength and the new tasks it is assuming, but also because it is enlarging. Enlargement, he said, would consolidate the Union's position as the anchor of prosperity and security, and as the locomotive of development in Europe.

The President affirmed that Finland considers it important that progress is made in the enlargement process, and that all candidate countries are supported. He added that Finland must make certain that the European Council meeting in Helsinki strengthens faith on the part of all applicants that membership will become a reality for them.

UNITED KINGDOM⁵⁹

Ms Joyce Quin, FCO Minister of State, was asked on December 14th 1998 by the CBI Europe Committee in London to talk about the Government's key priorities for the future development of the EU.

Ms Quin repeated the position of the Prime Minister to the audience, who said that Britain's future lies in being a full partner in Europe, far from being isolated, forgoing new alliances and new links across the European Union. The Government has made a Step Change in its relations with all its EU partners and with the applicants from Central and Eastern Europe, which is supported by the British people in a new spirit of constructive engagement.

Apart from other priorities, successful enlargement is a key priority for the future development of Europe. In Ms Quin's opinion EU enlargement offers an historic opportunity to bring stability and prosperity to the greater part of the European Union. There will be more effective action to protect the environment and to combat crime and the opportunities for business and consumers in a single market of 400 million boosted by booming and dynamic economies, will be considerable. In recent years the UK has witnessed an impressive growth in its trade with the markets of Central Europe and holds the view that enlargement will rejuvenate the EU.

Britain has been enthusiastic on enlargement from the start and therefore the UK has the reputation amongst applicant countries as a champion of enlargement. The country has been the leading advocate of CAP reform throughout negotiations, with the Germans and French following, and the British government would continue to be a frontrunner in enlargement negotiations in the future.

On January 14th 1999, the FCO Minister of State, Ms Joyce Quin, gave a speech concerning the same subject to the Franco-British Colloquy in Paris.

First the Minister stated that the Government wants Britain to be influential and respected in Europe and Ms Quin said, that Britain is obtaining this position by forgoing new alliances and new links across Europe, especially with Central and Eastern Europe.

The UK Government's priorities for the future development of the EU are the following:

The Euro, economic reform and employment, enlargement, Agenda 2000 and Defence.

Relating to enlargement, the Minister stressed that Britain has been an enthusiastic proponent of enlargement for some years and still holds the view that Europe cannot be successful without being united. It is vital to maintain the momentum and the UK will be actively working to ensure that the applicant states receive all the necessary help to integrate into the Union as well as pushing for CAP reform and a stabilisation of spending.

Enlargement will offer considerable opportunities for business and consumers and it will create the biggest Single Market in the world. Nevertheless, enlargement has also to be undertaken politically and an important area in the context of enlargement would be to reform the EU institutions as the Union grows. The UK, together with France, would also

⁵⁹ All original documents derive from the source: <http://www.fco.gov.uk>

press for these institutions to become more accountable to the citizens of Europe to make clear to them that enlargement is both affordable and sustainable.

Furthermore Ms Quin pointed out that the EU has to take its proper place in the world, as it moves into the 21st century as one of the major powers of the world, so it definitely needs a Common Foreign and Defence Policy. This is perhaps a particular challenge for France and the United Kingdom, as Europe will not be united on foreign policy issues unless these two countries can move together.

On March 2nd 1999, the FCO Minister of State, Ms Joyce Quin, was invited by the Royal Institute for International Affairs in London to give a speech on enlargement of the EU.

First of all, the Minister stressed that enlargement is a political project, like the EU itself, which was actually founded to make war in Europe unthinkable, like it is today, at least between the member states. The mere fact of being a member state of the EU provides domestic stability and participation in the EU's foreign policy promotes security as well as the economic well being of its members. So enlargement offers an opportunity to bring this stability to the greater part of the European Continent, not only to the East but also to the South.

The accession process is a clear incentive to Central and Eastern European countries not to go backwards in their reforms; it could provide a solution to the Cyprus problem and help Turkey to prepare for possible EU membership, which is becoming more and more possible for Malta as well.

Furthermore, enlargement would also facilitate the tackling of various continent-wide problems, such as for example organised crime and the environment. On organised crime, the EU signed a pre-accession Pact last year with the candidate countries, which will make joint efforts to get to the heart of the problem all the more effective and Europol will ensure co-operation as regards police forces.

Extending EU environmental standards and environmental management techniques across Europe will greatly strengthen British efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to tackle transboundary pollution of air, water and the marine environment. It encourages the candidates to look more closely at the environmental costs and benefits and thus avoid the huge burden of clean up that resulted from unsustainable development in the past. And enlargement will help to ensure that the environmental assets of these countries are not going to be destroyed in the future, which benefits all of Europe.

