

Greece and the European Union: The Greek Approach to the Intergovernmental Conference

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RÉSUMÉ

Cet article examine le rôle de la Grèce pendant la conférence intergouvernementale européenne. L'auteur présente la perspective grecque sous une série de questions telle, la dimension sociale de l'Europe, de développement de ses institutions et la politique étrangère et de sécurité commune. Il conclut que la Grèce contribue positivement à sa façon à la construction de l'Europe.

ABSTRACT

This article examines the role that Greece played during the European Intergovernmental Conference. The author gives the Greek perspective by asking a series of questions on Europe's social dimension, the development of European institutions and Common Foreign and Security Policy.

I. Introductory Remarks

On the eve of the 21st century, the European Union (EU) faces acute challenges, demands and controversies caused by the sweeping changes, especially since 1989. During this period, the Treaty on European Union (the Maastricht Treaty), in force since 1993, was a major step forward in the construction of the European edifice.

The series of problems, however, that arose during the ratification of the Treaty on European Union, coupled with the failure to cope effectively with mounting social problems, such as rising unemployment, social exclusion, environmental degradation and lack of economic cohesion, have demonstrated the Treaty's limitations. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that greater priority was given to single market and single currency issues than to real convergence and social cohesion.

In order to discuss these other issues, an IGC was scheduled for 1996. As a result, the IGC took place in a climate of intense social pressure stemming from the citizens' lack of trust *vis-à-vis* the complex European edifice and evident inability of the Union to intervene effectively for the preservation of peace and establishment of a stable system of security and co-operation in Europe. This has revealed the weaknesses of the EU system of external action, and has undermined the credibility of the

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Treaty on European Union and, by extension, of the Union itself. The lack of transparency and the insufficient democratic character of some policy- and decision-making procedures of the system have also contributed to the alienation felt by many of Europe's citizens towards European institutions and policy choices.

As a result of the above developments and circumstances, a considerable segment of the population in the member states has begun to question European integration, while challenging the usefulness of certain institutions, policies and procedures.

Within its immediate external environment, the EU does, however, enjoy a high degree of appeal and acceptance. This is confirmed by the declared wish of all the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as a number of the European Mediterranean countries (Cyprus, Malta), to become full-fledged members of the EU as soon as possible. The Union represents for these countries the institutional framework within which they aspire to safeguard their external security, to increase their economic and social well-being and to consolidate their democratic political institutions.

The question of expansion is a challenge that should be met positively. Still, it must be ensured that future expansion will not alter the institutional and political character of the Union.¹

II. Greece and the IGC of the EU

The content of the Maastricht Treaty, along with its form, foundation and orientation, has fallen under heavy criticism. It is generally accepted, that the Treaty did not take into account the new circumstances on the continent after the international system changed form in the late 80's. The Treaty has also ignored the crucial influence of the European economy. Neither did it reflect the needs of the general public; hence the average European citizen remained largely unaware of what the Treaty really meant.

The IGC served as an exercise to find new approaches and solutions on institutional problems in the Union. All problems did not find a solution, but, on the other hand, progress has been achieved in many areas, notably progress on the common currency.

Greece stands as a unique case among the member states of the EU in almost every respect. A peripheral country of the EU, Greece is geographically situated at the Union's extreme south-eastern part. Besides being the member furthest from its centre, Greece is also the only country that has no common border with any other EU member.

Furthermore, Greece is located in a turbulent region, the Balkans,² surrounded since 1989 by her neighbours, who are in a stage of nationalistic turmoil. In fact, the crisis in Yugoslavia has evolved into a major destabilising factor for all of Europe. However, Greece's position within a fragile environment does not depend only on the Balkans but also on the critical situation in the Middle East. Yet another factor is that Greece remains the only EU-member state which feels an intense external threat to its national sovereignty and territorial integrity.³

Crucial to understanding the situation is the fact that Greece is surrounded by countries with different régimes and cultures. This fact of life really creates communication problems with nearby countries. This reality not easily understood by the country's partners in the E.U., as they live in a different more stable and homogeneous environment.⁴

The fragile environment and potential threat compel the Greek government to spend 7% of its GDP, or the highest percentage of all EU members, on military expenditures. Within the EU context, Greece is the country with the lowest level of development in terms of *per capita* GNP, facing at the same time important structural problems. Since Greece's accession to the Union, the country's economy has steadily diverged from the European economy.⁵

