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"We are all part of one world"

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PREFACE

1 On the threshold of the second millennium, the world finds itself in a period of radical transition. Millions - complete strangers to one another - communicate across the continents via the Internet. In the age of television and on-line communication we are there, "live", wherever in the world disasters and human conflicts break out. The countries of Asia are becoming strong competitors to Europe and America on the world market.

2 The Euro-centric world of the 19th century has finally been swept away by this century's two world wars. The world of the 21st century will have numerous centres of power. We have decided to face the challenges thrown up by globalization head-on, and shape our future together in the European Union.

3 That means reconstructing our economies and our societies, making our social systems fit for the future, and strengthening people's sense of personal responsibility which will also lay the foundations for improved competitiveness, the creation of new jobs, and the protection of the environment. A new balance must be found between personal responsibility and organised responsibility.

4 But in Europe we can, together, and acting in solidarity, also deal with the question of taking in refugees and victims of political persecution.

5 Together, we intend to face up to the challenge of internationally organised crime.

6 The fundamental idea of the European integration process remains that of securing permanent peace and prosperity. The construction of Europe has halted what may otherwise have become an endless series of civil wars, and has created a climate of peace, freedom, and democracy. Now the EU Member States must also make their

contribution to democracy, security, stability, and peace beyond the Union, and be a model of co-operation for other regions.

7 We recognise the challenge and opportunities of globalization, fully aware of our responsibility, not only towards our own citizens, but also to those outside the European Union. We want to shape this radical change on the basis of firm values: freedom and responsibility, equality, justice, and solidarity. Europe is part of one world.

8 This responsibility has to be implemented on the basis of our commitment to the new agenda for Europe, and on the basis of those values which have inspired European society and history. In Athens, the EPP made a clear choice: to base its politics and its commitment on just those values. For that reason, the Athens Basic Programme is the leitmotiv for our answers to the great challenges of globalization.

CHAPTER II POINTS OF DEPARTURE FOR GLOBALIZATION

1 Globalization is a product of modernization and arises from mankind's desire to develop further. With our economic power and innovations, we in Europe have also contributed decisively to this process of development, the pace of which has constantly accelerated in recent years. We cannot halt this process, nor do we want to, because we are part of it. So we must tailor our economic, social, domestic and environmental policies to this phenomenon. We must rise to the challenge of the increased competitive challenge to perform and to generate new ideas. We must have the courage radically to reshape our ideas in many areas, and to implement far-reaching changes. These are the challenges we face on the road to the new millennium.

2 For decades, the attempt has been made to remove every moral statement from the complex of political action. This reticence is all the more serious because, as a result of economic and media globalization, we are now experiencing the collapse of communities and identities which shaped our society, and which were binding on each and every one of us.

3 The break-up of the traditional family, mobility, the dissolution of the social fabric, both rural and urban, the changed role of the churches, of political parties and of trade unions - all these phenomena have served to strengthen individualism and to weaken the framework of relationships which once anchored people in the community.

We do not regard these changes as regrettable signs of moral decay, but rather as the expression of changed realities in the modern world, changes which we intend to face with determination and with policies based on firm values. Weakened public structures need to be balanced by strong links between individuals.

4 The changed realities of the modern world, changes which we intend to face with determination and with policies based on firm values, highlight the necessity of common ethical principles as a basis for society.

5 In societies which are in a rapid period of transition, is it still possible for us to agree on concepts which belong to our human heritage and on which we can rely? This at a time when our societies are in a state of flux, and have become heterogenous because of the geographical, ethnic, and religious origins of the people who live in them, and - more important still - because of the multiplicity of social customs and beliefs.

6 There is no doubt in our political family that we share convictions which can claim universal validity. That is what enables us to live together and to make plans. The most

significant of these beliefs have been codified in human rights declarations. They are the reason for the long, ceaseless campaign for respect for human dignity.

Our point of departure

7 The European Peoples Party was established to create a political movement, founded on Christian and humanist values, capable of setting European society on a course which would allow the complete self-realization of human beings and the communities in which they live.

8 The 1992 Athens Basic Programme committed the EPP to policies based on values. Freedom and responsibility, equality, justice, and solidarity are the basic orientation of our political activity. "Christian Democratic thought and political action are based on fundamental, interdependent, equally important and universally applicable values: freedom and responsibility, fundamental equality, justice, and solidarity." (Art.108, Basic Programme.)

9 We believe that genuine freedom means responsibility and autonomy, but absolutely not irresponsible independence. It renders everyone responsible for his or her actions, to the community but also to posterity.

10 All human beings are equal in that they are endowed with the same dignity. That also means that one man's freedom in relation to other human beings is circumscribed by the respect for others he must show because of their fundamental equality.

11 The concept of justice means that the necessary conditions for men and, depending on their nature and their objective, their communities to exercise their freedom must be guaranteed at all times. It is the characteristic of justice to give to each individual his due. It is also actively to seek greater equality of opportunity, and life in society based on dialogue and respect for others.

12 Justice, the fundamental equality of all human beings, and their inalienable dignity, are inextricably bound up with the spirit of solidarity, which is a further essential element if humane relationships are to be achieved and deepened between people and their various communities, as well as within those communities.

13 Our vision of mankind is rooted in the Christian vision of mankind. Whatever their religious beliefs, all who embrace Christian values and respect for human dignity have a place in our ranks.

14 If we are to be successful with our common philosophy on the role of man in society, in democracy, in the rule of law, and in social solidarity, then all previously separate traditions in our political family must be brought together, and mutually recognised and respected. Coming from different traditions, and with varied experiences, the men and women of the EPP affirm that what they have in common is more important than the issues that divide them. They avow not to deny anything in their history or their convictions. In agreement on essential questions, they are united in thinking they can make up their own minds on issues which divide them and which touch upon matters of conscience without damaging the community which unites them

For responsible freedom

15 We regard it as self-evident that all human beings, whatever their circumstances, or the fortunes or misfortunes which have befallen them, have exactly the same dignity, and must not be the object of trade or exploitation.