Economically, the benefits would be felt in an increase in incomes in the EU fifteen, growth in trade and investment, more and cheaper goods, productivity and innovation. Benefits were direct and indirect, though, and would effect the candidate countries as well. An enlarged European Union would create the biggest Single market for trade and investment in the world, with nearly 500 million consumers. Of course, enlargement will increase competition in the Single market and this represents a challenge for existing and new member States, which need to adjust to that new economical environment. For the candidates there will be need to be structural adjustments in certain sectors, such as agriculture and heavy industry. The EU will be needed to cope with the greater number of workers to take up employment among the current EU15. But the Minister is confident that there will be clear commercial benefits for both new and existing member states,

even in the short term. Enlargement will quickly expand the opportunities for investment and trade and in the longer term the net effect will be greater prosperity across Europe. The UK was steadily preparing for enlargement and many businesses were looking to the candidates as markets for export and investment. In Ms Quin's opinion UK business needs to realise that preparing for enlargement is as important as preparing for the Euro, and it must become aware of the opportunities and challenges that enlargement is bringing. To encourage this, the Government recently launched a new campaign, "Opportunities in Central Europe" which will start off with "Opportunity Poland", followed by "Opportunity Hungary" in autumn and "Opportunity Czech Republic" in spring 2000. UK companies have to improve their competitiveness in order to compete in an enlarged Europe, which means also learning from successful companies in the enlargement countries.

In response to critics of enlargement, Ms Quin said that, although the long process of enlargement is entering the most difficult stage in its history by negotiating the more difficult chapters of the acquis, it is the fact that Europe, existing member states and candidates alike, stands to gain enormously from enlargement. The process is not unaffordable and when the costs were put in the context of the wider benefits it is actually a good deal. Of course, the EU needs to prepare for enlargement and in the UK's view the reforms of the CAP and the structural funds are long overdue. The EU also needs to reform its institutions to ensure that they will be in shape and can accommodate an enlarged EU of 20-30 members.

According to Ms Quin, twinning is a key element of pre-accession work and the UK has much to offer such as investing people, transferring skills and expertise to help ensure the candidates joining as fully fledged Member States meeting all the obligations and enjoying all the benefits of membership.

The pace of enlargement must continue at the pace set by Agenda 2000, and the Minister hopes that negotiations in all chapters of the acquis will be opened by the end of June 2000. Nevertheless, speed should not be allowed to give inferior membership to countries. The UK and Europe must get on with the job of preparing all applicants thoroughly and equally.

The British Prime Minister Tony Blair held a speech regarding the future of Europe, invited by the Royal United Services Institute for NATO 50th Anniversary Conference on March 8th 1999 in London.

Talking on NATO enlargement, the Prime Minister mentioned that three of the partners – Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic – have gone beyond partnership and will become members of the Alliance itself. The UK Prime Minister fully welcomed the prospect of the new NATO members also becoming, along with others, members of the European Union in a few years.

He totally agreed that NATO and the European Union, perhaps the World's two most successful international organisations according to Tony Blair, will extend their reach and the benefits they bring.

Eventually even the countries of the Former Yugoslavia will integrate into the European mainstream after their leaders and societies have become more like their counterparts in Western and Central Europe.

At the Annual Meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), April 1999 in London, Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair spoke about the task of transition.

The Prime Minister pointed out the important role of the EBRD in transition by giving the example of five countries which have benefited from the EBRD's programmes, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, that are now negotiating to join the EU: this is a powerful indicator of the progress that those countries have made, that democracy has firmly taken root in Eastern and Central Europe. Moreover, nearly all countries in Central and Eastern Europe are now partners of the NATO Alliance, three are allies and ten are accepted, along with Cyprus and Turkey, as candidates to join the EU.

The British Prime Minister affirmed that this progress has not been easy but Britain will continue to help those countries in Central and Eastern Europe, which have undergone fundamental structural changes, to complete the full distance.

Mr Blair pledged a serious commitment on behalf of Britain towards EU enlargement. The EBRD would have to give not just advice but also create the right conditions for bringing the economies of the accession countries into line with the rest of Europe. The UK was in Mr Blair's opinion instrumental in opening up western markets, reforming the CAP and in launching a round of world trade negotiations in 1999, and is even committed to doing much more: Britain wants the EU to be a standard bearer in a new endeavour to achieve open and competitive international markets for trade and investment.

For achieving this goal, the shareholders of the EBRD must keep faith in the idea of sustainable and equitable transition in Central and Eastern Europe.

Speech delivered by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair at the Ceremony to receive the Charlemagne Prize at Aachen, Germany, on May 13th 1999.

Mr Blair firstly stated that the war in Kosovo had highlighted the moral duty of the EU to help the accession countries to make the transition into EU countries, to profit from stability and well being, to learn to live and work together in peace.

Britain cannot allow the values of Europe to be desecrated within one part of Europe while the EU member states live comfortably in the western corner of the continent. Britain must overcome its ambivalence about Europe, work more closely on big issues such as enlargement, decentralise where possible and integrate where necessary. Britain itself joined the European Union and is not one of its founding members, so it has to play its part fully if it wants to obtain a leading role in the European Union. The Prime Minister entitled himself pro-European as well as pro-reform in Europe, the next era of the European Union must in his eyes be about how to build Europe's strength, power and responsibility to the outside world, as the challenges are now external: in economy, in defence and enlargement.

According to enlargement the British Prime Minister sustained the idea of intensify the negotiations with the existing Central European and Mediterranean applicants. Enlargement offers the chance of a market of 500 million consumers and the inestimable advantage of political stability for the continent. Europe finds itself at a moment of transformation. Mr Blair neither shares the vision of a United States of Europe, nor a

simple European free trade area. He foresees a new and different sort of entity with diffuse powers, that have to be organised in reformed European institutions to win the battle for peace and security, jobs and competitiveness, crime, environment, enlargement, defence and foreign policy. But of all these challenges the most important challenge for the British Prime Minister is the development of the relations with the rest of Europe and the enlargement of the European Union.