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LETTER OF INVITATION TO THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

I am looking forward to welcoming you and our other colleagues to Vienna for the European Council meeting on 11 and 12 December 1998. We have already had an opportunity of discussing the topics on our agenda, for which, once again, many thanks.

The debate on the future of Europe that was begun in Cardiff is giving added momentum to the process of European integration. The aim is to focus the European Union's economic and political strengths, to harness them more to people's needs. We used our informal meeting in Pörschach to press for policies of particular relevance to our citizens: economic stability and employment, internal security and a stronger role for the European Union in the outside world.

We must now continue along these lines, in the spirit of the Pörschach meeting, both at the Vienna European Council and under the forthcoming Presidencies.

Our meeting will begin at 10.00 on Friday 11 December with an exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament on the key questions before the European Council.

The Council's first working session will start at 10.30. As I discussed with you earlier, we shall start by deciding to make Helmut Kohl, the former German Federal Chancellor, an honorary citizen of Europe.

The session will then focus on central issues of economic and employment policy, a discussion at which the Finance Ministers will be present. The aim is to give a further strong boost to common European efforts to create jobs and to strengthen economic policy coordination. We ought to concentrate on the following topics:
A review of the implementation of the European Employment Strategy and its future development
External representation of the European Union in EMU matters
Enhanced economic policy coordination.

At the end of the morning session we should also consider how we can make more progress in integrating environmental issues into Community policies.

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL X
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08/12 '98 MAR 16:43 [TX/RX N° 65411]

At about 13.00 we shall be joined, as I discussed with you, by the Heads of State and Government and the Foreign Ministers of the Central and Eastern European countries involved in the accession process, and of Cyprus. We should brief our guests on the main outcome of our discussions at a working session to be held over lunch. Afterwards a group photo will be taken with our guests.

I am looking forward to welcoming you to Vienna and firmly believe that our meeting will bring the European Union an important step nearer to its citizens.

SN 5308/98
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