16 Thus, it is high time to restore to these ideas the moral vision which provides their

justification. At first sight the task seems insurmountable. Yet there is a way, because there a general consensus has been forged in our democratic societies. The affirmation of human rights serves in different ways as a general point of reference.

17 The consensus on this becomes even wider if we look at patterns of social behaviour. The rule which must be the touchstone for men and women is responsibility. There can be no democracy without awareness of responsibility: however weak I may be, it is on my personal attitude that my future really depends, as well as the future of those around me, and of the nation and civilization to which I belong. This is why the EPP supports small communities such as the family, small and growing enterprises, the neighbourhood, and what is generally understood by "civil society".

18 We must argue publicly for this morality of responsibility. Only when the citizen no longer considers him- or herself as a consumer of public life or the spectator of his or her own destiny, but rather as jointly responsible for the common good, will the necessary renewal of social ties and reasons for living together be made possible.

19 Instead of regretting the past, we turn resolutely towards the future, and together are constructing a society based on freedom, responsibility, and solidarity. It is not a question of finding again what has been lost, but rather of regenerating - in a form as yet undefined - what have been the best and most life-giving elements of the network of human solidarity, of society, a word which derives from the Latin 'socius' or 'companion.'

CHAPTER III REFORM OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL MODEL

Introduction

1 Following the Second World War, Christian Democrats played an important role in the construction and development of the Social Market Economy; it makes possible a society based on equality between the sexes, welfare, social justice, subsidiarity, solidarity, personal responsibility and freedom, participation including social integration, and promotion of the common good. This concept of the social market economy is fundamentally different from the Socialist welfare state, which has developed to a point where - in many countries - the state is claiming a far higher proportion of national income than is reasonable. This Christian Democratic concept guarantees the maintenance of general social interests without disturbing their balance.

2 The fundamental elements of the social market economy include the constituent principles of an open market with free competition, the freedom to make contracts and to own private property, along with a steady economic policy. In particular, the regulating principles of competition and distributive policies will control market forces and take care of social needs.

3 In the social market economy, the state has a clearly-defined role. The state must not itself become involved in the market process, but it does have an important part in setting out the legal and economic framework of the market economy.

4 The social market economy is based on social norms and laws. In practice, this means that dialogue and, where possible, consensus between the social partners is of great importance, not least in terms of pay agreements which will ensure that new jobs are created. The social partners have a common responsibility both towards those in work and those who, involuntarily, are not.

5 Globalization and increased competition face Europe with important challenges. Its social security systems have to be re-organised, and a new balance found between personal freedom and responsibility, between organised solidarity and personal choice. The "European Social Model", if it is to deal adequately with these challenges, must be reformed on the basis of the social market economy.

6 Europe's social structures differ from those of Japan and the USA, and will continue to do so. Meeting the challenges of globalization does not mean throwing all social standards overboard. But to remain competitive in a globalized world we must combine Europe's advantages and strengths with greater efficiency, flexibility, and lower labour costs. The most important pre-condition for Europe's competitiveness is to give everyone the chance of a job appropriate to his or her abilities.

7 Another important challenge in this reform process is a renewed family policy combining child-care with working parents. For us, the family is the cornerstone of society. Reforming the health-care and pension systems is necessary not only because of an ageing population, but also because of a technically advanced society and high life-expectation. A new balance has to be found between personal responsibility and organised solidarity. Further, our politics are defined by the war against poverty and social exclusion. Welfare distribution should only be accorded to those in real need.

8 There is a delicate balance to be struck between freedom on the one hand and social responsibility on the other. The point of departure for the EPP is that, in the first instance, individuals themselves are primarily responsible for securing their own income and financial independence. Social justice and solidarity mean that it is the state's task to guarantee the population's basic living conditions. The EPP considers social security a safety-net for those in real need. The party pursues an active policy aimed at keeping people outside the welfare system as long as possible, or encouraging them to leave it as soon as possible, the intention being to help them to re-integrate into society and to strengthen their sense of personal responsibility as active members within it.

Present and future challenges to the Social Market Economy

The European Social Model has come under pressure for a number of reasons:

9 The past decades have seen more and more tasks being taken over by the state, and personal responsibility progressively reduced. We reject this conception of the welfare state, according to which everything is regulated from the cradle to the grave. The false starts and mistakes resulting from this have significantly weakened Europe's international competitiveness, cost many jobs, pushed state deficit far beyond any level that could be regarded as responsible, and driven social security systems into a severe crisis which is currently being corrected.

10 The constant increase in the number of elderly people of pensionable age, accompanied by a falling birth-rate and substantially higher unemployment, have also created permanent financing problems for social welfare systems.

11 At the same time, as a result of globalization, international competition for markets, investments, and jobs, has become much more intense. If even more jobs are not to be lost, then taxes and social contributions cannot go up any more, but should rather go down, which itself could create new financing problems.

12 Beyond this, the atomization of society and the disappearance of traditional family structures - in a society becoming more and more anonymous - is making more and more people dependent on a functioning social security system paid for by all, with the higher costs that go with this.

How to react

13 An important task which will face the EPP in future is the adaptation of the European Social Model to cope with the new realities.

14 In addition to employment protection, there is also the problem area of social security. For the EPP, the decisive issue as we adapt to the changed overall situation is finding a new balance between economic pressures, social obligations, and individual responsibility and retaining a fair minimum standard of living.

15 But we resist any idea of exposing the helpless individual to whatever risks life or market forces throw at him. Everyone has an inalienable dignity, and has a right to the respect, protection, and solidarity of the community. At the core of the social security system should be organised solidarity, supplemented by private insurance and care. It is necessary to have a properly functioning market economy combined with well-rooted social norms.

In order to prevent a decline in the standards of social legislation, the EPP seeks to establish minimal standards at European level. The EPP calls upon the social partners to strengthen European co-ordination of collective bargaining.