Furthermore, Greece has a distinctive pattern of historical and political development rather different from that of the rest of Europe. In cultural terms, it is the only EU member state that participates in two cultural formations, the Western liberal tradition and the Eastern orthodox tradition.⁶ Nevertheless, Greece, by virtue of its classical cultural heritage, is entitled to the name European more than any other member state.⁷

The evolution of the Greek attitude towards European integration is also unique. In 1961, Greece was the first country to become an associated member of the newly established European Economic Community (EEC). Its association status with the EEC was frozen following the imposition of a dictatorial regime (junta) in 1967. After the return of democracy in 1974, Greece also restored its relations with the EC. The Greek government, after long and tedious negotiations, opted for full E.C. membership in 1975. Greece joined as the tenth member in January 1981. Still, accession to the EC was not a consensual choice for the major opposition party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), which came to power ten months after the country's accession to the EC.

During the first decade of membership, the issue of accession turned from rather divisive to strongly consensual. Following three EC Greek presidencies, the principal political forces in national politics, as well as the public at large, with the exception of the Communist Party (KKE),

had turned in favour of the European Community. The strong support fueled efforts for greater political and economic integration, including the goal of full EMU. One example is the overwhelming majority with which the Maastricht Treaty was ratified by the Greek Parliament. Despite great difficulties, the Greek public has demonstrated exceptional support in order to achieve the criteria of economic convergence set out in the Treaty for the country's participation in the second phase of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in 1999.⁸

Greece's keen pro-integrationist attitude is directly related to the actual and perceived gains the country has obtained due to membership in the European Community. This was, to a large extent, expected from the conservative government which insisted that Greece become a member of the EC as soon as possible. Indeed Greece has achieved considerable gains:

– Greece has gained considerably from the flow of the financial resources from the Community budget, that amount now to almost 5 per cent of the annual GNP of the country,

– Greece has strengthened its regional position, increased its bargaining power in its international relations and, last but not least, enhanced its political status and ability to deal with its traditional adversaries.⁹

Nonetheless, Greece still encounters severe problems in adjusting its economy to the EU environment and specifically to the criteria for the second phase of the EMU. Nevertheless, there are certain aspects of the country's foreign policy position that create tensions with its partners in the EU. These issues explain to a certain extent the reasoning that occasionally makes the country appear a heretic to mainstream European thinking. Still, Greek governments have supported the deepening of European Union even towards a federalist structure.

III. The Greek Approach to the IGC

Greek governments, in general, have followed an increasingly strong pro-European policy since 1984, as seen in Greece's positions in its affairs within the European Community.¹⁰ This is a new approach, since the various Greek governments never decided on a shift in policy toward the EC up to 1984. The policy shift served to increase funding obtained from EC structural funds to enhance the policy of the country's participation in major EC projects.

Greek governments played a crucial role in achieving agreement on the Single European Act in defining the regulations agreed upon as part of the Single Market (1992), as well as in concluding the Maastricht agreement. It had become a common belief in Greece that the ever-broadening scope of co-operation in a vast range of sectors was in the country's interest.

Such was the case of Greece's participating actively in the drafting of the Single European Act with the concept of cohesion and economic convergence between member states. Later on, Greece contributed to drafting the European Community's Social Charter. The Greek Commissioner, Vasso Papandreou played a significant role in the drafting of the Social Charter of the EC, which was part of the negotiations in Maastricht. The concept of Social Area in the EC was the main objective of the Second Greek Presidency of the Community (July-December 1988). Another important contribution was the idea of Yannis Kranidiotis, Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1994, to suggest a Reflection Group, which played a crucial role in preparation of the IGC in 1996.

All the above indicates that Greek governments had discovered that the European Community was not only a structural fund, but mainly a forum where political ideas, platforms and initiatives could be discussed. This attitude steadily created a pro-European profile. Successive Greek governments soon realised that the country was able to use the Community to promote its own interests as well. This concept became policy subsequently followed by both Conservative and Socialist governments.

This is the case with regard to achieving economic convergence with the other member states and reaching the criteria for entering the second phase of the EMU. None of the major parties would like to be responsible for having left Greece behind the other members of the EU or having left the country out of the EMU all together.

