

## Address given by Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the meeting with the candidate countries (Copenhagen, 28 October 2002)

**Caption:** On 28 October 2002, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Danish Prime Minister and President-in-Office of the Council of the European Union, welcomes the European Union applicant countries and outlines to them the outcome of the Brussels European Council held on 24 and 25 October.

**Source:** Danish EU Presidency's meeting with the candidate countries. [ON-LINE]. [Copenhagen]: The Prime Minister's Office, Denmark, [20.06.2005]. Available on

<http://www.stm.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=6&n=0&h=6&t=14&d=1232&s=2>.

**Copyright:** The Prime Minister's Office, Denmark

**URL:**

[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/address\\_given\\_by\\_anders\\_fogh\\_rasmussen\\_at\\_the\\_meeting\\_with\\_the\\_candidate\\_countries\\_copenhagen\\_28\\_october\\_2002-en-a7a50e3b-4bc8-4f22-979c-d2ae97c94ec0.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/address_given_by_anders_fogh_rasmussen_at_the_meeting_with_the_candidate_countries_copenhagen_28_october_2002-en-a7a50e3b-4bc8-4f22-979c-d2ae97c94ec0.html)

**Publication date:** 05/09/2012

## Danish EU Presidency's meeting with the candidate countries (Copenhagen, 28 October 2002)

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all here in Copenhagen today. The fact that we managed to reach an agreement among the present Member States at the meeting of the European Council on Friday makes it an even greater pleasure.

Our meeting marks the beginning of the final round of the enlargement negotiations for the 10 candidates listed in the Laeken Conclusions. It will also be an opportunity to reiterate that the enlargement process continues after The European Council in Copenhagen for those candidate countries that will not be able to be part of the first round of accession.

I will start by giving you a first hand report on the result of the European Council in Brussels. I will then give the floor to the Commission. Finally, I will invite you to take the floor and give us your first reactions and your thoughts on the process leading up to Copenhagen.

\* \* \*

According to the timetable of the Presidency, the European Council had to decide on three points:

The countries with which the Union can conclude negotiations at the European Council in Copenhagen

The items still lacking in the financial package

The outstanding institutional issues.

I made it clear beforehand that it was of vital importance that the European Council in Brussels reached agreement on all three points in order to be able to conclude negotiations in Copenhagen. I stressed that we needed an offer now so that you, the candidates, should not be placed in a situation where there was no time to negotiate. I underlined that the discussions on the future development of Union agricultural policies must not stand in the way of the historic decision on enlargement.

Therefore, I am happy to be able to confirm to you today that the Union did indeed reach an agreement on all three points.

On the first point, The European Council endorsed the recommendations in the progress reports and the strategy paper by the Commission.

As for Bulgaria and Romania, the Council expressed its support for their effort to achieve the objective of membership in 2007.

As for Turkey the Union welcomed the important steps taken by Turkey towards meeting the Copenhagen political criteria and alignment with the *acquis*. This has brought forward the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey.

In the context of the discussion on the progress reports, the European Council also decided on monitoring and safeguards. On the table was the proposal by the Commission. The European Council agreed to slightly amend that proposal by extending the duration of such safeguards from two to three years.

On the second point, the financial package, the European Council also decided to follow the main elements of the proposal by the Presidency and the Commission.

On direct payments, the European Council decided on the offer proposed by the Commission: That is phasing in beginning in 2004 with 25% and ending in 2013.

On structural and cohesion funds, the Council agreed on a total sum of 23 billion euros. That is, as you will know, somewhat less than the original Commission proposal for a total sum of 25,5 billion euros.

This should, however, also be seen in the light of the fact that the European Council confirmed the principle of budgetary compensation using 2003 as the reference point. This makes it clear that no new member state will find itself worse off in budgetary terms in the years just after accession than in the year before accession.

On the third point, the institutional chapter, the European Council endorsed the agreement reached by foreign ministers last Tuesday.

\* \* \*

As you are all very well aware, reaching an agreement among the 15 member states was not easy. You know the positions before the meeting, I am sure. You know that a number of Member States questioned the need for a decision now. You know that some Member States did not agree to the proposal on direct payments, the sum for structural funds and principle of budgetary compensation. To this you should add the main difficulty - that is the link to the future development of the CAP.

The process leading up to the meeting as well as the meeting itself tells us two things, I believe:

First of all, that the Heads of State and Government of the present EU Member States are indeed responsible leaders and that they do stand by their commitment to finalise negotiations by the end of this year. The press has been full of rumours that this or the other EU Member State was secretly working towards delaying the process. The impression I get from my roundtrip to Member States as well as the meeting in Brussels is completely different. I have experienced a sincere wish by all delegations to stick to the timetable and to make the compromises that are necessary. That is a very encouraging signal.

Secondly, that the room of manoeuvre in the final phase of the negotiations is very limited when it comes to the overall financial package. The European Council confirmed that the ceiling for enlargement set out in Berlin must be respected. And the difficult negotiations leading to the offer on direct payments makes it very unlikely that the European Council in Copenhagen should be able to arrive at another result than the offer on direct payment agreed in Brussels.

I would therefore like to reiterate what I have said to most of you individually on previous occasions: please concentrate less on direct payments and more on other elements such as quotas. Quotas affect the possibilities for production in the future.

\* \* \*

Now we enter the final phase of negotiations. Already tomorrow, my EU ambassador, Poul Skytte Christoffersen, together with the Commission, will embark on a new round of talks with each of your delegations individually trying to identify the key problems for the end game. We need to move forward quickly now. Time is not unlimited. Talks will have to take place in a direct and informal atmosphere focussing on the really difficult political problems. All levels will have to contribute actively. Already in a fortnight, I hope to have a general overview of the key issues for the final negotiations.

To those few who still have not closed all non-budgetary chapters, I would like to reiterate my wish that such problems be solved as soon as possible. We do not have time for individual problems in other areas in the final phase. We would also run into grave difficulties if there was an important move towards reopening chapters that have already been agreed.

In parallel with this political track, let me add that at the technical level the drafting of the Treaty is advancing well. The Treaty should be ready by early 2003. The Presidency and the Commission is also in close contact with the European Parliament to ensure a smooth passage of the Treaty there. I, myself, will

participate in the general debate on enlargement in the European Parliament in 19 November. Everything is being done to ensure that the date of signature in April can be respected.

We look forward to fruitful negotiations in the coming weeks.