Resolution on "the strategy of the European Union to prepare for the accession of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, with a view to the European Council in Essen\textsuperscript{1},
30 November 1994

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the communications from the Commission to the Council entitled: 'The Europe Agreements and beyond: a strategy to prepare the countries of central and eastern Europe for accession' (COM(94)0320 - C4-0137/94 and COM(94)0361 - C4-0138/94),
- having regard to the conclusions of the European Councils in Edinburgh (11-12 December 1992), Copenhagen (21-22 June 1993) and Corfu (24-25 June 1994),
- having regard to the outcome of the European transport conferences held in Prague (29-31 October 1991) and Crete (14-16 March 1994),
- having regard to the accession applications already submitted by Poland and Hungary,
- having regard to the interim report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the Committee on Women's Rights (A4-0081/94),

A. having regard to its resolution of 20 January 1993 on the structure and strategy for the European Union with regard to its enlargement and the creation of a Europe-wide order [OJ C 42, 15.2.1993, p. 124.], in which it argues in favour of institutional and structural reforms to strengthen democracy within the Union in order to facilitate its enlargement,

B. having regard to its resolution of 27 May 1993 on developments in East-West relations in Europe and their impact on European security [OJ C 176, 28.6.1993, p. 185.] which clearly emphasizes the political unification of Europe as the cornerstone of a sustainable security policy on equal terms,

C. whereas the aspiring member states in the countries of central and eastern Europe want a strong European Union, partly as an expression of their wish to form part of a Union that is entirely under democratic control; whereas they would have little enthusiasm for a Union impaired by a weakened decision-making structure,

D. whereas the European Council in Copenhagen opened the way for the associated countries of central and eastern Europe (i.e. those linked to the Union by a Europe Agreement) to accede to the Union in due course, as soon as they are able to meet the political and economic obligations arising from accession,

\textsuperscript{1}OJ No. C 363, 19/12/1997, p.0016
E. whereas the European Council in Corfu confirmed this policy and asked the Commission to propose a strategy to prepare those countries for the prospect of accession,

F. whereas there is a need to maintain a balance between the endeavours which the European Union is pursuing with the countries of central and eastern Europe and its commitment to the countries of the Mediterranean region,

G. whereas the European Council in Corfu noted that the next phase of enlargement of the Union would incorporate Cyprus and Malta; whereas Cyprus and Malta must therefore be given an appropriate opportunity to state their views at the Essen European Council; recalling its resolutions on this subject;

H. whereas the same European Council asked the Council of the Union to continue its examination of a draft mandate for the conclusion of a Europe Agreement with Slovenia,

I. having regard to the role the Phare Programme ought to play in the process of transition towards a market economy in the countries of central and eastern Europe,

J. recalling its resolution of 21 July 1994 on the conclusions of the European Council in Corfu [ OJ C 261, 19.9.1994, p. 54.], in which it recommends the extension of the PHARE programme to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, and wishing to see the programme extended to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as and when the minimum conditions necessary are met, in accordance with the specific situation of each republic,

K. having regard to its resolution of 11 March 1994 on further steps towards an all-European transport policy - Measures following the first European Transport Conference (Prague, 29-31 October 1991) [ OJ C 91, 28.3.1994, p. 308.], which formed the basis for the second European Transport Conference in Crete (14-16 March 1994) which expressly stated its wish to be involved in formulating the European Union's foreign policy,

L. whereas the trade liberalization agreements which have just been concluded with the Baltic states are the first step towards their future accession to the European Union, as they will lead to Europe Agreements that will act as an intermediate stage on the way to accession to the Union,

M. whereas the countries of central and eastern Europe now take part in the existing structures of intergovernmental cooperation such as the CSCE, the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Partnership for Peace, which make it possible to avoid the creation of a new rift in Europe, Russia in particular being a member of these various forums at one level or another, as well as being part of the framework for dialogue represented by the Stability Pact process,

N. hoping that the Stability Pact process, a fully operative European Union
joint action, will contribute to peace and security in the region by means of preventive diplomacy,

O. having regard to the close and positive links which the current candidate countries (Austria, Finland, Sweden and Norway) have with the countries of central and eastern Europe,

P. whereas since the Kirchberg Declaration of 9 May 1994 the countries of central and eastern Europe have the status of 'associate partners' within the WEU,

Q. insisting that, in all consideration of the further enlargement of the European Union, the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which historically, culturally and geographically have particularly close relations with some Member States and with the Scandinavian countries due to join the European Union on 1 January 1995, must be regarded as part of central and eastern Europe,