Social Security

16 The EPP assumes at the outset that individuals have the first responsibility of procuring a personal income and economic security. Social security is aimed at protecting the population from specific profession and social risks. The system consists of two large areas: social security in the narrow sense, and social support.

Social security consists of compulsory insurance, which organises social solidarity between those being insured on the basis of social security contributions (non-labour costs), the level of contribution being dependent on income and not on the risks being covered. Financing such social insurance can come from sources other than income.

Social insurance is only one form of social support . It is based on the state's responsibility to all of its inhabitants (or citizens). It serves to protect them from the "risks of poverty". It is "universal", eg providing a minimum income. It is financed from general resources. Payments are made following examination of the needs of the claimant, and a means test. Where an individual is not in a position to support him/herself, it is the state's task - on the basis of social justice and solidarity - to ensure that he/she has the basic necessities of life.

The EPP regards social assistance as a safety-net for those who are really in need. The party pursues a policy of actively keeping people out of the social security system as long as possible, or encouraging them to leave it as quickly as possible, and strengthening their sense of personal responsibility as active members of the society. The community of solidarity must limit itself to ensuring basic support, which can be supplemented by individual provision.

Part-time work and flexible working hours offer the possibility of integrating more men and women into working life, and thus stabilising contributions to social insurance systems.

The EPP supports transferring taxes from labour to other sources of finance. But care must be taken to ensure that an excessive burden is not placed on enterprises. European solutions are needed for the introduction of alternative sources of funding. For the EPP it is a matter of course that public social security systems must be seen as the basis of social assistance, to which private provision can be added as a complementary measure.

Providing for old people

17 EU Member States must deal with the implications of longevity in their populations. The effect is that the number of people receiving social security constantly declines in comparison with the number paying contributions.

18 The challenge we have to confront is constructing a system which is viable in the long-term while at the same time still providing security for the elderly, avoiding the loss of competitiveness through excessive social costs, and a fair spread of the burden between the generations.

19 One pre-condition for this is the best possible economic growth and as high a level of employment in the EU as possible, so that there is a growing number of people paying social security contributions. If those capable of being financially independent are given the possibility to of being so, then our resources can be more effectively used on helping people in need.

20 The pension system in individual Member States is historical, developing in a variety of ways, and the need for reform is correspondingly various. But in all cases pension systems will increasingly offer basic support, supplemented by company insurance systems and extra individual contributions. The necessary reforms must be introduced quickly so that individuals can plan their lives. A more flexible pensionable age, coupled with appropriate contributions either to or from pensioners is another important element of better, individually-tailored, provision for old people.

Preventive medicine and Health care

21 An important societal obligation is to ensure there is free access to good quality health-care. The role of public institutions must be to take responsibility for quality control and to order and supply health care, rather than to be the sole producer of health care.

22 A consequence of an ageing population is increased demand for health services. The demand for medical treatments is also growing because of developments in modern medical research and technology, and the tiny incentives for those providing the services, and the individual, to keep costs in the health service as low as possible. Thus health costs rise inexorably in most EU countries, which also leads to increases in the relevant contributions.

23 Realistically speaking, an uncontrolled explosion of cost must be avoided by greater efficiency. However, we see one essential of the European Social Model as being that every citizen has access to health care, independent of his income. But in the future, individuals will have to accept more small risks, while larger ones remain a challenge to communal solidarity.

In order to continue limiting the costs of health care, the EPP considers the following measures necessary:

24 - Introducing elements of insurance to health care. Apart from solidarity between the healthy and the sick, and between the young and the old, there also need to be possibilities for differentiation in the insurance package, so that everyone can decide what extra risks they wish to accept themselves, and which services should be covered by the insurance package. Starting a public debate on this issue will result in an increased awareness of the costs, quality, and efficiency of health care.

25 - Encouraging workers and employers to pay greater attention to measures to improve working conditions and to sick leave taken by each employee.

26 - Preventive medicine: there should be discussions about healthy life-styles and the individual's responsibility for his own health.

27 - Encouraging cost management in hospitals, so that health-care costs are subject to better control. Health care should be arranged so that the duration of a hospital stay is as short as possible, and that, with the help of medical and social support, people can stay in familiar surroundings as long as possible, receiving help and appropriate care at home.

28 - A critical review of the value of new and old medicaments is desirable. A general critical review of such costs is needed.

29 - Encouraging contracts between various insurance companies and health care providers in countries where this is appropriate, so that those insured pay a fair price for services. In general, monopoly positions held by insurance companies and health authorities should be avoided.

Bringing up children in a family

30 The family as society's natural building block is the necessary and irreplaceable basis for a human being's balanced development. The personal responsibility of parents for bringing up their children is of central importance. The family is the first and most important community in which children learn values and norms, interaction with each other, and how to play with each other, and where they experience solidarity and can put tolerance into practice.

School

31 The task of school is to pass on to children knowledge and particular skills, as well as to support parents in their talks of raising their children. Therefore school must also pay attention to the values and norms desired by the parents, as well as the need to shape people who, when adult, will be able to realise their full potential and act as responsible citizens in a democratic and law-abiding setting.

32 From a pedagogical perspective, it is of major importance that children grow up in well-organised schools where they receive personal attention, and where teachers take account of the individual progress of each child. Special attention is to be given to the care of children where the parents are not available to look after them immediately after school. The state should encourage after-school care initiatives, since in more and more families both parents work, and the number of single-parent families is growing.

Caring for Children, Old People, the Sick, and the Handicapped

33 Members of a family all take care of each other, and it is there that solidarity within and between generations is put into practice. Often, however, there appear to be practical obstacles preventing help from being given to members of the family who need care.

34 The possibilities of home care for sick and disabled people must be expanded. The possibility, if so desired, of looking after disabled people at home - eg with the support of a special grant - deserves special consideration.

35 In many cases, elderly people nearing the end of their lives prefer to die at home in a dignified atmosphere. For members of the family who want to nurse their loved ones at

home , unpaid 'care-leave' granted by the employer could be of great help.

