

Statement by Giulio Andreotti (Luxembourg, 17 February 1986)

Caption: On 17 February 1986, in Luxembourg, Giulio Andreotti, Italian Foreign Minister, emphasises the position of the Italian Government in relation to certain provisions of the Single European Act (SEA).

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Statement made in The Hague on 28 February 1986 on behalf of the Italian Government by Mr Andreotti, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr President,

At the moment when I am about to sign on behalf of the Italian Government the Single European Act drawn up by the Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Community, I should like to ask you to have the following statement included in the records of the Conference:

“The Italian Government has always considered and its own actions have been based on this conviction that the Intergovernmental Conference to amend the Treaties of Paris and Rome should represent an historic opportunity for relaunching the process of European integration on the basis of the “acquis communautaire”, the Solemn Declaration of Stuttgart on European Union and the conclusions of the Dooge and Adonnino reports, and that this should be done in keeping with the spirit and method of the draft Treaty on European Union adopted by the European Parliament.

Italy has indicated the following priority objectives for joint action: the creation of a large market comprising an "area without frontiers"; the general adoption of majority voting in Council decisions and the simplification of the relevant procedures; the strengthening of the institutional framework, with particular reference to the conferral (as provided for in the Dooge report) of joint decision making power on the European Parliament; the broadening of the Commission's powers of management and implementation; extension of the scope of the Treaty of Rome to new spheres of activity.

The Italian Government will continue to pursue these objectives, convinced that their achievement will enable the European Community to meet the needs of our peoples. We are supported in this by the fact that these objectives are shared not only by the European Parliament but also by many Member States and by the Commission.

An objective examination of the results of the Intergovernmental Conference shows that the Single European Act is merely a partial and unsatisfactory response to the need for substantial progress in the direction indicated by the European Parliament and by the reports of the Dooge and Adonnino Committees.

As regards the powers of the European Parliament, the Act provides for a double-reading system which does not constitute the joint decision making power sought by the European Parliament and the Italian Parliament.

As to the commitment to achieve the internal market by 31 December 1992, I would point out that this objective is hedged around by a whole series of exceptions and derogations which reduce its effect considerably.

Moreover, the introduction of majority voting for Council decisions has been confined to a few Articles of the Treaty, with exceptions and the possibility of derogations in extremely important sectors.

Lastly, just as the significant progress hoped for in the field of European Economic and Monetary Union has not materialized, so has there been a failure to extend Community jurisdiction to extremely important areas of European life such as culture, health and the fight against terrorism, organized crime and drug abuse.

The Single European Act does not therefore represent the realization of that fundamental reform of the European Community for which the Italian Government has been striving and which was desired by the national parliament, in line with the suggestions put forward by the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

The Italian Government considers that the Intergovernmental Conference which took place following the European Council meeting in Milan was neither able nor willing to take advantage of the opportunities open to it for enabling our Community to make a genuine, qualitative leap forward. It can therefore do no other

than express its deep dissatisfaction. Italy intends to use the opportunity afforded by the signing of the Single European Act to reaffirm its determination to work to ensure that the limited reforms agreed upon are not only applied in full but in addition, and above all, that they are carried out in a progressive manner. In this connection, taking up the requests made by the European Parliament to the Governments of the Member States, the Italian Government calls on the current Presidency of the Council to initiate amendment of the Council's Rules of Procedure without delay so as to make a vote possible when it is requested by the Commission or three Member States.

In addition, the Italian Government calls on the Governments of the Community countries to take the necessary steps to ensure that by 1 January 1988 all the Community institutions carry out an examination of the implementation and operation of the decisions adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference with the aim of verifying their validity and expanding their scope, especially as regards greater participation by the European Parliament in the legislative process, so that the planned reform of the European Community can go ahead.

Lastly, the Italian Government wishes to make clear that it will take all possible steps to make citizens, parties and sections of opinion more aware of the problems involved in European Union and of the best ways of achieving it”