**On enlargement itself**

1. Recalls that the hope and prospect of unifying all the peoples of Europe in a free and democratic system in a 'common European home' was one of the motivating forces for the foundation of the European Community and of the democratic changes in central and eastern Europe;

2. Welcomes the Commission proposal, therefore, to hold a joint meeting with the associated countries, coinciding with the Essen European Council, for the purpose of discussing further constructive steps towards integration into the EU;

3. Stresses that any enlargement of the European Union to embrace the countries of central and eastern Europe requires settlement of the institutional problems connected with the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference, including practical measures such as the extension of its powers and a thorough reform of its procedures and instruments aimed at ensuring that demands, objectives, and decisions can be shaped in a democratic way, be it at the level of decision-making processes, common policies or the financing of the Community budget, so that a larger Union continues to be able to function;

4. Considers in particular that the European Union should not only have a more democratic structure but must also achieve broader support with the general public in order to make decision-making both more effective and more in keeping with the political standards common to the Member States and the applicant countries;

5. Wishes to play an equal part in preparations for the accession of the applicant member states, believes it is necessary to step up the work of the joint parliamentary committees and considers it highly desirable that the
parliamentary committees should be able to confer with delegations from the applicant countries for the sectors for which the committees are responsible, to ensure that accession will take place on a proper democratic basis;

6. On this basis approves the principle of enlargement of the European Union to include the countries of central and eastern Europe, on the understanding that it will examine each application on its own merit, as it has done with previous accessions, and that accession will be dependent on institutional decisions to be taken in 1996 concerning the structure of the Union;

7. Notes the strategy proposed by the Commission to prepare these countries for accession to the European Union, recognizing that it contains a number of positive aspects but also many gaps;

8. Points out, in particular, that Union policy in various sectors must be adapted in order to make accession feasible politically as well as economically, and calls on the Commission to inform Parliament of its views on this aspect;

9. Takes the view that the political unification of Europe through the accession of new democracies and the necessary reforms of the Union should take priority over economic unification through the pursuit of a common market and calls on the Commission and the Council to formulate the conditions of accession for the countries of central and eastern Europe accordingly;

10. Declares that all the countries of central Europe - including the Baltic States - which share the fundamental values and principles of the European Union are entitled to become members, provided they meet the obligations of accession, particularly as regards the establishment of constitutional and democratic structures, civil society, safeguards for human rights and minority rights and the settlement of mutual problems in this area;

11. Believes that, in order to help the associated states to fulfil their obligations, the EU should contemplate the possibility of a differentiated enlargement process and that bilateral conflicts should be resolved by negotiation and not stand in the way of quicker accession for certain states;

12. Further believes that as a prerequisite of an enlargement to central and eastern Europe the European Union needs to enunciate a clear vision of the new democratic and peaceful European order it wishes to see established;

13. Considers that all the countries of central and eastern Europe, including the states of Balkan Europe, applying for accession must first become members of the Council of Europe, whose purpose is to ensure that democratic standards and values are respected;

14. Confirms that the ever-increasing participation of the countries of central and eastern Europe in the structures of intergovernmental cooperation referred to above means that the enlargement of the European Union towards
the east must be accompanied by closer cooperation with the countries of the CIS;

15. Is of the opinion that the aim of enlargement of the European Union towards central and eastern Europe is to strengthen solidarity between countries which share a common history and culture, and that such enlargement must therefore help to establish an order based on the rule of law throughout the continent of Europe, provided that the states concerned are consistent in their wish to belong to a democratic Community, to subscribe to European democratic principles, to be part of an international order based on justice and security, to promote their economic development and to raise the living standards of their people;

16. Reiterates its demand made during the current round of enlargement that negotiations for accession should be based on the acquis communautaire with no opt-outs;

**On ways and means**

17. Approves the development of 'structured relations' between the European Union and the countries of central and eastern Europe, both at meetings of the European Council and the Council of the European Union;

18. Draws attention to the importance of paying due heed, in the context of 'structured relations', to discussion of the basic political aspects of the CFSP;

19. Stresses the need for multilateral dialogue between the Union and these countries, including the strengthening and development of interparliamentary relations, in order to establish the habit of cooperation before their possible entry into the Union;

20. Considers that such dialogue must be based on the provisions of the Union's existing Europe Agreements with these countries;

21. Welcomes the proposals for closer mutual integration of the applicant countries as an essential step towards accession to the Union;

22. Insists, however, that multilateral dialogue and 'structured relations' must not be allowed to undermine the autonomy of the decision-making process within the EU and, in particular, the powers of the European Parliament;