Making family and professional life compatible

36 The education of children is of prime importance. Various measures can be taken in this regard :

- the implementation of the Recommendation on Paternal Leave and its application to both men and women;
- family tasks being divided equally between both partners;
- organisation of 'welcome venues' for young children; these, along with company crèches, must be diversified and open to all, and be educational;
- working hours ordered in such a way as to suit both careers and temporary or partial interruption of work for women and men;
- special measures for reintegrating back into the world of work those who have taken a period out of their working lives to bring up children.

37 It is of vital importance to give financial help or tax-breaks for child-raising. A labour market based on individual contracts will make it easier to adapt working hours to individual needs. For instance, this is of great importance for parents who wish to adapt their working lives to the needs of their children. There should be numerous alternative ways of bringing up children.

The fight against poverty and social exclusion

38 The EPP takes the view that a key task must be the fight against poverty and social exclusion. It goes against our principles of solidarity and social justice that a substantial percentage of the population is living below the poverty line, and in a state of permanent insecurity.

39 One of the most important elements in the fight against poverty and social exclusion is employment policy, not only at national, but also at European level. The social partners must be given a major role in both national and European decision-making processes.

40 It is also important that social security systems should continue to offer a minimum level of social protection. The exclusion of certain social groups from the labour market must be avoided. Much can be done to re-integrate such groups by re-organising the labour market and adapting labour costs so that new jobs can be created.

Putting minimum social standards in place

41 The EU should take up common positions to strengthen minimum social standards in international fora. In the United Nations, in the International Labour Organisation, and in the World Trade Organisation, the EU could, for instance, demand minimum social standards such as on the question of child labour. Third countries can in this way be encouraged to develop further their own social model. Demanding minimum social standards must not be an alibi for protectionist policies.

Worldwide rules for the new era of world free trade

42 The internationalisation of economic activity and the growing number of economic mergers pose both a challenge and an opportunity. With the decline of tariff obstructions to trade, there are more and more dangers to free trade and fair competition from non-tariff obstructions.

43 For that reason, the EPP is strongly behind the continuation of world trade talks in the framework of the WTO aimed at achieving further progress in liberalisation. Furthermore,

internationally binding rules on competition must be progressively developed, so that globalization does not destroy what has been achieved and lead to trade wars. In this connection the EU must continue to push for internationally open markets and fair competition.

CHAPTER IV THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBALIZED CRIME

1 The threat posed by organised crime and terrorism is one of the gravest challenges facing modern society, undermining democratic institutions, distorting the free market economy, obstructing fiscal policy and increasing the perception of insecurity. Internationally-organised criminals respect no boundaries either in traditional areas such as protection rackets, prostitution, especially of women and children, drugs, gambling, corruption, and illicit arms-dealing, nor in fields like massive economic crime and, increasingly, environmental crime.

2 The technological revolution, increasing free trade, and unprecedented levels of economic and monetary interdependence have turned our world into a "global village". For example, financial transactions are now on a scale scarcely dreamed of even five years ago. Crime has adapted to these developments by itself turning into a global industry exploiting the most advanced technologies. The European Union does not escape from this phenomenon, and has been subject to fraud on a massive scale. The EU must therefore redouble its efforts to combat organised crime. Further, new fields of operation were opened out to organised crime by the changes in Central and Eastern Europe and the gaps in control which resulted from these.

3 The political changes in Central and Eastern Europe - and the initially feeble financial control mechanisms which accompanied them - have been exploited by organised crime. The former Communist system was a breeding ground for corruption and crime. The problems are thus not caused by the present system. Rather, the new democracies face the challenge of stemming crime which springs from the old structures. Car theft, drug trafficking, traffic in human beings, and the smuggling of cigarettes and other luxury items, as well as of weapons and nuclear materials, are now, despite the much greater efforts of many governments in the region, an established part of organised crime in Central and Eastern Europe. There are close connections with organised gangs in Western Europe.

4 Terrorists and organised criminals use the most modern technologies and in the market place of the 21st century are increasingly ignoring the national legal systems. The time is ripe to depart from traditional models of crime-fighting, which are based on an outdated conception of impermeable borders, and to use methods based on close cooperation by the judiciary, police, and customs authorities working together transnationally.

Measures to be taken

Europol

5 Europol is a clear sign and a concrete instrument of EU Member States' will to cooperate in the fight against organised crime. But internal trench warfare between authorities about national sovereignty has so far prevented sensible cooperation between the police, customs, legislative, and immigration authorities. If efficiency is to be increased, the Europol Convention must be ratified as quickly as possible. Europol must be given its own budget, and be able to cooperate in comprehensive, practical ways with national authorities; in the final analysis it should also be accorded executive and operative competencies where this makes it possible to pursue organised crime

effectively. Where national authorities need assistance, national police forces should remain in charge of interventions on their own territories. Europol should also have international competence in fighting organised crime, money laundering, and trafficking in human beings and nuclear material. A further objective, to be realised as soon as possible, is the forging of closer cooperation with neighbouring states.

Exchange of personnel and joint training

6 There are at least 121 separate police forces in the 15 EU Member States. Only when there is broad acceptance among them of cross-border and agency co-operation can we hope to be truly successful. Exchange of staff and joint training, particularly of the next generation of leaders of these forces, is essential. In this way the most efficient methods and new ideas can be easily shared and acted upon.

7 EU programmes such as GROTIUS, SHERLOCK, STOP and OISIN should be encouraged and if necessary expanded as they provide the basis for more co-operation, the exchange of administrative and police officials, and for joint training.

Compatible crime statistics

8 A key area needing improvements is that of gathering reliable crime statistics. Proper analysis of the crime situation and of developing trends is impossible without reliable and comprehensive statistics. The priority is to aim for agreement on the definition of crimes and how to counter them. In this connection, a real policy on crime should be established at European level: this would unquestionably fix target priorities in the area of organised crime and lead to the eradication of the problem.

Cooperation between the European Union and non-EU countries

9 The problem of organised crime goes well beyond the boundaries of the EU. Co-operation with the states of Central and East European states, with states in Western Europe which are not members of the EU, with Russia, the USA, and with governments in Latin America, Africa, and Asia is essential.