Facing a challenging era in Europe, Greece seeks its place and role.¹⁰ The country's answer to the question 'What kind of European Union for Greece?' leads unequivocally to the following type of EU:

- evolving towards the direction of deeper integration;
 - democratically structured with legitimized institutions that will guarantee the institutional equality of all members;
 - prepared with strengthened common policies and actions;
- and sufficient economic resources that will contribute to the strengthening of social cohesion, social justice and solidarity and lead to a «Europe of citizens, development and democracy», and a Community of Law;

Overall this is an EU open to the world and capable of protecting its member-states' and citizens' security and independence.

In particular, Greece wishes Europe to have a strong political and social identity built upon the values of democracy, respect for national identity, cultural particularity, solidarity, cohesion and tolerance. For Greece, political union is a comprehensive set of goals which includes the

development and adjustment of EU institutions, common policies and resources. In addition, the Union's endowment with adequate means, resources and policies is a prerequisite for the successful completion of the forthcoming expansion.¹²

Expansion to the East will be facilitated by the progress of the candidate countries themselves, as well as by the timely increase of the EU's own resources. The same applies to the reform of basic Union policies, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)¹³, which is driven by the logic of fund-saving beyond the adjustments required by the new World Trade Organisation (WTO) régime.

The IGC provided member states with a good chance to prepare the Union to enter the 21st century with confidence. Hence the Greek approach consisted of the following main objectives:

1. Evolution of the European Union towards a pattern of deeper integration built upon the principles of democracy, solidarity, cohesion and social justice, i.e. *development of «A Europe of Citizens»*.

2. *Enhancement of the European Union's «Social Dimension»* through policies, actions, means and resources designed to solve social problems, especially unemployment and economic cohesion, as well as that of real convergence.

3. *Development of the Union's Institutional System*, so that it becomes more democratic at all levels and more effective in decision-making on the basis of institutional equality for all member-countries.

4. *Endowment of the Union with an efficient Common Foreign and Security Policy* and, ultimately, defence policy, capable of safeguarding the independence, security, external borders and territorial integrity of the Union and its member-states and contribute actively to the preservation of peace and stability, conflict resolution and crisis management.

5. *Enhancement of Co-operation in the Sectors of Justice and Home Affairs* in a way that intergovernmental co-operation between the member states will produce better results in areas directly affecting the free movement of persons, the security of the Union's citizens as well as police and judicial co-operation.

Of course all these objectives haven't been met but significant progress has been achieved. Furthermore, *Active participation, transparency and subsidiarity* remain the keys to gaining support for the EU's goals from the citizens of its member states. Let us now discuss these issues in detail.

1. Active Participation

The most serious challenge facing the European Union is that an increasing number of its citizens question the relevance of the goals and content of European integration.

For Greece, the citizen's active participation in the integration effort constitutes the basis of the EU's legitimization, its «raison d'être». Without the active support of the societies, the member states and their citizens, the European Union will be unable to achieve its goals. Therefore, the European Union should take substantial measures towards solving these problems and allow the citizens to participate actively in the integration process.

The revised Treaty should include provisions that aim to:

-Strengthen and enhance the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Greece supports the incorporation - in the revised Treaty - of a Catalogue of Human Rights or, alternatively, the Union's accession to the Convention on Human Rights.

-Enrich the Treaty with a catalogue of basic social rights, as provided by the European Social Charter and the Protocol on Social Policy.

-Include in the Treaty specific provisions prohibiting any form of discrimination and explicitly condemning racism and xenophobia.

(Enrichment of the Treaty's provisions on equality between men and women and including special actions in favour of disabled persons and other disadvantaged social groups.)

(Enrichment of the Treaty's references to European citizenship, by the expansion, among others, of the catalogue of associated rights.)

2. Transparency

Respect of the principle of transparency should be a fundamental principle of the Union. Democratic procedures are inconceivable without it.

Although the principle of transparency constitutes a legal principle stemming from the Union's law in effect, its explicit enshrinement in the new Treaty would constitute a clear step forward. In addition to increased transparency in the operation of the Union's institutions, consolidation of the Treaties into a single text and legislation simplified to make it easily comprehensible to the average European citizen, will help it regain the lost support of its citizens and reduce the distance between them and Union institutions.

3. Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity must be maximized, as the means of defining how the EU competencies should be applied. Subsidiarity, a fundamental organisational principle ensuring that decisions are made as close as possible to the citizen, should be used as an instrument for strengthening the role of the citizen, the local authorities and the regions within the integration process.¹⁶

V The European Union's Social Dimension

The Union is currently experiencing an acute 'legitimacy' crisis. In order to overcome this crisis the Union should evolve into an institution that makes a positive contribution in solving the day-to-day problems faced by its citizens. Institutional and procedural adjustments, simplifications and clarifications may be important, but these cannot become a substitute for positive action on the part of the Union. This should be manifested through actual policies.

The European Union, therefore, can only win the support of society if it develops visible, credible and effective policies, as well as means and actions needed to achieve basic economic and social objectives in these cases.

1. Social Policy

A revised Treaty should balance the promotion of full Monetary Union with the goals of economic and social development, promotion of a higher level of employment, social protection, as well as improved living standards, as provided for by Article 2 of the Treaty. This is a tall order. Efforts to achieve nominal convergence must not lead to a fracturing of cohesion and solidarity between the Union's member-States. Greece's constant pursuit should be the reduction of inter-regional inequalities through the further promotion of policies of economic and social cohesion, employment and social protection, and through the Union's common policies. Thus, economic imperatives should be balanced with socially acceptable objectives and values.

Greece is in favour of strengthening of the EU's broader social protection policy. A major contribution in this direction would be the incorporation of the social rights included in the Social Charter and the Social Protocol, in the revised Treaty. The new Treaty should formally establish a minimum level of social protection, regulation of employment relations and social welfare in favour of disadvantaged persons and social groups.

2. Employment

The serious problems of unemployment, joblessness and social exclusion have worsened to the point where they threaten the social fabric of the Union's countries. It is imperative to find the means and methods to combat these problems effectively.

Greece would favourably consider the introduction of greater co-ordination in the E.U.'s social actions and the formulation of a more active employment policy than what is currently in place. The Union should further strengthen its strategy on employment, as decided by the European Councils of Essen, Cannes and Madrid. This strategy is based

on a combination of macro-economic policies and structural interventions in labour markets, aiming at the creation of new jobs.

Greece supports the introduction of a special chapter for the promotion, at Community level, of employment issues, in the new Treaty. The establishment of an Employment Committee or the use of Structural Funds to finance employment objectives should be considered as policy actions for the future. National employment policies, however, should be kept sufficiently flexible, as the unemployment problem differs from country to country.

3. New Policies

To help combat the current economic and social problems of its citizens, the European Union should proceed to develop new policies, taking into account the principle of subsidiarity. More specifically, Greece supports the addition of new Titles in the revised Treaty concerning *civil defence, energy, tourism, environment, the union's island regions, public health, culture* and the need for a *demographic policy*.

With regard to *civil defence*, the Greek side proposes an assistance mechanism for member-states hit by natural calamities or disasters as a further expression of solidarity between member states, and a tangible way for the E.U. to come closer to the citizen.

In the field of *energy*, Greece attaches importance to the definition of a «European Energy Policy». Greece stresses the need to add provisions concerning the security of supplies, to associate energy with the goal of cohesion and to include references to the environment, energy conservation and use of renewable sources of energy.

For Greece, *tourism* is a sector that heavily contributes to the international recognition of our common cultural heritage by Europeans being better acquainted with each other and to their common European identity. At the same time, it represents a major economic activity, greatly contributing to the Community GNP and employment, especially in areas with significant seasonal fluctuations in economic activity.

In terms of environment, Greece intends to propose certain amendments promoting sustainable development in the implementation of the environment policy and of encouraging environmental research and technological development. Greece also supports the inclusion of a specific reference to Environmental TransEuropean Networks in Title XII.

A goal to which Greece attaches particular importance is the inclusion in the Treaty of provisions on the Union's *Island Regions* as regions of special cultural, ecological and social significance. The EU's current structural policy has not managed to provide satisfactory solutions to the problems of isolation and economic fragility of such areas, since

inequalities between mainland and island regions of the Union appear to be constantly growing. There is an imperative need to bring exceptional means and considerable efforts to support these areas. If the particular disadvantages these areas are facing are to be overcome and if they are to make full use of their natural wealth and human resources on equal terms with the Union's other regions.

Greece is in favour of strengthening the Treaty's provisions on *Public Health*. This will make possible the adoption of binding acts aimed at the introduction of minimum standards in this area, taking due account of the particular conditions prevailing in each member-state.