23. Believes that the EU should build on the Europe Agreements to develop more dynamic forms of economic cooperation so as to accelerate the process of economic convergence;

24. Believes that the Commission should draw up a strategy to enable the central and eastern European countries to participate fully in a single currency;
25. Calls upon the Commission to draw up a further report on the budgetary, economic and policy implications for the European Union of the accession of central and eastern European countries; considers that particular attention should be paid to the implications for the workings of the common agricultural policy and the EU's regional policy;

26. Considers it essential to establish a 'structured dialogue' between the Union and the countries of central and eastern Europe as soon as possible so as to obtain appropriate solutions to the difficult problems posed by the integration of those countries into the Union's policies, especially in the agricultural sector;

27. Welcomes the move to draw up a White Paper on the approximation of legislation to enable the countries of central and eastern Europe to join the single market in accordance with a timetable and priorities adapted to the situation in each country;

28. Stresses the importance of transport policy in bringing the nations together and asserts its right to be involved in the development of cooperation between the European Union and the countries of central and eastern Europe as it was in the planning and holding of the European transport conferences; believes that special care must be taken to ensure that expansion in the volume of passenger and goods transport in the latter countries does not inflict irreparable damage on the environment and considers, therefore, that an environmentally acceptable transport policy needs to be devised as a matter of the utmost priority;

**On certain political aspects of enlargement**

29. Encourages all forms of cooperation between the Union and the countries of central and eastern Europe and among those countries in the fields of inter-regional cooperation, improvement of local infrastructure, law and order and the protection of minorities, justice and home affairs, the approximation of legislation, the environment, social policy, nuclear safety and conversion of military production plants, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation and cooperation in the field of training and among universities, small and medium-sized undertakings, and upward convergence of social and economic policy and the level of social protection; considers that existing regional economic and social structures in the prospective applicant countries must be taken especially into account;

30. Calls on the Commission to exercise actively its right of initiative in these areas;

31. Underlines the need to inform women in central and eastern Europe of the situation of women in the Union countries and the European equal treatment legislation and programmes concerning them;

32. Calls on the Member States to provide for specific aid measures in
Community programmes to promote and maintain women's employment in central and eastern Europe, above all by providing for adequate participation by women in the Community programmes (PHARE, TEMPUS);

33. Calls on the European Council in Essen to take the necessary decisions concerning communication and information vis-à-vis the citizens both of the future applicant countries and of the Member States so that they may be aware of their political responsibility towards Europe and take part in the decision-making process of their respective countries on enlargement of the Union;

34. Stresses that the granting of exemptions, such as those concerning accession to the EMU and the Union's social policy, must not be repeated;

35. Urges the Council to consider which elements of the Phare programme could be used to assist the reconstruction of Croatia and especially Bosnia-Herzegovina, and accordingly to take the necessary measures forthwith;

36. Considers it essential that enlargement of the Union towards the east be accompanied by a policy of closer cooperation with the European countries of the former Soviet Union;

37. Considers it essential to back up the strategy of Union enlargement towards the east with a new strategy for the countries of the Mediterranean basin, also taking account of the new opportunities opened up by the Middle East peace process and the current situation in the Maghreb countries;

38. Welcomes in this connection the Commission initiative for a new Mediterranean policy, and asks the Council to step up its activities and relations with the non-member countries of the Mediterranean basin, by providing political guidelines and budgetary funds, and to set up a joint action establishing a forum for dialogue and institutionalized cooperation in the Mediterranean;

39. Asks the Council to provide the necessary funds for the proposed Mediterranean policy;

40. Stresses also that the central and eastern European countries feel the need to consolidate firmly the political and economic reforms they introduced over the period 1989-1990, and that they also hope, for this reason, to accede to the European Union and to join the structures of western security;

41. Considers that the involvement of the central and eastern European countries in the 'Partnership for Peace', their 'associate partner' status within the Western European Union, the prospect of their accession to the European Union, and their full membership of the CSCE could help to bring about security and stability in the region based on international law and respect for human rights;

42. Confirms that the 'Partnership for Peace' is not the response these
countries expected to satisfy their need for security;

43. Takes the view, further, that accession of these countries to NATO, before they join the European Union, would not only be useful for the countries themselves, but would also constitute a factor for security in Europe as a whole;

44. Asks the European Union to support the efforts of the countries of central and eastern Europe to attain peace and security, in particular their efforts to strengthen democracy and the rule of law; considers that projects running under the Phare programme should concentrate on supporting all the democratic forces in the countries of central and eastern Europe;

