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Brussels, 30 September 1992

**Extracts from the address by Mr Andriessen  
to the Committee on Institutional Affairs of the European Parliament**

Brussels, 29 September 1992

**Debate on the structure and strategy for the European Union  
with regard to its enlargement and the creation of a Europe-wide order**

**(Hänsch Report)**

During the debate on the Hänsch Report, held on 29 September in Brussels, Mr Andriessen, Vice-President, set out the Commission's position on this matter.

Here are the salient points of Mr Andriessen's speech:

- The Commission welcomes the Hänsch Report, which makes clear the link between the future integration of the European Union on the one hand and the continent of Europe on the other. These two entities influence each other and it is important to discuss this subject now, even though the fate of the Treaty of Maastricht is still in doubt.
- The debate on the future integration of Europe and of the Community must be placed in a context which highlights global interdependence, destined to be a feature of the next century. A number of established regional groupings, such as NAFTA and APEC, are already looking in this direction.
- It is essential to correct the democratic deficit currently besetting the Community. More democracy is preferable to greater powers.
- On the question of extending Parliament's powers, and in particular the codecision procedure (Article 189 of the Treaty), the Commission welcomes the elements introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, although, in the final analysis, this Treaty weakens the Commission's role.

While Parliament's position is improved, the procedures referred to in the Treaty are nevertheless highly complex and relate only to a limited number of areas of competence.

422.31

441.214

43.02

The role of Parliament is strengthened under the Treaty of Maastricht largely in terms of its relations with the Commission: Parliament may not only "censure" the Commission - it also has the "power of investiture".

All the institutional improvements introduced by the Maastricht Treaty are still not enough to correct the democratic deficit, although the role of the national parliaments is redefined.

Two features can be traced right back to the Treaty of Rome and the Single Act: supranationality and intergovernmental trends.

The Maastricht Treaty consolidates these two features, strengthening the Community aspects in the case of the first "pillar" and extending the intergovernmental approach through the two others.

The Commission welcomes the fact that the Hänsch Report advocates the Community way, rather than integration on the basis of intergovernmental cooperation.

The Commission is also pleased that the Hänsch Report calls for a genuine executive institution. Although the Commission will no longer have the exclusive right of initiative, it should at least be able to act as co-initiator.

The Hänsch report states that even the first stage of enlargement (to include the EFTA countries) will require fundamental institutional changes. The Commission and the European Council do not share that view: together they reached the conclusion (Lisbon, July 1992) that this first enlargement could go ahead on the basis of existing provisions, including those of the Maastricht Treaty and especially Article O. Moreover, Article O does not distinguish very precisely between "technical" adjustments and those with a wider significance.

The reasons for setting a deadline of 1996 for a new intergovernmental conference relating to the application of the Maastricht Treaty is to permit a reassessment of the structures established by that Treaty, rather than to evaluate the institutional implications of enlargement of the Community.

In fact, there is no formal reason why the date should not be brought forward so that a debate can be held at intergovernmental level on the institutional implications of enlargement.

The Lisbon Summit imposed two conditions to be met before official negotiations on the accession of EFTA States could begin:

- 1. ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and
- 2. adoption of the Delors II Package.

The Commission cannot predict what will happen if these two preconditions - and especially the first - cannot be met by the scheduled date of 1 January 1993.

The various Community bodies must therefore take a decision on this question and Parliament certainly has a contribution to make to this discussion.

- On the topical question of monetary problems, it is Mr Andriessen's personal opinion that the operation of the EMS should be discussed with a view to making it more efficient.
- A "two-speed Europe" is already in force in the monetary sphere, in that the EMS offers three separate possibilities:
  - full membership
  - full membership with a wider margin
  - non-membership.
- Rapid progress needs to be made on ratification in all the Member States. The Danish "no" is not only a problem for Denmark but affects the interests of all Member States. Consequently, a solution must be found which satisfies the interests of all the States.
- The spirit of the principle of subsidiarity is already to be found in the Treaty of Rome and the Single Act. It must be applied through the Maastricht Treaty in such a way that it does not prejudice the political direction of European integration.
- The Delors II package was conceived in the context of the Maastricht Treaty. If this Treaty is not ratified, or if ratification is delayed, a multiannual financial perspective must still be agreed in good time, since, even without the Maastricht Treaty, the Commission insists on the need for better cohesion within the Community which must be taken into account in the new financial perspective.
- The Commission welcomes the Hänsch Report's suggestions for arrangements whereby Central and Eastern European countries could be "associated" with certain specific aspects of European Union. While observing that a more precise definition of these arrangements was needed, Mr Andriessen pointed out that some of the suggestions made at the time, and particularly "affiliated" status for these countries vis-à-vis the European Union, corresponded exactly with the thinking in the Hänsch Report.

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