

Statement by Andreas Cappelen (Brussels, 30 March 1971)

Caption: On 30 March 1971, the new Norwegian Foreign Minister, Andreas Cappelen, reiterates his government's commitment to bringing the accession negotiations under way with the European Communities to a successful conclusion as soon as possible.

Source: Archives historiques de l'Union européenne, Florence, Villa Il Poggiolo. Dépôts, DEP. Franco Maria Malfatti, FMM. Élargissement. Négociations pour l'adhésion des pays candidats, 05/01/1971-12/01/1972, FMM 47.

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Statement by the Foreign Minister at the Ministerial meeting in Brussels on 30th March, 1971

Mr. Chairman,

Let me first of all express my sincere thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues, for your kind willingness to rearrange the meeting schedule of the Council in order that this extraordinary ministerial meeting with Norwegian ministers could be held today.

You will all be aware that there has recently been a change of government in Norway. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to emphasize that my Government considers a participation in the efforts to bring about greater unity in Europe as a matter of great importance. We will actively seek to bring the negotiations which have been initiated with The European Communities to a successful conclusion.

Norway is heavily dependent upon world development, a fact which has made it both natural- and necessary for us to take an active part in international cooperation. Many of those trends in the development which play a great, and most likely increasing, role in my country, are trends which to a considerable extent are also experienced by other industrialized countries. This applies for instance to structural changes in the economic life, the tendency towards increased internationalization of important sectors of the economy, to urbanization, and to the increasing pollution of water and air. Many of the problems caused by these trends cannot be solved by the national states individually. Nor do the traditional forms of international cooperation seem to be adequate to deal effectively with all these problems. The Norwegian Government will advocate increased and obliging international cooperation, in order that countries can better solve in common some of the most important problems of our time.

In this connection we consider the establishment of The European Communities creates an opportunity to introduce democratic decision-making processes into the field of international cooperation. In the individual democratic national state large groups of the population are already exerting a substantial influence on decisions of importance to them. It is important that the interests of these groups can be effectively taken care of also through International organs. I should like to point out that my Government, in dealing with our relationship to The Communities, will attach a decisive importance to the claim that adequate and stable conditions be secured for the large population groups, the employees, the farmers and the fishermen.

My Government hopes that the negotiations and the clarifications with The Communities will confirm that the goals we have set ourselves in our national policies are in accord with the goals on which the operation of The Communities are based. We attach great importance to the achievement of constantly better and more stable living conditions, not least for those who today are least well-off. Our aim is to secure full employment, and we regard the reduction of social inequalities as a major task. We wish to extend the democratic processes to increasingly wider sections of the society. My Government would like to stress the importance of ensuring that democratically elected institutions can effectively govern the development of the society, and this also at international level, based on a sense of solidarity between the groups concerned.

Irrespective of the outcome of the present negotiations developments within The Communities will have great effects in Norway. Through our application for membership we have expressed a wish to participate in these developments.

At the Ministerial meeting on 22nd September last year, the Norwegian Foreign Minister made a declaration on behalf of the government then in power, in which he accepted the Treaties of The Communities, and their political objectives, as well as the decisions taken since the entry into force of the Treaties and the options adopted for the future development of The Communities. On behalf of my Government I confirm that this acceptance will continue to be the basis for the Norwegian negotiations.

Prior to our Parliament reaching its final decision, it is foreseen that a consultative referendum will be held. In this context all aspects of Norway's relationship to The Communities will be deliberated.

I should in this connection like to recall that at the said Ministerial meeting the Norwegian representative, while accepting the general rule that problems should be solved by the way of transitional arrangements, at the same time made certain reservations, inter alia with regard to problems which Norway has in the field of agriculture and which will have to be negotiated.

At the same Ministerial meeting The Communities on their part recognized that Norway had special problems in the fisheries sector. I would like in this connection to recall the statement then made by the spokesman of the Communities that The Communities were prepared to recognize, in due course, the attention which it will be appropriate to ascribe to the problems faced by Norway in the fisheries sector. I will come back on this under the item on today's agenda concerning the common fisheries policy.

It will appear from statements made by the previous Government and from the documentation which The Communities have received from the Norwegian delegation, that it is of vital importance to my country to arrive at satisfactory solutions with regard to the problems related to agriculture and fisheries. My Government is of the opinion that a solution of the problems in these sectors is a pre-requisite for Norway's full participation in European integration. If the pattern of population settlement in Norway which is desired shall be secured, it is a necessary condition that these two industries can enjoy a satisfactory development. In many remote regions few, if any, alternative possibilities of employment exist, and a reduced activity within agriculture and fisheries would therefore undermine the very basis for the existing settlements.

Despite unfavorable climatic, topographic and structural conditions, the average standard of living for Norwegian farmers is relatively satisfactory. This is due to a deliberate policy based on national solidarity, which, by means of extensive transfers of revenue, ensure that these groups benefit from the economic progress of the society as a whole. We presume that it will be possible to continue to pursue such a policy of equalization also within an enlarged Community. My Government confidently believes that the necessary solutions to this problem can be found in the course of the current negotiations.

It is not necessary today to recapitulate those problems which arise for us in connection with The Communities' rules for free movement of capital and non-discriminatory rights of establishment. I shall limit myself by merely referring to the views previously put forward by the Norwegian delegation.

My Government, however, would like to emphasize the importance of the aim contained in the Treaty of Rome that The Community will conduct an economic policy with a view to ensuring a harmonious development of The Community as a whole, with increased stability and a balanced expansion coupled with a rising standard of living. It is a pre-requisite for us that, through membership in The Community, we will be able to secure full employment, economic growth, greater stability in price-levels and a fair distribution of the national income in our country. We regard the economic and monetary cooperation within The Community as a part of the efforts to realize these goals.

We have noted with satisfaction that among the objectives of The Communities, importance is attached to regional policies. In addition to support given to the development of regions with a non-differentiated industrial pattern a balanced development of all parts of an enlarged Community can only be achieved through cooperation with a view to avoiding an excessive economic concentration in particular regions. We assume that this requires not only a national, but a joint Community effort in order to avoid an excessive concentration of industries within limited geographic areas.

Norway naturally attaches particular importance to the expansion of the close cooperation which exists with Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden. Thus we already possess a common Nordic labor market. It is of great importance that the Nordic market created through EFTA be maintained. We are pleased to note, that The Communities have also set themselves as a goal to prevent the re-establishment of tariff barriers and other obstacles to trade which have already been removed. Through the negotiations with the countries applying for membership and with the other countries within EFTA, solutions must be found which will secure continued free trade between the Nordic countries.

Norway belongs to Europe. This is based both on economic, cultural and general political factors. We have

one of the most outward-oriented economies in Europe. But it is also necessary for us to be politically outward oriented and engaged in order to be able to participate in decisions of importance to us.

We support an enlargement of The European Communities also because we wish Europe in this way to be able to make substantial contributions to the solution of important international problems, such as combating poverty in the world. Through joint action the European countries ought to have greater possibilities to make a significant contribution to the cause of peace as well as to the economic and social progress in the world as a whole.

It is on this basis, Mr. Chairman, that my Government intends to negotiate for Norwegian membership within an enlarged Community.