

Address given by Giulio Andreotti at the signing of Portugal's Treaty of Accession to the European Communities (Lisbon, 12 June 1985)

Caption: On 12 June 1985, at the signing, in Lisbon, of Portugal's Treaty of Accession to the European Communities, Giulio Andreotti, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and President-in-Office of the Council of the European Communities, delivers an address in which he hails the accession of Portugal as a victory for liberty and democratic values.

Source: Archives historiques du Conseil de l'Union européenne, Bruxelles, Rue de la Loi 175. Adhésion du Portugal, 07.151 (469): 07. Dossiers 537-549, Boîte 66. Cérémonie de signature (12.6.1985) du traité d'adhésion du Portugal aux Communautés européennes, Dossier n° 544.

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Today we are sanctioning, with all due solemnity, the accession of a new Member to the European Community.

This is a development which brings us all great satisfaction and also new hope.

Above all, the signing of the Treaty concerning the accession of Portugal to the European Community marks her induction into what may truly be called the most important political achievement of the post-war era – and not only for our Continent.

By this accession, Europe as a political and institutional entity is also brought closer to the Europe of physical geography. And once again we see that membership of the European Community follows naturally from the restoration of the values inherent in a pluralist democracy. This represents a guarantee, since within the process of European integration there has never been nor can there be any turning away from the path of freedom.

The Portuguese people will thus be making its contribution to consolidating a Europe in which the very individually of all the countries that go to make it up finds expression in a political process based on the pooling and enhancement of common resources – and not only material resources.

Europe is growing, and taking form through the process of enlargement and by working towards a better and sounder balance among its members.

Accession is not an end in itself. Rather, the entry of a new country obliges the Community to redouble its efforts of imagination and willpower in order to accommodate interests and viewpoints which, while not dramatically opposed certainly do not always exactly coincide.

The spirit that moves us and informs all the objectives set out in the Treaty of Rome must guide us in our work. This spirit of solidarity must always be with us as we move forward, inspiring our every choice; and it must be accompanied by confidence in the future and perseverance in the face of difficulties.

We have before us a hard task, bearing in mind the inequalities which the Community must strive to mitigate or do away with, through the very process of accentuating solidarity with those least favoured among us.

In this respect, the provisions of the Accession Treaty bear witness to the Community's will to contribute to the modernization of Portugal's economy and to increase its growth potential by means, among other things, of specific development programmes in the agricultural and industrial sectors.

We are sure that Portugal, like the other countries that have gone before it, cannot fail to draw material benefit from becoming part of so vast a market and from participation in the European Community's mechanisms for bringing about the balanced and uniform development of all its regions, for the benefit of all its inhabitants.

Here, it seems to me worth stressing that those Portuguese workers who live outside their country – and have done so much to strengthen Portugal's cultural and economic ties with other European countries – will henceforward enjoy the safeguards and benefits to which Community membership entitles them.

The road that leads a country to the European Community is not a one-way street; the advantages involved do not move in one direction only; rather, there is a constant exchange which must be mutually advantageous. And so it will be this time too.

When in 1977 Portugal applied for membership of the European Community, political motives of

fundamental importance – such as the consolidation of a democracy which was still in its infancy and had had to struggle for its very survival – seemed bound to dictate a positive response on the part of the Community. Now that, after lengthy negotiations, Portugal is at last becoming a member of a Community of Twelve, we can safely say that the Portuguese have built up democratic safeguards with their own hands. We note that the democratic Portuguese State is indeed solidly established and that its contribution to the European democratic family is assured.

What the European Community can, for its part, give Portugal is a new political and economic dimension in which the country can take up the place which belongs to it by right of its history, culture and traditions.

In this connection, Portugal's historic, cultural and economic ties with Latin America, Africa and Asia represent a major contribution to the action in which the European Community is engaged for the creation, above all in areas of major international tension, of the preconditions for a new equilibrium and new opportunities for peace.

The Portuguese people's act of placing their hopes in Europe means today remaining faithful to the spirit of that great saga in which this country bore so many of the values of European civilization to far-off lands.

Drawing on her traditions and historic experience, Portugal has more than one reason for joining in the European venture: a venture the aim of which – namely the unity of the peoples and of the nations of our Continent – it would be impossible to achieve in full without this country's contribution.