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Ceremony for the signing of the
Accession Treaty, Madrid, 12 June

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Statement by Mr Jacques Delors

President of the Commission of the European Communities

The Accession of Spain to the European Community is one of those rare events whose historic importance and impact must be stressed from the outset. I am conscious of the honour of being a participant in this solemn ceremony which marks the end of arduous labours and ushers in a period of hope.

What a comfort it is for us - enmeshed as we sometimes are in the turmoil of day-to-day events - to know that this desire for accession comes from all sectors in Spain, to see the government of a great people intent on safeguarding the future and refusing to give in to temporary difficulties.

For although I am convinced that accession will be for the good of Spain in the long run - I have no doubt of that - it may in the short term make the effort you have undertaken to adapt your economy to the new world situation more arduous.

The result we have now achieved after all these years of negotiating seems to me to be fair and balanced, and I should like to pay tribute to the work done by your delegation, and to Mr Fernando Morán, Mr Manuel Marín and their colleagues for their clear-sightedness

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and their understanding. I should also like to praise the hard work and devotion of the officials of the European Institutions, with a particular word - as you will understand - for all our colleagues in the Commission.

Spain is, therefore, now going to be one of us. May I say to you quite simply: we needed you. The building of Europe, and the hopes of Europe, would have remained partial and incomplete without your membership and your participation.

Spain is a country which already ranks as a world industrial power, which has won back for itself freedom and democracy and which, while being fully in the modern world, holds fast to its essential values: how could we not feel stronger and more ambitious with such a partner?

You are not just joining an economic club; your membership does not mean just one more power added to other powers. The building of the common market is inseparable from the project for Europe, this enterprise for peace and harmony, this resolve to strengthen our civilization and play a joint role in the future of the world.

When the European Council holds its next meeting in Milan at the end of this month, your Prime Minister will join us in a meeting at which the Heads of State or Government of the present Community will discuss European union: Why Europe? How far can this idea of Europe be taken? And how? It is vital that at a time like the present, when Europe has an appointment with its own destiny, we should have the support of a resolve whose roots arise from a common heritage of humanism and conception of society, in no

way forgetting its past yet turned towards the future. This must be the meeting-point for the diverse aspirations to the universal which the countries of Europe have expressed in the course of their history, each in its own way. From this essential standpoint, we also need to hear the voice of Spain.

We have paid dearly for our divisions and our wars. Our coming together will be a source of peace and will point the way towards prosperity. But let us not minimize the difficulties: the crisis is still there and Europe sometimes seems to lack faith in itself - at the very time when its cooperation and its awareness are increasingly being called for from all parts of the world.

I am thinking especially of those young nations in Latin America with which you have special links and in respect of which we now have new responsibilities.

"Europe: all Spain's travails have their beginning and their end in this word." These words, written by the great thinker, Ortega Y Gasset, one of the pioneers of the European idea, for his own country in the early part of the century, also apply to each of our own countries. The European project is a fact, arising from the need to turn our backs on our divisions and to pool our strength, and from our determination to control a destiny that we must inevitably share with each other.

Today's ceremony signifies that a decisive stage has been completed on the way to our higher objectives. The European Community now has a new frontier and new ambitions. Spain has acquired

friends who are proud to see a great nation and a great people joining in this now common task. May the future generations in Spain, this country strong and dazzling like a dream of stone and sun, bring further support to our convictions. May our way be lit by the light of Spain.