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Athens, 26th of April 1977

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

Following the request by Portugal for accession to the European Communities and in anticipation of a forthcoming request by Spain to the same effect, the question of the enlargement of the European Communities has now become a subject of reflection and discussion. Directly or indirectly the case of Greece is sometimes involved therein, notwithstanding the specific and unique characteristics which make the Greek case different from any other. I feel, therefore, the need to draw your attention on the dangers which such an attitude might imply for my country.

My Government believes that the accession of Greece to the Community at the earliest possible moment is dictated by legal, economic and political considerations which do not apply to any other European country and which I would like briefly to mention here.

a) In accordance with the Treaty of Rome, every request for accession is being considered per se independently from any other similar request. During the recent Conference in Luxemburg on April 5, 1977, the President of the Council of the Community, Dr. Owen, declared to the representative of my Government in order to allay the Greek misgivings, that the Greek case will be considered independently and on its intrinsic merits.

His Excellency,  
Mr. J.M. den Uyl  
President of the Council of Ministers  
of the Kingdom of Netherlands  
The Hague  
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b) The Council of the Communities has accepted as far back as February 9, 1976 the Greek request for accession. And we have no reason to doubt the firmness of the political will of the Nine. This is a policy which corresponds to the promises which were given by the Community during the period of military dictatorship in Greece and which the Greek people readily accepted.

c) The Agreement of Association, signed in 1961, in force since November 1st, 1962, gives Greece the special regime of a country destined to become a full and equal member of the Community. However, the development of our relations within the framework of that Agreement led, for the known reasons, to an obvious economic imbalance. As a matter of fact, our tariff disarmament in the industrial sector on the one hand and the "freeze" of harmonization in the agricultural sector on the other, has created an unfavourable situation for Greece which can only be remedied by her accession to the Community as a full member.

d) Our negotiations with the Community are in an advanced phase. Following detailed investigations conducted by Community and Greek experts, the Community invited us on July 27, 1976 to begin formally negotiations. The Community asked us to accept the "acquis communautaire". We did so. But we pointed out that parallel to that "acquis" there exists also the "acquis" resulting from the Association. I know that the Community believes that accession should materialize within a totally new juridical framework. My Government, nevertheless, believes that, notwithstanding the legal premises we start from, we cannot ignore facts. And in the particular case of Greece, we cannot ignore the uncontested historical fact that we have behind us a fifteen year period of association and interpenetration of our economies. This makes the case of Greece different from any other.

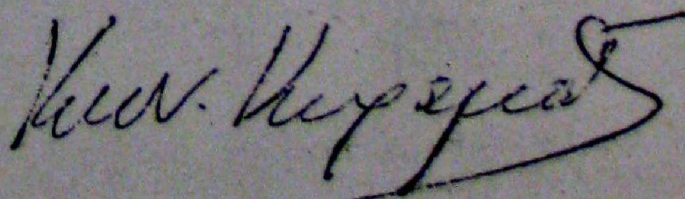


e) Speaking of agricultural problems which might give rise to thoughts among certain member countries, I would like to underline that the total volume of Greek agricultural production amounts to about 6% of the corresponding Community production. Moreover, Greek agriculture, with the exception of a very limited number of products, covers only Greek needs or complements to a small degree the deficits of Community production. In any case, however, it is always possible among friendly countries to find for specific problems mutually agreed solutions of a transitional character.

Under these circumstances, it is obvious what would be the political consequences of a possible delay of Greece's accession. This would only play the game of the anti-democratic forces trying to shake the confidence of the Greek people toward European democracies and hoping to profit, at the expense of the Western world, from the deception which the Greek people would feel, were his hopes to be frustrated. The Greek people has been looking forward for fifteen years to its full participation in the construction of a united Europe. It has politically and economically adapted its outlook to this idea. This cannot be changed without dangerous political and social consequences for my country.

I am certain, Mr. Prime Minister, that you understand the position of the Greek Government, and that you will kindly manifest your personal interest to avert the dangers involved in any linkage of the Greek case with other candidatures, a linkage which will inevitably delay the accession of my country to the Community.

Please accept, Dear Mr. Prime Minister, the assurance of my highest consideration and personal regards,



Constantine Karamanlis