

Brussels, 8 December 1997 (12.12)  
12891/97 (Presse 378 - G)

**JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

***SIGNING OF AGREEMENTS BETWEEN  
MEXICO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION***

During a ceremony held in Brussels today the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement - "Global Agreement" - between the European Community and its Member States of the one part and Mexico of the other part was signed

**on behalf of Mexico by:**

Mr Angel GURRÍA

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico

**on behalf of the Community by:**

Mr Jacques F. POOS

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign  
Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg,  
President-in-Office of the Council

Mr Manuel MARÍN

Vice-President of the European Commission

**on behalf of the Community Member States by:**

**Belgium:**

Mr Erik DERYCKE

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Denmark:**

Mr Niels HELVEG PETERSEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Germany:**

Mr Klaus KINKEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Greece:**

Mr Theodoros PANGALOS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Spain:**

Mr Ramón de MIGUEL

State Secretary for European Affairs

**France:**

Mr Hubert VEDRINE

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Ireland:**

Mr Denis O'LEARY

Ambassador, Permanent  
Representative

**Italy:**

Mr Lamberto DINI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Luxembourg:**

Mr Jacques F. POOS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Austria:**

Mr Wolfgang SCHÜSSEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Netherlands:**

Mr Hans VAN MIERLO

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Portugal:**

Mr Jaime GAMA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Finland:**

Ms Tarja HALONEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Sweden:**

Ms Lena HJELM-WALLÉN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**United Kingdom:**

Mr Robin COOK

Secretary of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs

At the same time the Interim Agreement on trade and trade-related matters was signed

**on behalf of Mexico by:**

Mr Herminio BLANCO

Minister for Trade and Industrial Development

**on behalf of the Community by:**

Mr Jacques POOS

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign  
Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg,  
President-in-Office of the Council

Mr Manuel MARÍN

Vice-President of the European Commission

\* \* \*

The Parties also signed the Final Act relating to both Agreements which includes a number of joint and unilateral declarations.

\* \* \*

In their speeches at the time of signing, the President of the Council, the Vice-President of the Commission and the Mexican Ministers emphasized that these Agreements opened up a new era in the long-standing relationship between Mexico and the European Union, giving it a long-term outlook.

They noted that in the new Agreements, which went well beyond the Agreement signed in Luxembourg in 1991, both Parties had acquired suitable instruments for developing fully both the political and economic potential of their relationship.

The speakers welcomed the fact that the aims which both Parties had set themselves in the Joint Solemn Declaration signed in Paris in summer 1995 had thus been translated into operational texts.

\* \* \*

The Global Agreement, for which competence is shared, will be ratified on behalf of the European Union by the European Parliament and the Parliaments of the Member States and on behalf of Mexico by the Senate of the Republic. The Interim Agreement will have to be ratified by the Mexican Senate and, since it falls within Community competence, by the European Parliament, and will therefore be able to enter into force at an earlier date. Hence, the Interim Agreement will make it possible, during the ratification process for the Global Agreement, to apply provisions relating to trade and trade-related matters which fall within the Community's sphere of competence.

Adopting the joint declaration in the Final Act will make it possible to conclude, in parallel with the negotiations on trade in goods, negotiations on measures designed to liberalize trade in services, capital movements and payments and measures relating to intellectual property. This will allow simultaneous negotiation of global trade liberalization, both in goods and services.

The main components of the legal instruments signed today are summarized below.

\* \* \*

#### 1. Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement

1. The object of this Agreement is to strengthen existing relations between the Parties on the basis of reciprocity and mutual interest. To this end, the Agreement institutionalizes political dialogue, strengthens commercial and economic relations by means of bilateral, preferential, progressive and reciprocal liberalization of trade in conformity with the rules of the WTO and reinforces and broadens cooperation.
2. Respect for democratic principles and fundamental human rights constitutes an essential element of the Agreement.
3. A Joint Council is established which is responsible for supervising the implementation of the Agreement. It will examine any major issues arising within the framework of the Agreement and any other bilateral or international issues of mutual interest.

The Joint Council will have the power to take decisions in the cases provided for by the Agreement. The decisions taken will be binding on the Parties, which will take the measures necessary to implement them.

4. The Joint Council will institute a regular dialogue in order to intensify and improve cooperation, which will include, in particular:
  - (a) information exchange and the periodic revision of the development of cooperation;
  - (b) coordination and supervision of the implementation of sectoral agreements provided for in the Agreement, as well as examination of the possibility of new agreements of this type.
  
5. As regards cooperation, the Parties will ensure in particular that they:
  - set in motion a dynamic, integrated and decentralized management of industrial cooperation in order to create a climate conducive to economic development,
  - promote investment,
  - ~~cooperate in the financial services sector, in accordance with their laws, regulations and policies and in accordance with the rules and disciplines of the GATS,~~
  - cooperate on small and medium-sized enterprises,
  - cooperate on technical regulations and conformity assessment, customs, information and communications technologies and in the agriculture and rural sectors, in mining, energy, transport, tourism, statistics, government, drug trafficking and related offences, science and technology and training and education, culture, the audiovisual sector, the environment and natural resources, fisheries, social affairs and combating poverty, aid to refugees, consumer protection, health and data protection.

The Parties will also promote activities aimed at developing joint actions by means of regional cooperation, mainly in Central America and the Caribbean, and have agreed to cooperate in the area of human rights and democracy.

In addition, the Agreement includes a future developments clause under which Parties may by mutual consent extend the scope of cooperation in order to raise its level and supplement it by means of agreements on specific sectors or activities.

6. The Parties will make available the appropriate resources, including financial means, insofar as their respective resources and regulations allow, in order to fulfil the cooperation objectives.

The Parties will encourage the European Investment Bank to continue its operations in Mexico, in accordance with its procedures and financing criteria.

7. The Joint Council will decide on the arrangements and timetable for a bilateral, progressive and reciprocal liberalization of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods, in accordance with the relevant WTO rules, in particular Article XXIV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and taking account of the sensitive nature of certain products. This decision will include, in particular, the following matters:

- (a) coverage and transitional periods;
- (b) customs duties on imports and exports and charges having an equivalent effect;
- (c) quantitative restrictions on imports and exports and measures having equivalent effect;
- (d) national treatment including the prohibition of fiscal discrimination in respect of taxes imposed on goods;
- (e) anti-dumping and countervailing measures;
- (f) safeguard and surveillance measures;
- (g) rules of origin and administrative cooperation;
- (h) customs cooperation;
- (i) customs valuation;

- (j) technical regulations and standards, sanitary and phytosanitary legislation, mutual recognition of conformity assessment, certifications, marks systems, inter alia;
  - (k) general exceptions justified on grounds of public morality, public policy or public security; the protection of human, animal or plant life or health; the protection of industrial, intellectual and commercial property, inter alia;
  - (l) restrictions in case of balance of payments difficulties.
8. The Joint Council will decide on the appropriate arrangements for a progressive and reciprocal liberalization of trade in services, in accordance with the relevant WTO rules, in particular, Article V of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and taking due account of the commitments already undertaken by the Parties within the framework of that Agreement.
  9. The decisions of the Joint Council in respect of trade in goods and services will adequately cover all these issues within a comprehensive framework and will enter into force as soon as they have been adopted.
  10. The Joint Council will adopt the measures and timetable for a progressive and reciprocal elimination of restrictions on capital movements and payments between the Parties.
  11. The Parties will agree to the gradual and mutual opening of government procurement markets on a reciprocal basis.
  12. The Parties will agree on the appropriate measures in order to prevent distortions or restrictions of competition that may significantly affect trade between Mexico and the Community.
  13. Reaffirming the great importance they attach to the protection of intellectual property rights, the Parties undertake to establish the appropriate measures with a view to ensuring adequate and effective protection in accordance with the highest international standards, including effective means to enforce such rights.

14. As regards the institutional framework, the Joint Council will be assisted in the performance of its duties by a Joint Committee which will generally meet once a year, in Brussels one year and Mexico the next; the Joint Council may decide to set up any other special committee or body to assist it in the performance of its duties.
15. The Joint Council will decide on the establishment of a specific trade or trade-related dispute settlement procedure compatible with the relevant WTO provisions in this field.
16. The Parties agree to accord a high level of protection to the processing of personal and other data.
17. The Agreement is valid for an indefinite period.

o

o o

II. Interim Agreement on trade and trade-related matters between the European Community of the one part and the United Mexican States of the other part

1. Pending ratification of the Global Agreement, the Parties signed an Agreement which will enable them to implement the provisions of the Global Agreement on trade and trade-related matters as speedily as possible.
2. For that purpose, the Interim Agreement faithfully reproduces those parts of the Global Agreement which fall within the Community's sphere of competence.
3. Hence, a Joint Council is established which will supervise the implementation of the Agreement. It will meet at ministerial level at regular intervals, and when circumstances require. It will examine any major issues arising within the framework of the Agreement and any other bilateral or international issues of mutual interest. It will meet for the first time within 30 days of the entry into force of the Agreement.

The Joint Council will have the power to take decisions in the cases provided for in the Agreement. The decisions taken will be binding on the Parties which will take the measures to implement them.

Decisions and recommendations will be drawn up by agreement between the two Parties.

4. The Interim Agreement also reproduces the clause on democratic principles.

o

o

o

III. The Final Act contains various joint and unilateral declarations by the Parties to the Agreements, in particular:

- (a) The joint declaration by the European Union and Mexico on political dialogue, which is an integral part of the Global Agreement. In the declaration the European Union and Mexico state their view that the establishment of greater political dialogue represents a fundamental aspect of their envisaged economic and political rapprochement.

The dialogue will cover all subjects of shared interest and will aim to open up paths towards new forms of cooperation with shared objectives, including by means of joint international initiatives, particularly in the areas of peace, security and regional development.

The Parties will conduct such political dialogue by means of contacts, information exchanges and consultations between the various Mexican and European Union bodies, including the European Commission.

It will be held, in particular:

- at presidential level;
- at ministerial level;
- at senior official level;
- and by using diplomatic channels to maximum advantage.

The highest authorities of the Parties will regularly hold Presidential meetings in accordance with detailed arrangements to be decided on by the Parties.

Meetings at ministerial level, the detailed arrangements for which will be decided on by the Parties, will take place regularly between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

- (b) In another joint declaration the Parties underline the advisability of institutionalizing a political dialogue at Parliamentary level by means of contacts between the European Parliament and the Mexican Congress (Chamber of Deputies and Senate of the Republic).
- (c) Mexico made a unilateral declaration on Title I of the Agreement, in which it states that its foreign policy is founded on the principles enshrined in its Constitution:

Self-determination of nations

Non-intervention

Peaceful settlement of disputes

Prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations

Legal equality of States

International cooperation for development

The struggle for international peace and international security.

Given its historical experience and the supreme mandate of its constitution, Mexico expresses its full conviction that only the full observance of international law is the foundation of peace and development. Mexico declares, likewise, that the principles of coexistence of the international community, as expressed in the United Nations Charter, the principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and democratic principles, are the permanent guide of its constructive participation in international affairs and are the framework for its relationship with the Community and its Member States, governed by this Agreement, and for its relationship with any other country or group of countries.