10 The EU must assist the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, especially through the use of PHARE funding, to improve their policing and judicial systems, which would enable them to better tackle organised crime. Moreover, we need to strengthen police and customs intelligence co-operation between the Union and accession countries, possibly resulting in joint structures/operations.

11 Because of its size and its rapid economic changes, Russia is a particular problem. TACIS funding should be made available to help it develop and modernise its criminal justice system, including improvement of financial supervision.

Cooperation in the fight against terrorism

12 European Union cooperation in the fight against terrorism must be reinforced. The Union must find ways of defending the liberty of its citizens and the security of its Member States against malevolent enemies. Cooperation in the areas of policing and the judiciary, exchange of information, and political solidarity, are elements in the fight against terrorism.

Co-operation against crime

13 Legal harmonisation should be pursued in areas where it is necessary for the cooperation of national police forces. The methods and needs of customs, police, and lawyers for the pursuit, arrest, and prosecution of drug-dealers vary considerably.

Varying laws and practices allow some criminals to avoid punishment. Conflicts or inability to act in cases where drug transfers are being observed, the bugging of vehicles, the trans-national pursuit of criminals, swift arrests, and differing search methods, are all examples of how existing laws hinder rather than help cooperation and the achieving of satisfactory results.

This is why we propose:

- Harmonisation of national penalties for trans-national criminality (definition of crimes, of penalties, and procedures);
- Implementation of the 1996 Resolution on the Sentencing of Persons Convicted of Drug Trafficking;
- All EU Courts of Justice to send out a very clear message that every form of drug trafficking will be severely punished.

Money-laundering

14 Central to the fight against organised crime are effective measures against money-laundering. Existing directives in this area must be implemented in their entirety. Further, a sensible, concentrated campaign by legislators, banks, lawyers, tax inspectors, and security organisations is needed to strip away the basic *raison d'être* of organised crime, namely the acquisition of profit. This will also involve surveillance of so-called tax oases which are under either the direct or indirect control of the EU or its Member States

Specific measures to fight drug-related crime

15 Drug-related crime is one of the most significant faces of organised crime. Fighting it is therefore especially important.

16 Drug-producing countries must redouble their efforts to stop drug production. We have diplomatic, trade and aid relations with the main drug-producing and transit countries. In recent years we have insisted on putting human rights and democracy clauses into agreements with third countries. We should now include clauses committing our partners in Asia, in North Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America to the eradication of drug production and trafficking.

17 We should assist producer countries serious about stopping drug production by providing expertise and finance as well as access to our markets for alternative crops to drug production. TACIS funding could be used in Asia, MEDA in the Mediterranean region, and the Caribbean initiative funding used in that part of the world.

18 We have to work closely with the United States in the fight against organised crime. By sharing our experience and mounting joint operations, we can avoid duplicating our work and achieve real results.

19 In deprived regions, the breeding ground of crime must be eradicated by the provision of educational and training opportunities. The idea of partnership, between local communities, the social partners, and state partnership along the lines formulated, for instance, in Commission President Santer's Confidence Pact, should be developed as the model for the economic and social regeneration of these communities.

20 In addition, the adoption of the Community's action plan on drug prevention for the first time offers the opportunity to develop and fund a common strategy which could develop into a comprehensive prevention programme. The exchange of experiences in the fight against drugs should also be given an institutional framework beyond the

borders of the European Union.

Carrying out investigative controls not based on suspicion or dependent on results

21 At national level the main goal must be to create a concentrated zone, along international transit routes and at traffic hubs, in which investigative searches can be carried out. In particular, the so-called "Schleier-style investigation" involving controls based on suspicion of a crime, and not dependent on results, can make a useful contribution. The EPP therefore appeals to all countries to introduce this effective instrument as quickly as possible in response to the constantly increasing mobility of criminals.

Traffic in Human Beings

22 Europe has become a turntable for traffic in human beings. Recent statistics suggest that each year some 500,000 women are forcibly and illegally brought to EU countries from Central and Eastern Europe to be exploited physically and psychologically as prostitutes. The EPP is committed to countering this crime through an intensified campaign against it, and deterrent punishments.

An intensified campaign, meaning:

- prevention, and an information campaign,
- better treatment of the victims of human traffic;
- free legal advice and assistance;
- making it easy to receive temporary residency permits (permis de séjour) where individuals cannot safely return to the country from which they have come.

CHAPTER V IMMIGRATION AND THE RIGHT OF ASYLUM

Towards a common immigration and asylum policy

1 We feel responsible for ensuring a just policy towards all those who come to us in the European Union. Agreed common regulations on immigration and asylum in the European Union are of decisive importance to the European People's Party. A clear, unambiguous policy must be put in place, both in relation to individual Member States and to third countries.

2 Divergent laws and procedures in the EU do not make sense. This is all the more problematic insofar as citizens from third countries legally resident in one EU Member State can travel freely within the EU's borders. Given that internal EU borders are being progressively removed, and in view of the agreement to integrate the Schengen Agreement into the new Treaty of Amsterdam, the introduction of a common immigration and asylum policy has become a priority in the next few years.

Asylum

3 Political refugees currently obtain asylum in EU Member States under the Geneva Convention, which guarantees protection from persecution on the grounds of race, political opinion, religion, nationality etc. or belonging to a specific social group.

4 Assessment of asylum-seekers must also take into account whether they are being

persecuted on the basis of rules initiated by a state or state authority.

5 Those afflicted by poverty, hunger, or natural catastrophes must be given the best possible humanitarian aid either in their own country or as close as possible to that country.

6 The European Peoples Party is committed to the Geneva Convention on Refugees and stresses the need to introduce common EU laws and procedures as soon as possible. Applicants for asylum must be distributed among EU Member States, which logically implies common regulations. If this does not happen, a number of EU Member States will continue to accept a disproportionate share of refugees, since asylum-seekers will naturally apply to those countries most likely to accept them and where social security benefits are most generous. Beyond that, it is necessary to take into account agreements on avoiding dual nationality.