Greece will seek improvements regarding the provisions on *culture*, a fundamental common element of the European identity. The development of such provisions must continue to respect and promote the Union's variety of cultures. In addition, Greece considers self-evident the maintenance of the principle of equality of languages in the Union.

Special care will be required for the formulation of a *demographic policy* which will address the problem of low birth rates and an aging population — phenomena with negative repercussions on Europe's social security systems.

VI Development of the Institutions of the European Union.

There is an imminent need to reform and develop the institutional system of the European Union so that it is more democratic, efficient and transparent, while also capable of facing the challenges of the future enlargements.¹⁵ In light of the Political Union's prospective development, Greece's goal must be to provide the EU with institutions that are transparent, democratically structured and capable of making decisions and solving problems efficiently.

The development and adjustment of the institutional system must be based on certain basic principles, such as the following:

- institutional unity and equality of all member states through the reinforcement of a single institutional framework,
- preservation of the basic institutional balance, as this has been shaped by Treaties and historical experience, and
- preservation of the institutional, legal and political *acquis* of the European Union.

The respect of institutional unity and equality dictates, *inter alia*, the avoidance of institutionalised forms of «differentiated» or «flexible» integration, which under any guise or form would introduce permanent discriminations among member states and upset the basic principles of institutional equality.

Greece is opposed to the institution of provisions which would lead to

the fragmentation of the unification process. The notions of «differentiated» or «flexible» integration, of a «multi-speed» Europe, or of a «hard core» Europe cannot be accepted by Greece. These notions are dangerous to the extent that they may lead to new divisions and antagonisms in Europe.

Greece believes that the method of «temporary transitional provisions» which is provided for in the Treaty and has been successfully tested is the answer to the problems posed by the need for deepening of the unification and enlargement processes. This is the method which ensures the unity of goals as well as institutional unity and contributes to the cohesion of the European Union without hindering the acceleration of unification.

VII Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

During the last forty years, the contribution of the European Union to peace and stability in Europe has been significant. Nevertheless, as the Yugoslavian and other recent crises have indicated, the E.U. lacks both the instruments and clearly-defined objectives to deal effectively with the new situation which has arisen on our continent, as well as outside it, after the end of the Cold War.

The EU's external action should aim at upholding the values constituting the essence of European integration and contribute to the security of the continent and its periphery through the prevention and elimination of potential sources of crisis.

1. Common Foreign Policy

A framework for the conduct of a Common Foreign Policy among the Union members is now essential. This should include, as a minimum prerequisite, the recognition, respect, and guarantee of the provisions of international law and treaties. This framework will constitute the single legal system of the CFSP. Within this context, CFSP actions might be undertaken on the basis of statutory principles agreed upon by the institutions and member states of the E.U.

A genuine CFSP presupposes a clear definition of general principles and objectives, having as a guide the gradual formulation of common basic interests, and the development of practical measures of an institutional and procedural nature which will contribute to the deeper «communitarisation» of the current CFSP system and render CFSP capable of protecting the territorial integrity and external frontiers of the EU.

The provisions of the Treaty on European Union concerning CFSP led to high expectations, yet at the same time caused deep disappointment due to their shortcomings. In Greece, it is generally believed that the lack

of political will, essential to the formulation of common positions and the undertaking of common actions, and the actual pillar structure, with all the ensuing defects. Hence Greece supports the concept of bringing the so-called second pillar closer to the first, that is to say, its partial communitarisation. Nevertheless, this would imply:

—more consistency and coherence in all aspects of the Union's external action,

—wider participation of the institutions, and

—inclusion of all CFSP expenditure in the Union's budget, allowing for the possibility of recourse, in exceptional cases, to national contributions.

The creation of an Analysis and Planning Unit is equally essential to an effective CFSP. Such event is proposed within the framework of the General Secretariat of the Council, along with the participation of the member states and Commission. This Unit would contribute greatly to the formulation of common assessments and approaches concerning the problems which at present are still subject to a variety of national approaches and interests. The functioning of this Unit will help promote the achievement of a consensus.

A more effective implementation of a CFSP will require affording wider competencies to the European Commission, while the role of the Council's Secretariat will need to be reinforced. The objectives of CFSP should be clearly defined and broadened to include:

—respect of human rights and democratic freedoms,

—guarantee of the EU's external frontiers and territorial integrity, as well as the adoption of a solidarity and mutual defence assistance clause¹⁶ and

—contribution of the Union to ensure the prevention of conflicts and to seek the consolidation of stability, particularly in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean basin.

