

Resolution 962 (1991) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (23 April 1991)

Caption: On 23 April 1991, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe expresses its concern at some of the consequences of the single market due to be established on 1 January 1993 and calls on the Twelve to implement the European Economic Area (EEA).

Source: Council of Europe - Conseil de l'Europe. Assemblée parlementaire-Parliamentary Assembly. [EN LIGNE]. [Strasbourg]: Council of Europe - Conseil de l'Europe, [12.12.2003]. Disponible sur <http://assembly.coe.int/documents/adoptedtext/>.

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Publication date: 22/10/2012

RESOLUTION 962 (1991)1 on "1992", Europe and the world - Consequences of the completion of the European Community's internal market

1. Among the momentous events in current European history, few match the determination of the twelve member states of the European Community to complete their internal market by the beginning of 1993 - with as its most important results the free movement of people, services, goods and capital, as well as a harmonisation of the competitive environment.
2. The European Community's "1992" project constitutes a means for economic growth and for reinforcing Western Europe's dynamic development. The objectives of integration policies have led economic and political decision-makers to concentrate more intensely on the issues at hand, have led to structural adjustment and have spurred trade negotiations, as well as a wave of domestic and foreign investment.
3. Fears persist, however, in Europe and beyond, in particular in the United States of America, of a "Fortress Europe" after 1992, engaging in protectionist practices under the strain of its own integration and for reasons of immediate political and economic expediency. Such apprehension continues to be felt, indeed grows, despite the pledge in the 1957 Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community that it should "contribute ... to the progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade" and despite recent commitments to creating a "partnership Europe" with the outside world.
4. The "1992" project will bring its greatest advantages to the citizens of the European Community and to the world if it combines internal integration with a maximum of co-operation with, and openness to, the Community's European and non-European partners, in accordance with the multilateral trade system of GATT.
5. The economic cohesion of Western Europe will be strengthened through the enlargement of the internal market to include also the EFTA countries. The resulting European Economic Area (EEA) will provide an attractive means for many countries of participating in a major European market, one which is different from membership of the Community.
6. The abolition of trade barriers in the European Economic Area and the general liberalisation of international economic relations cannot but have long-term benefits for the countries concerned. The daily life of consumers and producers is likely to improve. After transitional problems have been mastered, enhanced economic growth is likely, accompanied by the creation of new employment and increased well-being on the part of the countries in the European Economic Area.
7. More immediately, however, integration will entail restructuring costs whose material, social and psychological repercussions should be carefully examined in order to prevent the economic sectors most directly concerned from being destabilised.
8. The Assembly emphasises that the completion of the European internal market should not be allowed to deepen the divide in Europe, and that the Council of Europe, to which all Community and EFTA countries belong, has an important new pan-European role to play in promoting greater cohesion and unity among the countries of Europe, and in building a "European Democratic Area" across the continent, not least within the CSCE context.
9. The Assembly, in conclusion :
 - i. encourages the European Community :
 - a. to study in greater depth the transitional effects of integration in order to permit the economies involved to adapt gradually in areas of major change, thus avoiding any calling into question, at national or regional

level, of the plan to complete the internal market;

b. to step up information to Community citizens as regards the practical consequences of an evolution whose effects on daily life are poorly understood;

c. to stand by its traditional commitment to open trade and to avoid having recourse to protectionist practices against outside countries in order to achieve further integration;

d. to aim, in the forthcoming EEA treaty, at the creation of a dynamic European Economic Area satisfying both its own need for inner cohesion and the legitimate interests of its partners;

e. to promote more balanced trade relations with developing countries, and to enhance co-operation aiming to improve their social and economic conditions;

f. to respect at least those requirements for a socially just society which are laid down in the Social Charter of the Council of Europe;

g. to examine whether the aims referred to in paragraphs 8 and 9.ii.b in this resolution can be better realised if the European Community as such accedes to the Council of Europe, as called for in the European Parliament's resolution of 11 July 1990 and in the Parliamentary Assembly's Recommendation 1139 (1991) on the institutional role of the Council of Europe in a continent aspiring to greater unity;

ii. calls on the European Community and the EFTA countries :

a. to establish as close economic relations as possible with the other European countries, by opening their markets and by offering them increased assistance in modernising and reforming their economies, thereby favouring the emergence of a real awareness of the need for a greater Europe of solidarity;

b. to make full use of the Council of Europe as a privileged joint forum not only between EFTA and European Community members in fields like legal co-operation, culture, education, environmental protection, employment and social matters, but also with the rest of Europe, and in particular countries in its central and eastern parts, for co-operation in the political domain and in the fields of politics, democracy and human rights.

1. Assembly debate on 23 April 1991 (3rd Sitting) (see Doc. 6408, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, Rapporteurs: Dame Peggy Fenner and Mr Flückiger).
Text adopted by the Assembly on 23 April 1991 (3rd Sitting).