45. Takes the view that the European Union should continue to encourage the cooperation of all the countries of central and eastern Europe in the economic, political and cultural spheres and develop transfrontier cooperation between those countries and the Member States of the European Union; considers, in particular, that transfrontier cooperation in Balkan Europe will make a crucial contribution to long-term stability in the region, provided that all parties show respect for fundamental democratic values, international law - including the inviolability of borders - and all the basic conditions for achieving peaceful co-existence and good neighbourly relations;

46. Calls on the European Council in Essen to look into the fundamental question of European identity with regard to peace-keeping and defence and to include in this debate the implications of a European Union enlarged to the east of its present borders, and to Malta and Cyprus, the applicant countries in the Mediterranean region;

47. Asks the European Council to specify the target dates it is taking as a guide for the various stages of accession;

48. Insists that in the meantime all the opportunities of the existing association agreements and Europe agreements are used exhaustively;

**On the budgetary aspects of enlargement**

49. Emphasizes that any enlargement of the European Union on the basis of the current Financial Perspective and the Interinstitutional Agreement of October 1993 cannot lead to an increase in expenditure, as the agreed financial framework has been fully utilized;

50. Takes the view that in the event of a change to the association agreements in accession or pre-accession agreements, the financial implications must be examined in accordance with the Interinstitutional Agreement;

51. Maintains, therefore, that - leaving aside non-financial considerations - an enlargement with budgetary consequences can only be achieved after the
Union's own resources have been thoroughly reformed and replenished;

52. Acknowledges that support for the process of reform and reconstruction in the countries of central and eastern Europe is in the particular interest of the European Union and that financial support for these processes in combination with other financial instruments in the context of G 24 is thus a priority area of budgetary policy; calls for an appropriate portion of the additional funds allocated to Category IV following the revision of the Financial Perspective pursuant to Article 24 of the Interinstitutional Agreement to be used for the PHARE and TACIS programmes;

53. Notes that the funding of the reform process in central and eastern Europe already constitutes a priority with approximately 25% of Category IV (External relations), not including aid for the states of the former USSR;

54. Recalls that, in the area of external relations, the European Union has other priority interests and is devising new ones, such as its policy on the Mediterranean region (MEDA), which must also be given adequate funding; any provision of funds for PHARE up to 1999 over and above the share allocated to it in the past would therefore have to be at the expense of the current funding for other programmes such as TACIS and MEDA;

55. Stresses its political commitment to making aid for central and eastern Europe a priority of the European Union's external policy; emphasizes strongly, however, that any medium-term financial planning by the Commission can at best be of an indicative nature, especially if it contains increases over and above present allocations;

56. Welcomes the large number of areas and options for the use of PHARE funds; questions nonetheless the effectiveness of a virtually unlimited spectrum of project options, which would be more likely to cause limited resources to be dissipated than to be used in a focused and efficient manner;

57. Recommends, in view of the impressive number of project options, that funds be concentrated in the following areas: aid for infrastructure, particularly in the field of environmental protection; energy policy, including nuclear safety and environmentally sound means of extracting, processing and utilizing energy resources; promotion of the social market economy by means, inter alia, of continuing training and education; and partnership between local and regional bodies, with the order of these activities and the determination of individual priorities being geared to the main goal of developing and stabilizing democracy;

58. Welcomes and supports the proposal no longer to restrict support for investment to 15% and proposes that the proportion be raised to at least 30% in order to increase the opportunities for participation in multilateral financing projects;

59. Proposes that it be made possible for transnational projects to be
jointly financed by PHARE countries using PHARE funds, as well as cooperation with TACIS; in the areas of transport infrastructure and the environment effective measures can often only be carried out on a transnational basis;

60. Welcomes the comprehensive precautions taken as regards control, monitoring, evaluation and information; calls, however, for more effective measures to ensure that there are consequences in cases of serious deficiencies; calls on the Commission also to draw up comprehensible and verifiable criteria for the process of democratization in central and eastern Europe, which can serve as a yardstick for all concerned for the continued provision of resources;

61. Calls on the Commission to take careful account of the findings of inspections carried out by the Court of Auditors and to draw swift conclusions therefrom, and, in addition, to intensify its cooperation with the Court of Auditors;

62. Calls on the Commission to present a country-by-country analysis of the cost of possible accession by the central and eastern European countries by mid-1995;

63. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parliaments of the Member States and the governments and parliaments of the countries of central and eastern Europe, the Baltic states, Malta and Cyprus.