

Letter from José Medeiros Ferreira to Georg Kahn-Ackermann (Lisbon, 12 August 1976)

Caption: On 12 August 1976, the Portuguese Foreign Minister submits an application for his country's accession to the Council of Europe.

Source: Archives historiques du Conseil de l'Europe - Historical archives of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex. Political relations with member states, 030 CCN. Political relations with Portugal, 848/030 1951. Portugal, membership of C.E., DE 0313/848.

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Sir,

I have the honour to confirm that His Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic, General Antonio Ramalho Eanes, recently elected by the Portuguese people, assumed his functions on 14 July 1976, before the Assembly of the Republic, which was also elected by universal suffrage.

The Government presided over by the Prime Minister, Mr. Mario Soares, Secretary General of the Socialist Party, won the confidence of the Assembly on 11 August 1976.

The democratic institutions provided for in the Portuguese Political Constitution are already fully operational and the transitional period is over in which the dual goal of democratisation and decolonisation has been reached.

Thus the political conditions in Portugal are such as to meet the requirements under Article 3 of the Council's Statute, which confirms the rightness of the actions of those who – like you, Sir, – have contributed during this period to the excellent relations which have developed between the Portuguese Government and the Council of Europe.

I have therefore the honour to inform you that Portugal would be very happy to be invited to become the nineteenth member country of the Council of Europe.

I believe that Portugal's presence in the very heart of European Institutions will underline the importance my Government attaches to the existence of a strong, united and democratic Europe, contributing thereby to co-operation between peoples and States.

I remain, Sir, etc.,

(signed) José de Medeiros Ferreira
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal