

Statement by Minister of State Klaus von Dohnanyi at the opening session of EEC-Portugal negotiations (Brussels, 17 October 1978)

Caption: Statement by Klaus von Dohnanyi, Minister of State at the Foreign Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Communities, at the opening ministerial session of negotiations between the Communities and Portugal, held in Brussels on 17 October 1978.

Source: Archives historiques du Conseil de l'Union européenne, Bruxelles, Rue de la Loi 175. Adhésion du Portugal, 07.151 (469): 07.51. Dossiers 707-717, Boîte 84. Préparation de la 1ère session ministérielle (session d'ouverture des négociations) CEE/Portugal, Dossier n° 714.

Statement by the Community spokesman, Mr von Dohnanyi, Minister of State and President-in-Office of the Council, at the ministerial session opening the negotiations between the European Communities and Portugal, which has applied for accession to the European Communities. Brussels: Council of the European Communities, 17.10.1978. 9 p.

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URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/statement_by_minister_of_state_klaus_von_dohnanyi_at_the_opening_session_of_eec_portugal_negotiations_brussels_17_october_1978-en-fa5a57f1-e9ff-409c-aafd-51088bbdb1de.html

Publication date: 24/10/2012

Statement by the Community spokesman, Mr von Dohnanyi, Minister of State and President-in-Office of the Council at the ministerial session opening the negotiations between the European Communities and Portugal, which has applied for accession to the European Communities (Luxembourg, 17 October 1978)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council of the European Communities is very glad to receive the representatives of Portugal today in those familiar surroundings. Might I first be permitted to recall the background to today's meeting.

The establishment of contractual relations between the Community and your country dates back to 1972 when agreements on the liberalization of trade were concluded between the European Economic Community and the European Coal and Steel Community on the one hand and the Portuguese Republic on the other. At that time accession to the Community by three countries which were then members of EFTA necessitated adjustments in the trade relations between the enlarged Community and the other members of EFTA, to which Portugal also belongs.

Since then, the process of democratization in your country, which began on 25 April 1974, has led to the re-establishment of pluralist democracy and of fundamental rights.

Not only was the Community at one with the Portuguese people in welcoming this development but it also granted extensive emergency aid as a first gesture of its solidarity.

In 1976 an additional Protocol extending co-operation to areas other than trade was added to the existing agreements.

Portugal applied on 28 March 1977 to join the European Economic Community, the European Coal and Steel Community and Euratom, in accordance with the provisions of the three Treaties. On 6 June of this year the Council of the European Communities gave a favourable reply to this application.

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Although it may be superfluous to do so, I should like to emphasize that the aim of the European Communities is not confined to purely economic progress but is intended to lay the foundations for "an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe". The Member States accordingly called upon other peoples of Europe who share their ideal of preserving peace and liberty to co-operate in attaining this objective.

The Community is therefore not merely a matter for businessmen: it is the responsibility of every citizen to participate in the life of the Community.

This is borne out by the Decision adopted on 20 September 1976 to elect the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage. Furthermore, when deciding in April 1978 on the date of the first elections, the European Council confirmed the Member States' intention of ensuring respect for the legal, political and moral values for which they stand and of safeguarding the principle of representative democracy, the rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights.

These fundamental principles which the Communities have espoused are deeply rooted as is proven by the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice.

These are the ideals which guide and direct us.

Allow me now to describe the specific context of the negotiations which we are about to embark upon with you and how we, for our part, intend to conduct them.



1. As you know, the Institutions which you wish to join are involved in a process of continuous creation; the communities with which you are embarking upon accession negotiations are living ones.

You will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that we intend to pursue these negotiations on the basis of the principle that your country must accept the Treaties and the attendant political objectives, all the decisions of whatever kind which have been adopted since the entry into force of those Treaties, and the options selected as regards the development of the Communities, in short, what we call the "acquis communautaire". The resulting obligations on Portugal's part cover a field which has become extremely wide.

As regards internal affairs, I should like to observe that since 1958 we have witnessed the achievement of customs union and that we have also adopted and implemented a common agricultural policy and a common commercial policy. The Community has endowed itself with a system of own resources. Progress has been made in the field of social policy and has also been registered in transport policy. In addition we have introduced a regional policy that is producing positive results. We have also moved toward increased economic convergence. Finally, we can point to numerous achievements in the harmonization of legislation.

However, the economic crisis which also affected the Community showed that these efforts are not enough. Thus in 1976 the European Council once again emphasized the need to ensure greater convergence of economic and monetary policies. At the European Council meeting in Bremen last July an important step was taken towards economic and monetary union. With a view to the projected creation of a "European monetary system", this step is aimed at the immediate establishment of an area of economic and monetary stability.