7 The decision on whether or not there are genuine rights to asylum should be made in a legal procedure which satisfies the recognised minimum standards laid down in the Council decision of 20.06.1995. In particular, the prohibition of refoulement set out in the Geneva Convention on Refugees must be respected in that an asylum-seeker's statement of persecution is verified before he/she is sent back to the country alleged to have persecuted him/her.

8 Apart from the right to a judicial hearing, applicants for asylum have the temporary right to remain, access to translation and legal representation, and to the fulfilment of their basic needs in the country responsible for hearing their application for asylum.

9 An asylum-seeker should be permitted to enter only if the inward journey is direct, that is, if he is not already in another state where he is safe from persecution, and could have applied for asylum there. Further, there should be checks that a claim to asylum is not obviously without foundation. These checks must be performed by trained and competent personnel in order to avoid any arbitrary decisions.

10 The European Peoples Party stresses that applicants for asylum are obliged to cooperate with the assessment of their application. As soon as the applicant is in a place of safety, the responsible authorities must be informed about an asylum applicant's inward journey using false papers, or none at all. If an applicant refuses to give relevant information on the basis of which a decision can be reached about whether he should be sent back to his country of origin, this should be taken into account when his case is decided. In this connection we would like to stress that every country has a duty to take back its own citizens. Return to countries of origin should be facilitated by repatriation agreements.

11 Following a successful application for asylum, family reunification involving the spouse and children under 18 should be made possible, provided that the family is able to support itself. The EPP therefore welcomes the regulations relating to this in the new Amsterdam Treaty.

War Refugees

12 People fleeing from civil wars or similar situations in their country need help and solidarity. They must for a limited time be given protection if there is no other way of helping them near their home countries. Refugees will be repatriated as soon as the reason for their flight no longer persists and their lives are no longer in danger.

13 Within the EU, a system should be evolved which spreads the burden more fairly among the Member States, so that some are not disproportionately affected by a large number of refugees. The European People's Party further proposes that political decision-

makers work together at international level to ensure that each continent solves its own refugee problems. As far as possible this should be done with the economic support of the world community, especially the industrialised countries.

14 The European People's Party takes the view that it should be possible to send asylum-seekers, or those granted permanent residence, back to their own countries if they have committed serious crimes. This should also apply to those who have been granted asylum, or the right to remain, on the basis of incorrect facts, unless such an expulsion order clashes, in particular cases, with international conventions. However, equal treatment for nationals and foreigners demands that there should be a list of sanctions, for instance in the case of false statements.

Immigration

15 It is essential that Member States elaborate an active policy, at once political, economic and social, to integrate immigrants. In their own interests they should also contribute more to development in the countries from which immigrants are coming, notably Africa.

Citizenship, enfranchisement

16 Acquiring citizenship in an EU state should be open to those from third countries who have been granted long-term residence rights, who have made clear their intention of staying in the European Union, and are prepared to integrate into society. The decision then depends on the law of the State in which the applicant is seeking nationality.

17 For third country nationals, a general right to vote is normally linked to the acquisition of citizenship. Granting the right to vote in local elections is up to the Member State.

Integration of foreigners

18 Integration is an essential part of immigration policy. Experience shows that individuals of different cultures may be mutually enriched by living alongside one another in community. Cultural differences between the indigenous population and those more recently arrived, and between foreigners themselves, must not lead to open conflicts or to the destabilisation of social structures. Particular efforts should be focussed on helping to integrate those with the right to settle, in order to ensure co-existence between people of differing origins. The EPP is committed to promoting suitable EU measures for this purpose

CHAPTER VI EUROPE'S RESPONSIBILITY IN REGIONAL CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION

The lessons of Bosnia

1 The wars in former Yugoslavia constituted among the most serious threat to European security since 1945. None of the European security institutions was in a position to resolve this conflict, nor did they demonstrate decisive political will. There were substantial differences of opinion not only within the EU, but also between the USA and Russia, about how the conflict could be contained, controlled, and resolved. Looking back, it must remain an open question whether the conflicts could have been prevented altogether. There is no doubt that more decisive action could have contained the conflict

at an earlier stage, and that it would have been possible to arrive at a peaceful settlement much earlier than turned out to be the case.

2 The Dayton peace agreement was the result of the US accepting the political role in the peace negotiations from which it had until that time to a very large extent abstained from, and which the European Union - its foreign and security policy still dominated by national thinking - was unwilling to take on.

3 In the years following the last World War, Europe drew lessons from the horrors of the past, and created strong and committed institutions peacefully uniting the states of Europe. The Council of Europe, NATO, and the European Union together shaped freedom, peace and prosperity. Post-war Western Europe has so far been the most successful time in Europe's long and bloody history. In the same way as then, we now need to learn the lessons of Bosnia to make European institutions ready to meet the challenges of today. The European institutions must be capable of fulfilling the overall task of uniting Europe, but also of solving regional conflicts. We must create structures which, primarily, are capable of preventing the outbreak of such conflicts but which, in the event of conflict prevention turning out to be unsuccessful, are equipped with the mechanisms necessary for the resolution and containment of conflicts.

Establishing a European security structure

4 The European Union needs a Common Foreign and Security Policy which makes it a political power capable of acting in accordance with its values and common interests, capable of reinforcing its own security and of safeguarding and reinforcing international security, capable also of strengthening international cooperation, the development and consolidation of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and fundamental freedoms.

5 We would like to see this happen through a dynamic and rapid application of the measures and possibilities agreed in the treaties, among which are recourse to majority voting for the adoption of common actions, the creation of a planning and early-warning unit (drawing together experts from the Commission, the Council of Ministers, the WEU and the Member States and NATO), and organisation of the activities of the Secretary-General of the Council, who is responsible for foreign policy, and active participation by the European Parliament.

