

EFTA  
Akershus

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY  
NOT TO BE RELEASED BEFORE  
14 MARCH 1989. 2000 HOURS.

Prime Minister  
Gro Harlem Brundtland

DINNER SPEECH IN THE HONOUR OF THE EFTA HEADS OF GOVERNMENT  
MEETING IN OSLO, 14 - 15 MARCH 1989.

MR. PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTERS,  
EXCELLENCIES,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IN THE LIGHT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONCERN ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A FUTURE "FORTRESS EUROPE", ONE MAY PONDER ON THE SYMBOLISM OF INVITING YOU ALL TO THIS FORTRESS TONIGHT. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE: TODAY THIS IS AN OPEN FORTRESS. - WHERE IN FORMER TIMES OUR ANCESTORS RESISTED FOREIGN INTRUDERS, WE HAVE TODAY THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF HONOURING OUR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS.

IT IS A SINCERE PLEASURE TO WISH YOU ALL A HEARTY WELCOME TO THIS FIFTH SUMMIT OF EFTA HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WHICH I BELIEVE WILL BE A MILESTONE FOR OUR ORGANIZATION.

THE POLITICAL PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING IS CLEAR: WE WILL STRENGTHEN OUR ORGANIZATION AND PREPARE THE GROUND FOR A BROADENING AND DEEPENING OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

WE ARE DOING THIS AT A POINT IN TIME WHEN THE GLOBAL POLITICAL PICTURE IS CHANGING RAPIDLY.

THE HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IS THE HISTORY OF SEIZED OPPORTUNITIES. AS WE FACE A NEW DECADE, OUR HOPE AND EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY CONTINUE TO GROW.

THE CLIMATE FOR INTERNATIONAL CHANGE IS FAVOURABLE. THERE IS A NEW DEAL IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS, AND FAR LESS TENSION IN MANY REGIONAL CONFLICTS.

MANY OF THE GREATEST INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGES, HOWEVER, REMAIN UNSOLVED. THE 90S MUST BECOME A DECADE OF PROFOUND CHANGES. WE MUST BE READY FOR THAT CHANGE, POLITICALLY AND INSTITUTIONALLY.

WE MUST PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF A FUTURE MARKET COMPRISING NOT 320 MILLION, OR 350 MILLION, BUT OF 700 MILLION PEOPLE IN EUROPE ALONE.

STILL, HOWEVER, THE NORTH-SOUTH GAP IS WIDENING. MASS POVERTY, BLEAK ECONOMIC PROSPECTS AND A DEVASTATING DEBT BURDEN ARE PAIRED WITH ECONOMIC IMBALANCES BETWEEN MAJOR INDUSTRIAL NATIONS.

IN THE 1990S WE NEED POLICY CHANGES THAT HELP RATHER THAN HINDER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN REALIZING THEIR GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS.

ON TOP OF THIS, THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS IS BECOMING MORE VISIBLE FOR EVERYBODY. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A GOAL FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, BUT IT IS STILL FAR FROM BEING REALIZED.

IN THIS OVERALL GLOBAL PICTURE, THE ONGOING DYNAMIC EFFORTS BEING MADE TOWARDS CLOSER EUROPEAN COOPERATION ENTAILS PERSPECTIVES, NOT ONLY FOR EUROPEANS, BUT FOR THE WHOLE WORLD. WE NEED A STRONGER AND MORE ASSERTIVE EUROPE.

OUR POLITICAL VISION SHOULD BE OF A STRONG AND OPEN EUROPE, A EUROPE WHICH CAN SAFEGUARD VITAL EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL INTERESTS, A EUROPE WITH FULL EMPLOYMENT, HIGH-QUALITY SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY, IMPROVED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, CULTURAL VARIETY AND CULTURAL INTERACTIONS, AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE AND, NOT LEAST A EUROPE AT THE FOREFRONT OF RESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND LEADERSHIP.

THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF EUROPEAN CREATIVITY, VERSATILITY AND POLITICAL TRADITION CAN AND MUST BE RELEASED. IT CAN NOT BE THE PROPER ROLE OF EFTA COUNTRIES TO TAKE A REACTIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EC. WE, THE EFTA COUNTRIES, HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN SHAPING THE FUTURE.

