COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

# PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 1 February 1995 (07.02)
4547/95 (Presse 28)

## ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE EUROPE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENTS WITH BULGARIA, ROMANIA AND THE CZECH AND SLOVAK REPUBLICS

Following completion of the ratification procedures by the contracting parties in December 1994, the Europe Association Agreements signed with Romania on 1 February 1993, Bulgaria on 8 March 1993 and the Czech and Slovak Republics ([1]) on 4 October 1993, entered into force on 1 February 1995.

The trade provisions in these preferential agreements designed gradually to establish a free-trade zone had already been implemented by means of interim agreements signed at the same time as the Europe Agreements. Those interim agreements have already made it possible to develop trade and establish a climate conducive to the development of reciprocal economic relations.

The Europe Association Agreements establish close and lasting relations between the partners and contribute in this way to stability in Europe. They were conceived as instruments enabling the CCEE to be fully involved in the process of European integration. The Association thus created is to govern political, economic and commercial relations between the Community and its partners in Central and Eastern Europe.

---

(1) The Agreement with the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic was originally signed on 16 December 1991 at the same time as the Agreements with Hungary and Poland but, following the dissolution of that federal state, separate Agreements were negotiated with the two Republics which emerged therefrom.

It is furthermore pointed out that the Agreements with Hungary and Poland entered into force on 1 February 1994.



Press Office - Rue de la Loi, 175 - 1048 Brussels
Tel. : 285 62 31 - 285 63 19 - 285 68 08 - 285 81 11 - Telefax 285 80 26

The Agreements are based on the principles of respect for human rights, the values of pluralist democracy, the rule of law and the market economy. In addition to the commercial aspect referred to above, they contain an important chapter on political dialogue. Furthermore, these Agreements provide for wide-ranging cooperation covering the movement of workers, establishment and services, current payments and the movement of capital, competition and other economic provisions, the approximation of legislation, cultural cooperation, as well as institutional and general provisions. They also include significant economic and financial cooperation aspects (through the PHARE Programme).

The entry into force of the Agreements will allow all these provisions to be implemented and in particular will make it possible for the first meetings of the Association Councils with the four partners to be held.

It should further be noted that since the Agreements were signed in 1993, significant further steps have been taken in relations with our partners in Central and Eastern Europe. Thus the Copenhagen European Council agreed that the associated CCEE which so desired could become members of the European Union as soon as they were able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required.

At Copenhagen the European Council also agreed to accelerate the Community's efforts to open up its markets and to that end approved certain specific concessions ([1]). It also agreed on measures to increase the effectiveness of aid and encourage economic integration.

The Essen European Council also decided to impart new dynamism and improved quality to the process of bringing the CCEE closer to the European Union and adopted a comprehensive strategy to help prepare those countries for accession, in the knowledge that the institutional conditions indispensable for the proper functioning of the enlarged Union must be created at the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference before the accession negotiations can begin.

---

(1) The Council also authorized the Commission on 22 December 1994 to negotiate additional protocols with Bulgaria and Romania regarding the alignment of the timetables for applying the trade provisions for those two countries on those of the other associated CCEE.