6 The European Union needs a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which is capable of acting. It is for this reason that the EPP is not satisfied with the result of the IGC in this field and will pursue its commitment to formulate a Community structure capable of democratically elaborating and deciding as soon as possible upon a genuine CFSP, in which majority decision-making must become the rule.

The ongoing mission in FYROM is one of the most successful examples of how to avoid tensions in an area of extremely high tension. Such peacekeeping and enforcement missions should preferably have the mandate of the UN Security Council or the OSCE, but should be carried out and financed if need be by the WEU and the EU. The EPP once again stresses the need for appropriate mandates, rules of engagement, and military equipment adapted to every particular conflict-situation.

7 The EPP favours the integration of the WEU into the EU. The European Union will thereby take a greater responsibility in resolving conflicts and assume a directing role in humanitarian, rescue, and peacekeeping tasks, and combat force tasks in crisis management, including peacekeeping (known as the Petersberg tasks). Whether or not to participate in such operations is a decision for each Member State, but the financial burden should be shared by all EU Member States. In the integration process of the WEU, special attention needs to be given to the enlargement process of the EU. The integration

of the WEU must not be allowed to obstruct the integration of new Member States, inter alia the Baltic States.

8 The EPP stresses that strengthening the CFSP will involve better coordination of EU Member in the United Nations. EU Member States which are permanent or temporary members of the UN Security Council should not just represent themselves, but deliberately and systematically promote EU policies. A complete rethink of the composition of the UN Security Council is becoming more and more urgent. The EU should aim to be represented as such in the UN Security Council. Until this happens, EU Member States should vote together.

Control of Arms Exportation

9 As the Amsterdam European Council underlined the crucial importance of agreement at international level on the effective control of arms exports, we must, within the framework of the CFSP, work together with a real, responsible and coherent policy which goes further than simply exchanging information in this area.

Enlargement and integration

10 One of the best means of avoiding conflicts is the ongoing process of integrating new countries into European structures. In this context, the EU represents the most important institution for European peace-building. It is very important that the European structures are used in order to enlarge the area of stable democracy, the rule of law, and market economies on the European continent.

11 European integration fosters co-operation and builds confidence in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Mediterranean. The EU must accept early membership for those of the new democracies which fulfil the membership criteria. However the EU should also assist the other countries to fulfil the criteria as soon as possible. The EPP considers that all applicant countries must be judged on their own individual merits. The process of integrating Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Mediterranean must be trustworthy. The reforms and adjustments of applicant states are indispensable in order to permit successful integration, but the EU must also carry out significant institutional reforms in order to prepare for enlargement.

12 It is the task of governments, parliaments, and political parties to inform their citizens and electorates on the possibilities and problems involved in EU enlargement. As was the case with the integration of Greece, Portugal and Spain, enlargement is an essential means of stabilising democracy. It is important to stress the fact that new dynamic economies are an asset and not a liability. Southern European Member States revitalised Europe through their integration. The risks and consequences of non-integration must also be pinpointed.

Enlargement must be able to take place without discrediting the fundamental policies developed by the current Union, particularly the CAP and structural funds.

A strong NATO open to new members

13 Western Europe has, over the past decades, developed a strong security partnership with the United States and Canada in NATO. Only NATO has the military strength and organisation necessary for trustworthy military security. Therefore, it is the EPP's strong belief that the participation of the USA remains absolutely vital. But Europe has to contribute more actively to the common defence effort. In the foreseeable future, Europe is not willing to increase its defence budgets considerably. The strengthening of a WEU integrated into the European structures as the European pillar of NATO, and the avoidance of duplicate structures by simple access to NATO's infrastructure, is thus of

vital importance.

14 NATO should be open to current members of the EU who are not currently members of the Alliance.

15 The EPP welcomes NATO's invitation to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to become members. This symbolises the creation of a new NATO overcoming the old boundaries created by various pacts and integrating the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe.

16 Those countries which have asked for membership, but will not be admitted in the years to come, should not be allowed to drift into a no-mans-land. We do not wish and must not allow ourselves to create an abandoned grey zone in Europe. Therefore, cooperation with NATO falling short of membership must nevertheless be further intensified.

17 Nor were the three Baltic states invited to join NATO in the first round. Thanks to their geographical position, and their historic experience, we know their vulnerability. But NATO has emphasized both its openness to further members and recognised the Baltic states as aspirants for membership. A more intensive Partnership for Peace under the umbrella of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in which all interested states can take part in the framework of the NATO programme ensures that the Baltic states cannot be regarded as a grey area in terms of security policy.

Cooperation with the OSCE

18 The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) constitutes an additional pillar in the creation of a European security structure. It represents a platform for the whole of Europe, extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok, for a dialogue which is continually growing in importance, for cooperation in terms of security and for common action. Its role in Bosnia, Chechnya, Nagorno Karabakh and other regions has shown that the OSCE has successfully contributed to the easing of regional conflict. By extending beyond the territorial borders of NATO and engaging all the European states, including Russia and the CIS as well as North America, the OSCE is a particularly suitable forum for dialogue on political security, respect for human rights and minorities, as well as the promotion of open and democratic societies. The EPP is committed to the principle that the security policy adopted by the EU should be pursued in close cooperation with the OSCE. Any competition between the various institutions handling political security must be avoided.

Key regional issues

19 The advantages of preventive diplomacy are now becoming recognised on a global level. The European Union must develop closer relations and co-operation with global and regional security organisations. We also need to stress the important role of civil society and NGOs in providing early warning signals and in acting as mediators. It is important to point out that warning signals can take many different forms, but one can observe that systematic and persistent violations of human rights are often a first sign of impending conflict with many victims.

Cooperation with Russia and the Ukraine

20 Partnership and Co-operation Agreements with Russia and the Ukraine are a vital plank of EU foreign policy, and should be further developed.

21 As far as cooperation with Russia is concerned, the major task remains that of lending support to the strengthening of democracy and economic reform. We welcome the fact

that Russia has not been left outside Europe's security architecture, but - thanks to the NATO-Russia Founding Act - will be closely tied to it. A continuous dialogue with Russia is a vital means of avoiding the creation of tension and the construction of new Cold War-style border lines in Europe.

