

Concluding statement by the President of the ELDR Federation on the political debates at the XVth Congress in Copenhagen:

1) The ELDR Federation is convinced that it is more urgent than ever to continue on track towards a truly democratic European Union of a federal type, with a European Parliament exercising co-decision-making powers in all areas of Community legislation. The implementation of the Maastricht Treaty provisions, notwithstanding their shortcomings, is necessary because of the creation of a European Economic and Monetary Union, because it enshrines the principle of subsidiarity, leading to a clear-cut division of labour between the different levels of policy. This will further lead to the shaping of a citizen's Europe which must limit its activities to the policy areas which can best be dealt with at European level: we must look for quality not quantity.

The result of the referendum in Denmark illustrates that politicians, wherever they are, must not leave their citizens behind; at the same time the overwhelming positive vote in Ireland should encourage those promoting European Union. That is why the ELDR Federation calls on all its member parties to immediately launch a massive information campaign, explaining the advantages of an ever closer European Union of the citizens.

2) The ELDR Federation is convinced that the European Union must be endowed with the appropriate financial means to ensure cohesion and fulfil the new tasks which will be entrusted to it. In that respect the Federation calls for effective and democratic control of expenditure and warns that an increase in EC means should not automatically give rise to an increase in the overall burden of taxation.

3) The economic and political success of the European Community has attracted many European countries, which have now applied to become full members, or will do so in the foreseeable future. In fact, the European Community serves as a model of integration and as an anchor of political stability, internal security and economic prosperity.

4) The ELDR Federation wants the successful Single Market to be linked with more protection of the environment. For this it wants to further develop the economic and fiscal instruments of environmental policy and gradually achieve an ecological market economy, where sustainability and the internalization of external costs and benefits play a key role.

5) The ELDR Federation is of the opinion that the negotiations for future enlargement should serve as a catalyst for the deepening and democratic strengthening of the European Community. Enlargement must neither endanger the ultimate goal of the Community, nor weaken its internal cohesion.

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All applicant countries must subscribe to the 'acquis communautaire' and to the 'acquis politique' of the Community and the Union, including the political and economic perspectives enshrined in the Maastricht Draft Treaty.

6) The Community must extend its model for liberal free and fair trade, opening its markets, particularly to countries in East and Central Europe, so ensuring their future economic success and strong democratic development.

7) The EC must learn from the tragedy of Yugoslavia and the drama of Sarajevo; failure of the EC to act decisively does not prove Europe cannot work together - it proves we must work together, in foreign and security policy and in protecting human rights, including, if necessary, the taking of military action.

8) The ELDR Federation insists that member states announce a timetable for the complete democratization of the European Community before the next European elections.

9) Furthermore, the ELDR calls for the widening of the next Intergovernmental Conference, with the objective of turning the EC into a parliamentary democracy.

The application of all these principles will allow the European Community to contribute to the adaptation of existing Western organisations - the CSCE, the Western European Union and the Council of Europe - to meet the new challenges, and to play a pivotal role for integration and cooperation in Europe.

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