

Speech by Panaiotis Kanellopoulos at the signature of the association agreement between Greece and the EEC (9 July 1961)

Caption: On 9 July 1961, the association agreement between Greece and the European Economic Community is signed in Athens. On that occasion, Panaiotis Kanellopoulos, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, highlights the fundamental political significance of the agreement.

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[...]

The Agreement we are signing constitutes the basis of the economic union of Greece with your six countries which are economically, socially and scientifically in the van of human progress. The Hellenes are well aware of what this Agreement means to them. They know that they have a great effort before them to raise themselves as quickly as possible to that level of economic progress without which the Agreement signed today will be as valueless to themselves as to the peoples who have done them the honour of deciding to associate with them. The considerable advances which have been made along the road of economic development in these last few years by the people of Greece are of considerable importance. I believe that they will be still more substantial in the future, and today's Agreement will make a special contribution to this work, serving as a guide and a source of inspiration.

In this solemn moment I feel it is my duty — and it is always pleasant to carry out such a duty — to draw attention to the difficult nature of the work which has been done by the representatives of the Community appointed for this purpose during the long period of negotiations which have led to the results we see today. They have shown not only outstanding personal qualities and tenacity in defending the point of view of the Community and also — as was their duty — the point of view of the States forming the Community, they have also shown true devotion to the ideal of European unity.

The happy conclusion reached in these negotiations is no more than a great, a difficult beginning, Greece will spare no effort to appear worthy of the confidence you have shown in it by the Act signed today; for our own part, we are sure that your countries will prove themselves worthy of the great task they have undertaken in the Treaty of Rome.

[...]