

**UDENRIGSMINISTERIET**

**EUROPAUDVALGET**  
Alm. del - bilag 873 (offentligt)

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Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges formandskabets  
hvrdebrev til det uformelle møde i Det Europæiske Råd den 16. april 2003 i  
Athen.

(Unofficial translation)

Athens, 11 April 2003

At the Copenhagen European Council, we successfully completed the accession negotiations with the 10 candidate countries and we set the goal to sign the Accession Treaty in Athens, on April 16<sup>th</sup> 2003.

The Greek Presidency has completed in time the drafting of the Accession Treaty, in accordance with the relevant procedures by the institutions of the Union. I, therefore, have the honour and the pleasure to invite you in Athens for the historical event of the ceremony of the signature of the Accession Treaty. The enlarged Union guarantees a future of peace, stability and prosperity for its members and neighbours.

I seize the opportunity of our meeting in Athens, to hold a discussion on issues pertaining to the Convention, which was initially planned for the spring European Council.

Consequently, in the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30, we shall meet with the President of the European Parliament, Mr P.Cox and at 10:00, with the President of the Convention, Mr Giscard d'Estaing, who will present us with his report on the progress of the deliberations of the Convention.

As the Convention has reached the final and decisive stage of its deliberations, I propose, in agreement with President Giscard d'Estaing, that we express our views on the following five main institutional issues:

- how to ensure a greater continuity in the presidency of the European Council and the other formations of the Council
- the size and the composition of the European Commission (after the enlargement to 27 members)
- the nomination and the powers of the President of the Commission
- the nomination and the powers of an eventual "Foreign Minister"
- the role of an eventual formation (Conference/Congress), composed by representatives of the national parliaments and of the European Parliament.

This meeting will finish at 12:00. At 13:00, a lunch will take place at Zappeion Hall/Aigli, attended also by the Foreign Ministers.

I deemed it useful that the three candidate countries, which are not included in the present enlargement, be present at the ceremony of signature. The ceremony will take place in the Stoa of Attalos, close to

the Acropolis, in the afternoon of the 16<sup>th</sup> of April, at 15:15, in accordance with the organizational arrangements, of which you have already been notified. We have planned for short addresses by the 25 Heads of State and/or Government, as well as by the Presidents of the European Parliament and the European Commission. Upon conclusion of each speech, the two plenipotentiaries will proceed to the signature. At 17:30, we will gather for the family photograph. In the evening of the same day (April 16<sup>th</sup>), at 22:00, we will sit at the official dinner at Astir Palace Hotel/Vouliagmeni, near Athens, offered by the President of the Hellenic Republic in honour of Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers.

The following day, April 17<sup>th</sup>, I convene the European Conference in Athens, at the level of Heads of State and/or Government. Thus, we fulfill a commonly agreed commitment.

The European Conference will take place at Zappeion Hall, at 10:00. I considered this occasion appropriate for the members of the Conference to express their views on the relations of the enlarged Union with its neighbours. An invitation is extended to all states, whose participation is provided for by successive Conclusions of European Councils, including Switzerland, the EFTA countries, those of the Stabilization and Association Process, Ukraine and Moldova. I also considered useful to have Russia among us. Given the number of participants, it is my intention to have our discussions assisted by an informal text of the Presidency, which has been communicated to you. The European Conference will have only a morning session. At 12:15, we will meet for the family photograph. A lunch will follow at Zappeion Hall/Aigli, at 13:45, attended also by the Foreign Ministers.

I have invited to the European Conference, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, who has accepted to attend and to address the meeting.

I look forward to seeing you in Athens, so that you may participate in these important events for our countries and for the future of Europe.

Costas Simitis  
President of the European Council

