Romania: membership application and partnership, 22 June 1995

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OBJECTIVE: AGENDA 2000: presentation of the Commission's opinion on Romania's request for membership (22 June 1995). CONTENT: All the requests for membership were assessed using a single method based on the criteria established at the Copenhagen European Council (June 1993). These criteria are as follows: - political criteria: the candidate countries must have stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights and respect for minorities, - economic criteria: these countries must have a functioning market economy, as well as the ability to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union, - criteria relating to the ability of the countries to take on the obligations of membership (in particular integration of the acquis, to a greater or lesser extent, and respect for the criteria concerning economic and monetary union). With regard to these criteria the following emerges: 1) in political terms, Romania is on the way to satisfying the criteria for membership, in particular following the arrival in power of a new government; 2) in economic terms, this country would face serious difficulties in coping with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union although its progress in the creation of a market economy is considerable; 3) with regard to the capacity to take on the obligations of membership, despite significant progress Romania has neither transposed nor taken on the essential elements of the acquis, particularly as regards the internal market. There is, therefore, uncertainty on this point even in the medium-term. In addition, considerable efforts still need to be made in the areas of investment, the environment, transport, employment and social affairs, justice and home affairs and agriculture. More generally, substantial reforms will be indispensable if the country is to have (administrative and institutional) structures capable of applying and enforcing the acquis. In conclusion: the Commission considers that accession negotiations with Romania cannot be opened until its has made sufficient progress in the economic sector and with regard to respect for the acquis. The primary objective will therefore be to strengthen the pre-accession strategy.