

5/7/95 ES. FINALI  
INT. SIM. INC. → ITA.  
T③ LEGGE: BRADY TL=5'05'  
AS (1995) CR 9 - 26 -

1121/B

Mr MICHAELIDES (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cyprus, Chairman-in-Office of the Committee of Ministers).- For the second and last time during the Cypriot chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers I have the pleasure to present to your Assembly the report on the activities of the Committee of Ministers. Before doing so, I wish to stress how pleased I am with the excellent co-operation that exists between this august Assembly and the Committee of Ministers. I know, Mr President, how much you have contributed over many years to promoting this good climate between both organs of the Council of Europe. Before leaving the Chair, I wish to pay tribute to your continuing efforts to this end. Within this context, allow me to refer to the last meeting of the Political Affairs Committee hosted in Nicosia on 3 April 1995 and let me register our special satisfaction.

The Committee of Ministers has been very active during the past five months in following up our last ministerial meeting in November and of course in preparing for the next one, which will take place on 11 May.

The enlargement of the Council of Europe continues and we were very glad to welcome Latvia among us on 10 February last. In this context, we are paying close attention to the proceedings in your Assembly on the admission of the remaining candidate states following, of course, the pace of their democratic reforms. In this context, last week we were seized of the application for membership of Bosnia-Herzegovina, dated 10 April 1995. The Committee of Ministers is examining it with a view to transmitting it to your Assembly for opinion following the usual procedure.

The principle that enlargement should continue has been accepted by the Vienna Summit. It was further confirmed at our last ministerial session and it reflects the following resolve. First, it will use the Council of Europe as a favoured structure for receiving the former communist countries, particularly those which have no prospect of rapidly becoming members of other European institutions. Secondly, it emphasises the contribution of democracy, human rights and the rule of law to the strengthening of stability and democratic security on our continent.

In the framework of a comprehensive strategy concerning the whole community of European states, the aim is to foster stability and to cement it on the strong foundations of a vast democratic area built on our common values and principles. This means that, with a view to enabling candidate states to join the Council of Europe as soon as possible, we have to intensify political dialogue and co-operation programmes with all of them and target more precisely - both before and after accession - the most important reforms.

This has been one of the principal aims of the Committee of Ministers and its Cypriot chairmanship. It was in that spirit that, in April, our Deputies had an exchange of views with Mr Nicolai Afanassievsky, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia and with Mr Gennadi Udovenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. We are planning another exchange of views with Mr Vladzimir Sianko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belarus in May. Of course, all these exchanges of views should be seen in the context of our global strategy of political dialogue and of co-operation programmes with all candidate states, in order to enable them to meet the standards of the Council of Europe.

01-1221 B fin 6 sim

~~01-1221 B~~