It should, moreover, be stated that these endeavours have led not only to the effective economic interpenetration of the various Community markets but also to greater mutual understanding between Governments and peoples.

The *acquis communautaire* also includes all the commitments entered into and the policies pursued by the Community externally. The Community has concluded Association or Co-operation Agreements with the Mediterranean countries. At the time of enlargement it also signed free trade agreements with a series of European countries including, as I have already said, the EFTA countries, of which Portugal is one. In this respect allow me to point out that Portugal's accession to the Communities will of necessity require adjustments to be made to your relations with the other EFTA member countries. The Community has also created for the benefit of the developing countries a system of generalized preferences capable of further development. It has also opened its markets to almost all the African countries and to certain Caribbean and Pacific countries and granted them aid. In line with this policy, the Community also intends to pursue the renegotiation of the Lomé Convention which began on 24 July this year.

Furthermore, measures are currently being implemented and others will have to be initiated in the future as required by the pursuit of the objectives which the Community has set itself.

For anyone who sees the Community in this light, enlargement as such is only conceivable as a further contribution to the strengthening of the process of continuous creation which the Community is experiencing and not as a way of weakening or diluting its institutional structures or its powers of action.

2. The logical extension of the first principle, which as I have just described, is the Community's essential yardstick, is that in the negotiations the adjustment problems which may arise for either side must be resolved by transitional measures and not by a change in Community rules.

These transitional measures, intended to facilitate such adjustments as may prove necessary as a result of enlargement, must be so constructed as to ensure an overall balance of reciprocal advantages; they must, in

principle, have precise timetables; their duration could, if desirable, vary according to the subject matter involved. Moreover, the Community considers that provision should be made for mutual safeguard mechanisms in accordance with Community procedures.

3. Finally, negotiations will be carried on by the Community at all levels and on all problems in accordance with a uniform procedure in the framework of a Conference between the Communities and Portugal; the details could be arranged by our deputies.

As regards the Community delegation, it will be led by the President in Office of the Council of the European Communities.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The enlargement of the Communities that we wish to achieve together will present our undertaking with new dimensions and prospects. At present we can no more than glimpse these prospects; we must ensure that they lead to the construction of a Europe which is attractive to public opinion in our countries not only economically but also in its human, social and cultural aspects. Without prejudice to the Community's decision to treat each applicant on the basis of its specific circumstances, we must take account of the fact that two other European countries have also applied for accession to the Community: Greece, with which negotiations are already well advanced, and Spain.

At this initial stage in our proceedings, I have described to you some of our ideas. This statement could not be exhaustive or cover all the problems which will arise in the course of the negotiations.

Our negotiators will have the difficult task – difficult if only because of the number and complexity of the problems to be dealt with – of drawing up a negotiating timetable as they go along and determining the order in which the various topics will be covered.

With a view to accelerating the procedure, I nevertheless feel it would be useful even at this early stage to make a number of suggestions on this subject. Since customs union is the very crux of the Community and given that the existing agreements have already allowed tariff dismantling to be initiated between Portugal and the Community, I think that customs union might usefully be one of the subjects to be discussed at the very outset of negotiations.

The chapter on external relations, particularly the common commercial policy, might also be tackled very soon.

Moreover, secondary Community legislation could be examined from three different points of view: collation of complete data, determination of the technical adjustments necessary, and possibly definition of the substantive problems to be covered in the context of the negotiations.

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Admittedly the negotiations which are opening today can only cover problems of accession as such, i.e. the terms of accession and adjustments to the Treaties.

But this does not mean that the Community is unaware of the economic problems which currently beset your country: it realizes the importance and the urgency of re-establishing conditions for economic and monetary stability in Portugal and for gradually reducing the balance of payments deficit. All the meetings, all the talks we have had with the Portuguese authorities have shown how conscious you are of the need to improve the economic situation if the process of accession is to be weathered successfully. We all know that mere

accession is not in itself a panacea for the economic problems facing Portugal.

The Community and its Member States have supported directly and indirectly the action taken by your Government. This support, be it emergency aid, the financial protocol which is to enter into force on 1 November 1978 or balance of payments assistance, will still be bearing fruit in the months and years to come and will allow a number of projects to be realized with a view to restructuring and job-creation.

The Community is prepared to study and examine with you any supplementary measures which might assist your efforts, the success of which will facilitate Portugal's integration into the Community.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Substantial as is the task facing our negotiators, I am convinced – and here I conclude – that the negotiations on which we are embarking today will be brought to a successful conclusion by the common political will to make every effort to achieve our goal.