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**PRESSE-MEDDELELSE  
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**INFORMATION A LA PRESSE  
INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA  
MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

brussels, 23 May 1979

STATEMENT BY VICE-PRESIDENT NATALI ON GREECE'S ACCESSION TO

THE COMMUNITY

With the entry of Greece the Community takes on a more truly European dimension, for Greece is the cradle of the European civilization from which the Community itself is sprung.

The Community started out as a common market, but it owes its development to the fact that it is based on democratic and cultural values which have been our common heritage since the days of antiquity. It is therefore with great pleasure that it welcomes the people of Greece into its fold.

It so happens that two events of major historical significance for Europe will fall within the space of two weeks: the signing of the treaty of Greece's accession to the Community, and the first direct elections to the European Parliament. These events are a measure of the Community's vigour and ambition. From now on, the people of Greece will be taking part in a process of unification of Western Europe - the creation of a union which respects the cultures and legitimate interests of the different peoples that form it, a union of nations requiring a steadfast moral and political commitment. Without such a commitment the integration process will lose momentum, come to a halt and eventually be reversed.

I am sure that these risks are theoretical. The peoples of the Community and the people of Greece know that the process of European integration, however slow and difficult, is the only real hope for Europe's political future.