In the case of Greece, the shaping of such a security environment is very important as it will facilitate the transfer of substantial resources from the defence area and will further social and economic goals. In other words, there is a clear trade-off between the reinforcement of common security and promotion of cohesion.

Of course given the instability and insecurity in its surrounding region, Greece is obliged to spend a disproportionate share of its national resources for national and collective security purposes. As a percentage of its GNP, this share is the highest in the Union. Unlike the vast majority of member states, therefore, Greece has been unable to reap the so-called «peace dividend».

Decision-making in this key sector is exclusively based on the rule of unanimity. The extension of qualified majority voting to the second pillar

in issues which do not affect the vital national interests of the country should be considered in the light of the shape that this pillar will assume, as well as the degree of solidarity demonstrated. But it should also be based on the adoption of the aforementioned goals. Other means of Union's external action could be examined, provided that the institutional integrity, the coherence of EU policy and the equal status of the member states is not endangered.

2. Common Security and Defence

Common Foreign and Security Policy should be complemented with a common defence policy and common defence in order to become credible, effective and capable of facing the new threats and challenges that have emerged after the end of the Cold War. Since this policy will be complementary rather than antithetical to that of the Atlantic Alliance, NATO remains the key stone to the European security system.

In view of the need to develop an EU defence identity, the Western European Union (WEU) should be incorporated gradually in the E.U., according to a specific timetable. Greece supports the conclusion of a binding agreement between the EU and the WEU (i.e., for as long as the latter functions autonomously), on the basis of which the W.E.U. will be obliged to carry out duties and missions assigned to it by the Union.

In any case, defence policy should be formulated within the institutions of the European Union. For this purpose, it will be necessary to provide for meetings of member states' Ministers of Defence in the framework of the Council.

VIII Concluding Remarks

Greece is simultaneously a member of the European Union and a geographic part of the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Greece can play a major political and economic role in these two areas. Greece's ultimate goal is to integrate the Balkan countries into the European institutions, and to enhance significantly the co-operation of the EU with the Mediterranean countries. At the same time, there is a major effort to combine Greek and EU interests in all sectors.

With reference to Greece's aim regarding the Intergovernmental Conference, Greece has been able to play a significant part in this exercise and contribute in its own way to the future of Europe.¹⁷ However, the Greek government would like better relations with its partners and allies regarding its interests, especially the problems in its external relations. To this extent, Greece would expect more understanding and support from the European Union.

Greece, like other member states, has not been in a position to find perfect answers to all the questions asked by the IGC. A federal

organization like the European Union is an attractive option for Greece. The answer, to the challenges and crisis confronting the European Union can be summed up in the promotion of the political union. This is attractive not only for reasons of philosophical preference, but also for reasons associated with the country's geography and its position within the Union.¹⁸

While supporting the federalist approach, the Greek government will not overlook or ignore each member state's 'particular conditions'. In the case of Greece, this term has been overly used, something that automatically stirs up reaction. Nevertheless, Greek particularities do exist.

Still, the main intention of Greece is to achieve a better balance of rights and obligations for all member states. Greece has finalized the positions which it will advocate during the IGC. Most of which are summarised below!

The role of the European Parliament must be strengthened; here the process of 'co-deciding' has to be simplified and further expanded. The European Parliament must also have a greater say in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and in the Co-operation on Justice and Home Affairs. The Parliament should also have greater control over the work of the Commission and should participate more actively in the appointment of the latter's members.

Having carried out these measures, the Commission will enjoy greater status, due to the fact that its appointment will legitimize its power, thus enabling its members to undertake a more active role, not only in the EU, but also in the Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as in the Co-operation on Justice and Home Affairs.

Furthermore, the EU field of competence of the should be expanded, in particular culture, education, consumer protection, transport, tourism, and energy, should be given more attention.

Protection of the territorial integrity of the European Union is an issue which should also receive more attention through the building of the appropriate mechanisms for safeguarding and preserving peace. These mechanisms should be included in the objectives of the Common Foreign Policy. Furthermore, the Western European Union should be incorporated into the framework of the Common Defence Policy. This is a very important issue for Greece and it definitely requires careful examination. Issues of defence are quite delicate; not to mention the fact that there are different positions regarding EU and its relationship with the United States and NATO.

