The progress achieved by the European Union. Report 1994

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OBJECTIVE: report to the European Parliament by the European Council on the progress achieved by the European Union. CONTENT: the report stresses that 1994 represented a turning point - the year in which the Council endeavoured to specify how the European Community would evolve into the European Union, consolidate Community acquis and prepare the milestones along the path of European development over the next ten years. As far as the implementation of the TEU is concerned, the Council is keen to apply the new provisions which are designed to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the Union, be it the codecision procedure, the principle of subsidiarity or citizenship in its various political and cultural dimensions. The same applies to the chapter on external policy, with the gradual implementation of the CFSP and the development of specific activities on the ground following the adoption of several joint actions or common positions on matters instrumental to peace and stability. Similar efforts are being made with the implementation of "pillar three" (justice and home affairs), although the results are still patchy. In addition to institutional and political aspects, the Council also turned its attention to the development of Community policies, giving priority to the implementation of the programme on growth, competitiveness and employment drawn up in Brussels at the end of 1993. The Corfu and Essen Councils extended the strategy contained in this programme to three priority areas of action: the reform of labour systems, the effective implementation of the trans-European networks and information society skills. At the same time, the Council has turned its attention to the proper working of the internal market, extending the single market principle to new sectors such as energy and telecommunications and continuing in its efforts to adjust sectoral policies. Finally, the Council prepared for the next stage of European development, i.e. the arrival of three new Member States on 1 January 1995, enlargement to the CEECs and Cyprus and Malta and the 1996 IGC on the revision of the Treaties. On the specific point of relations with the European Parliament, the Council noted that the introduction of the codecision procedure involved the creation of new interinstitutional dialogue structures, resulting in the adoption of a number of texts designed to improve collaboration and rationalize relations between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission ("modus vivendi" between the three institutions with regard to implementing measures for acts adopted under the codecision procedure, decision including the modus operandi of Parliament's right of inquiry, interinstitutional agreement on a fast-track procedure for officially codifying legislative texts). The Council enhanced its contacts with the European Parliament by taking part in plenary sessions and committee meetings and responded to the European Parliament's request to be quickly and fully informed of major events in Community life, including within the framework of the CFSP and "pillar three". Finally, the Council stipulated that two European Parliament representatives would take part in the work of the study group in charge of preparing the 1996 IGC.