Electricity: common rules for the internal market

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The Council held a discussion on the proposal for a directive on the common rules for the internal electricity market, at the close of which the Presidency drew the following conclusions: 'In accordance with the amended proposals for directives concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and in gas, having consulted the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee and in accordance with the conclusions adopted by the Energy Councils on 30 November 1992, 29 November 1994 and 1 June 1995, the Presidency: 1. stresses the importance of achieving the internal market in electricity in terms of the competitiveness of the industry and economic development; 2. considers that the negotiations on the Directive concerning the internal market in electricity have reached a final stage enabling it to believe that adoption of a common position will be possible at the next meeting of the Energy Council; 3. notes that this progress was made possible by a substantial convergence of the positions of the various Member States and considerable clarification of the operation envisaged for the electricity systems of the Member States and is grounds for viewing the last compromise text of the Spanish Presidency as a valid basis for future proceedings; 4. considers it necessary to give further thought to the consequences of giving distributors rights and obligations similar to those of major consumers, taking account basically of the criteria of market opening, the task of public services, the general economic interest and the possibility of choice for the consumer. In this connection, it is essential that an equivalent and satisfactory degree of opening of the various electricity systems be gradually achieved; 5. notes that work will continue without interruption during the Italian Presidency, which will convene a meeting early in 1996 to discuss the question of the internal market in electricity with a view to achieving a common position'.