There is also the need for an effective decision-making mechanism. Greece will support the principle of equality between member states.

While essential in the European Parliament, the population criterion, cannot apply as easily to the Council. If unanimous decisions are difficult to achieve within an enlarged Union, the Greek government does not overlook the fact that, the country will be confronted with divergences between the common and the national interest for several years to come in the course of integration. In the field of external policy, therefore, Greece should examine the possibility of invoking vital interests.

Greece is in search of allies and common ground among its partners in order to improve its position within the European Union. The country's target is to be able to play a significant role in constructing the new Europe. Within this context, Greece aims to ensure the institutional, political and economic conditions necessary for the EU's successful enlargement to Cyprus, Malta and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Greece is part of Europe for better or for worse and its partners should show the necessary solidarity. Greece contributes to the political operation and physiognomy of the European Union and has always contributed to the joint effort of European unification.

NOTES

1. The promotion of the integration process, the unity and effectiveness of the institutional structure, the preservation of the «acquis communautaire» and «finalité politique» and the achievement of economic and social cohesion should be heavily safeguarded.
2. The Balkans were characterised since the First World War as the "powder-keg" of Europe.
3. The most significant external threat to Greece's interests comes from Turkey. The continued occupation of the northern part of Cyprus, the Army of the Aegean Sea turned against the Greek Islands, and the Turkish claims in the Aegean Sea consist a clear and permanent proof of the hostile position of Turkey towards Greece.
4. For a brief but good analysis, see Yannis Kranidiotis, **Foreign Policy and European Union**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Antonis Sakkoulas Publications, Athens, 1994, pp. 7-17, (in Greek).
5. The per capita GNP of Greece, which in 1980 stood at 58 per cent of the EC's average, dropped to 52 per cent in 1992.
6. Greece is the only orthodox member state of the European Union.
7. See the interesting analysis of Nikolaus Wenturis, "Political Culture", in Panos Kazakos and P. C. Ioakimides (eds.), **Greece and EC Membership Evaluated**, Pinter Publishers, Guildford, 1994, pp. 225-237, (in English).
8. The only exception to this policy are the affairs related with Greece's foreign policy.

9. See "For a Democratic European Union with Political and Social Content" Part I, (*Greece's Contribution to the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*), Compiled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ATHENS NEWS AGENCY, Feature Stories, No. 59, April 17, 1996, (in English).

10. The new enlargement is unlikely to provide the political and economic benefits anticipated by the candidate countries, if it results in alterations to the «acquis communautaire» and the E.U. policies, or ends up impeding decision and policy-making.

11. The Common Agricultural Policy will have to continue obeying certain fundamental principles, like the unity and organisation of the markets, recognition of the multi-dimensional role of farmers, definition of prices and specification of the accompanying measures, including the establishment of the system of direct income support, aiming at securing a sufficient income for farmers.

12. Subsidiarity should not be used as a means to alter the «acquis communautaire», to renationalise Community policies, to retard the development of the Union, or as a means to expand unduly the Union's competencies.

13. See "For a Democratic European Union with Political and Social Content" Part II, (*Greece's Contribution to the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*), Compiled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ATHENS NEWS AGENCY, Feature Stories, No. 60, April 19, 1996, (in English).

14. Currently, the status of Member State of the Union does not provide clear guarantees for its security. This fact constitutes a serious lacuna for an entity that presents itself to the outside world as a "Union",

15. See the speech of Christos Papoutsis, in Stelios Perrakis (ed.), **The European Union After the Intergovernmental Conference in 1996, The Role and the Position of the Small and Medium, in Respect of Population, Member States**, Nea Synora Publishers, Athens, 1996, pp. 31-37 (in Greek).

16. For a good analysis, see the speech of Yannis Kranidiotis, in "The Future of the European Unifying Process, Perspectives of the Intergovernmental Conference of 1996", **Research Papers**, No. 31, Hellenic Center for European Studies, May 1995, pp. 2-14, (in Greek).

17. See the speech of Michalis Papayannakis, in "The Future of the European Unifying Process, Perspectives of the Intergovernmental Conference of 1996", **Research Papers**, No. 31, Hellenic Center for European Studies, May 1995, pp. 29-37, (in Greek).