OUR ROLE IS AN ACTIVE ONE. AND SO IT SHOULD BE, BECAUSE WE HAVE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAKE. IT SHOULD BE AN ACTIVE ROLE BECAUSE WE HAVE GREAT RESOURCES AND GREAT POTENTIALS.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE INCREASING MOMENTUM MOVING THE INTERNAL MARKET TOWARDS ITS REALIZATION, WE, THE EFTA COUNTRIES, SHOULD BE VERY HONEST WITH OURSELVES: WE MUST ASK: DO WE HAVE THE MEANS TO PURSUE OUR COMMON INTERESTS VIS-À-VIS THE COMMUNITY? DO WE POSSESS THE MEANS AND INFLUENCE AND TO TAKE ADEQUATELY PART IN THE DECISION-SHAPING IN EUROPE?

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT ONCE SAID: " WISE AND PRUDENT MEN - (HE SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THE WOMEN SOMEHOW) - HAVE LONG KNOWN THAT IN A CHANGING WORLD WORTHY INSTITUTIONS CAN BE CONSERVED ONLY BY ADJUSTING THEM TO THE CHANGING TIME".

JACQUES DELORS HAS POSED US SOME VERY STRAIGHTFORWARD QUESTIONS. THIS SUMMIT CAN AND MUST INITIATE A PROCESS THAT WILL LEAD TO A NEW AND MORE EQUAL PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EC. OUR PRIME RESPONSIBILITY IS TO PROVIDE THE POLITICAL IMPETUS SO THAT THE PROCESS AHEAD WILL GAIN THE RIGHT MOMENTUM.

WE CAN LOOK BACK ON CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS. MOST EC-EFTA TRADE FLOWS FREELY ACROSS OUR BORDERS. BUT WE MUST INCREASE CERTAINTY ABOUT TOMORROW. WE MUST SECURE FOR OUR EXPORTERS THE RIGHT TO COMPETE IN A EUROPEAN MARKET ON A MORE SECURE, PREDICTABLE AND EQUAL FOOTING. IT IS VITAL THAT WE RAISE THE CONFIDENCE NEEDED TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

WE MUST BE FIRM IN OUR AMBITIONS. WE HAVE LITTLE ALTERNATIVE BUT TO SEEK FULLEST POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNAL MARKET. YET WE MUST ALSO GO BEYOND THIS TOWARDS REALIZING A STRONGER SOCIAL DIMENSION IN EUROPE, IMPROVED CONSUMER PROTECTION AND AMBITIOUS, RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.

AN ARTIST WILL WORK ON HIS NEXT COMPOSITIONS BECAUSE HIS PREVIOUS ONES DID NOT FULFILL HIS ASPIRATIONS.

WE MUST NOT LOOK INWARDS AND LET WALLS BE ESTABLISHED AROUND US. WE, TOO, MUST LOOK OUTWARDS AND BUILD BRIDGES. NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND INTERNATIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE CAN BE RECONCILED. AS PROSPEROUS AND MATURE SOCIETIES WE HAVE LITTLE TO FEAR AND MUCH TO GAIN FROM INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.

HONOURED GUESTS, MUCH HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT SUMMIT DIPLOMACY. AVERELL HARRIMAN ONCE SAID THAT CONFERENCES AT THE TOP LEVEL ALWAYS ARE COURTEOUS. NAME-CALLING, HE SAID, IS LEFT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS.

NATURALLY, THIS NEVER APPLIED TO OUR FOREIGN MINISTERS, AND CERTAINLY NOT WHEN THEY MEET THEIR EC COLLEAGUES IN BRUSSELS A FEW DAYS FROM NOW WITH A RENEWED MANDATE.

IN CONCLUDING, I PROPOSE A TOAST TO A HEALTHY, FORWARD-LOOKING EFTA, TO A SUCCESSFUL MEETING AND TO THE HEALTH OF OUR GUESTS OF HONOUR, THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE EFTA COUNTRIES AND THEIR DELEGATIONS.