Cyprus: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

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PURPOSE: presentation of the Commission's opinion on the application by Cyprus for membership of the Community. CONTENT: In its opinion, the Commission does not envisage starting real negotiations on membership until the Cyprus problem has been settled. Without this political settlement, inevitable problems would arise for the adoption of all Community legislation based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (principles which are still not accepted by the whole island). With regard to the economy, the opinion shows that, through the customs union between Cyprus and the Community, this country has showed the ability (in particular in the south) to adapt to Community rules. However, the opinion shows also that the gap in development between the north and south of the island can only be accentuated by the integration of Cyprus into the Community. Nonetheless, and without waiting for a final solution to the Cyprus question, the Commission proposes using the instruments provided under the EEC-Cyprus Association Agreement to ensure the gradual economic, social and political transition of this country with a view to its future membership. For its part, the Community should examine the institutional problem posed by Cyprus in order to enable this country to participate effectively in the Community's decision-making process in relation to its size. In view of the conclusions of its opinion and the impossibility of predicting in the foreseeable future the date of the solution of the Cyprus question, the Commission proposes reconsidering the question of this country's membership in January 1995.