18. See B. Vila Costa, "The Legalised Contribution of the Small and Medium, in Respect of Population, Member States to the Integrated European Systems", in Stelios Perrakis (ed.), **The European Union After the Intergovernmental Conference in 1996, The Role and the Position of the Small and Medium, in Respect of Population, Member States**. Nea Synora Publishers, Athens, 1996, pp. 137-146, (in French), and A. Maurer, *ibid*, pp. 147-162, (in English).

CHRONOLOGIE-CHYPRE

Période du 1er octobre 1997 au 31 mars 1998

1er octobre: Célébration du trente septième anniversaire de l'indépendance de la République de Chypre

12 octobre: Réunion de la Commission parlementaire mixte Chypre - Union Européenne

10 - 12 novembre: Richard Holbrooke, émissaire spécial du président des Etats-Unis effectuée à Chypre sa première visite

12 - 13 décembre: Conseil européen de Luxembourg qui décide de lancer le processus d'adhésion de la République de Chypre à l'Union européenne

23 décembre: Déclaration à Washington du Premier ministre turc estimant que la décision du Conseil européen de Luxembourg conduira probablement à la partition de Chypre

8 janvier: Déclaration du Premier ministre britannique Tony Blair: «Il n'y a pas de pré-conditions pour l'adhésion de Chypre à l'UE»

8 - 15 février: Election du président de la République de Chypre au suffrage universel (Glafcos Cléridès, président sortant)

Premier tour: Iacovou 40,61%, Cléridès 40,06%, Lyssaridès 10,59%, Galanos 4,04%, Vassiliou 3,00%, Koutsou 0,91%, Rolandis 0,78%

Deuxième tour: Cléridès 50,80%), Iacovou 49,20%

Nouveau gouvernement

Iannis Kassoulidès, *Ministre des Affaires étrangères*

Christodoulos Christodoulou, *Ministre de l'Economie et des finances*

Dinos Michailidès, *Ministre de l'Intérieur*

Iannakis Omirou, *Ministre de la Défense*

Lycourgos Kappas, *Ministre de l'Éducation et de la Culture*

Léonidas Iérodiakonou, *Ministre des Communications et des Travaux Publics*

Nicos Rolandis, *Ministre du Commerce, Industrie et Tourisme*

Costas Thémistocléous, *Ministre de l'Agriculture, Ressources Naturelles et Environnement*

Andréas Moshoutas, *Ministre du Travail et de la Sécurité sociale*

Nicos Koshis, *Ministre de la Justice et de l'Ordre public*

Christos Solomis, *Ministre de la Santé*

Christos Stylianidès, *Porte parole du gouvernement*

Georges Vassiliou est nommé chef de la délégation chypriote chargée de mener les négociations d'adhésion à l'UE

30-31 mars: Ouverture officielle des négociations d'adhésion de Chypre à l'UE

CHRONOLOGIE-GRECE

14 octobre: Protestation des autorités grecques après une série de violations de l'espace aérien hellénique par l'aviation militaire turque

3 - 4 novembre: Réunion à ééraklion en Crète des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de huit pays balkaniques (Albanie, Bosnie, Bulgarie, FYROM, Grèce, Roumanie, Turquie, Yougoslavie).

23 novembre: Inauguration à Thessalonique par le Président Stéphanopoulos d'un monument à la mémoire des victimes de l'éolocauste

11 décembre: Le ministre grec de la Culture, Evangelos Venizelos annonce la prochaine modernisation du Musée archéologique national d'Athènes dont le cout sera de milliards de drachmes

31 décembre: L'inflation qui était de 7,5% en 1996 a été réduite à 4,7% en 1997

9 janvier: Visite à Athenes du ministre francais des affaires étrangères éubert Védrine venu plaider la cause de la Turquie qui souhaite s'intégrer à l'UE

23 février: Le ministre grec des affaires étrangères Théodore Pangalos en visite au Caire désapprouve la coopération militaire de la Turquie avec Israël

13 mars: La Grèce demande l'adhésion de sa monnaie, la drachme au Système monétaire européen, première étape devant mener à son adhésion à l'euro qu'elle souhaite adopter le 1er janvier 2001

14 mars: Message solennel à la nation du Premier ministre Costas Simitis qui annonce une dévaluation de la drachme de 13,8% et un plan d'austérité économique