22 The Ukraine has a key role for European security, and EU policy should consequently aim at consolidating Ukraine's independence. Support for political and economic reforms should also be seen in this context.

Cooperation with Turkey

23 The Turkish application for EU membership will not be decided in the immediate future. But further economic integration based on the Customs Union will promote political cooperation with Turkey. The EU should keep up its support for the current Turkish government in its efforts to democratise, improve the protection of minorities, and show greater respect for human rights. The EU also underlines the urgency of resolving the Cyprus conflict. At the same time, the EU is called on to fulfil the obligations to Turkey to which it is committed under the Mutual Financial Protocol.

Former Yugoslavia

24 With the relative success of the peace efforts in Bosnia so far, there has been a tendency to neglect the factors of instability in the region as a whole. Left on its own, the region might well be heading for another war. The forces of nationalism are still relatively strong, and ethnic persecutions have not come to an end.

25 A coherent regional strategy must be shaped for the crisis- and conflict-ridden area of the western Balkans, its essential element being the creation of structures for political and economic integration and cooperation both within the region, and in relation to the European institutions. The latter must include a strong commitment to safeguarding human rights and the situation of minorities, and to advancing the development of open and democratic societies.

26 - The tide of rising nationalism must be turned into a tide of rising awareness of common European needs and a common interest in co-operation. Partition in Bosnia would bring partitions in other parts of the region, with massive waves of ethnic cleansing and possible conflicts as unavoidable consequences.

27 - When military issues are discussed, there is often talk about the need for an "exit strategy" from Bosnia. But in political terms, there is rather the need for a long-term "entry strategy" to address how this part of Europe can be integrated in the structures of co-operation and integration in Europe as a whole.

28 - The European Union must play a role as important as the one played by NATO this year. It must devise a strong regional strategy, the centre-piece of which must be the effort to create a common economic space with as much free trade and as close links with the rest of Europe and the world as possible, including a strong commitment to the safeguarding of human rights and the situation of minorities, as well as to the further development of open and democratic societies.

29 - International engagement in Bosnia can only be successful with a strong military foundation in a reformed NATO with an active France, coherent structures for political co-ordination between the key players including Russia, and with an increasingly important long-term role played by the European Union. This is the way in which some progress has been made in Bosnia. This is the way in which we must continue, and in which we must extend our concerns to cover this volatile part of Europe as a whole.

Kosovo

30 The international community must encourage the government of Yugoslavia to enter into a dialogue, under its auspices, with the Albanians' representation in Kosovo.

Albania

31 The EPP welcomes the success of the multilateral mission carried out by certain European countries in Albania. The EU must follow the situation in Albania very closely, pressing the government and the parliament to work in a spirit of national reconciliation which respects the rule of law, the local authorities, the independence of judicial power and the freedom of the press. All of this is a precondition for continued help from the international community.

Cooperation in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East

32 During the coming years special attention has to be devoted to the implementation of the action plan adopted by the Barcelona Ministerial Conference on Euro-Mediterranean partnership. The EPP supports a rapid conclusion of remaining association and co-operation agreements with non-Member States of the region. The conclusion of such agreements would represent an important step towards increased economic integration, prosperity and stability, which in turn would reduce social tension and discourage religious fundamentalism.

33 Not least for demographic reasons, the European Union faces a number of security challenges on its southern flank: migration problems, economic and social tensions, and the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. A farsighted European security strategy must be generated by means of a comprehensive security architecture, based on a simultaneous interaction of a mix not only of political and economic elements, but also of cultural, religious, military, judicial, and social building-blocks.

34 Deepened political cooperation is also vital in the fight against organised crime, drug trafficking, and terrorism. The EU must strive for a progressive extension of European internal security standards to the external borders of the partner countries.

35 The stagnation of the Middle East peace process has critical implications for the regional security of the Mediterranean area. The European Union must work in partnership with the USA and therefore strengthen its political commitment and provide a new input into the process, thus making a more active contribution to a stable and sustainable peace.

36 The EPP declares its solidarity with the Algerian people. It condemns every act of violence in Algeria, by whichever party, and supports all who are struggling for democracy and peace. The EPP considers that the European Union must make itself available to help the Algerians, making its own contribution to the pursuit of peace.

Cooperation with Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Latin America

37 An EU strategy for stability and security outside Europe cannot primarily rely on traditional military security measures. This must remain a last resort when preventive actions have failed. Our aim must be to contribute to security by means of an active policy for promoting a sound and sustainable economic and social development designed to limit the risk of potential armed conflicts. Serious tensions may occur between regions with different cultures. Religious differences may be the source of serious conflicts, which could be prevented if a dialogue between religious communities existed. The EPP supports such a dialogue.

38 The end of the Cold War and its bi-polar system has had a profound knock-on effect in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific (ACP). This, as well as the trend towards globalisation, emphasises the importance of closer EU-ACP relations with emphasis on the principles and methods of good governance. A credible Common Foreign and Security Policy cannot be limited to Europe and its neighbouring regions, but must entail a forward-looking strategy towards the ACP countries. This is also underlined by the fact that the Lomé Convention, which regulates EU-ACP relations, is due to be revised by 1999. This agreement should attempt to put in place a regional structure in order to take into account the different situations in individual regions. Trade preferences should be adopted which pay more attention to poverty and less to former colonial status, since this excludes some of the poorest countries in the world, while some prosperous Caribbean states profit from their ACP status.

39 Within the framework of the WTO, one major task is to give greater support for an opening up to international trade and thus integration into the world economy, as well as an increase of regional trade. EU and Member States' foreign aid policies should be better co-ordinated, and clearly directed to support the establishment and consolidation of democratic institutions and a vibrant macro-economic and micro-economic framework.

40 Recent tragedies in Somalia and the Great Lakes region call for a more profound and continuous EU engagement. This should result in efforts to prevent and contain similar armed conflicts and to provide assistance of any kind in their resolution. In this area a global, fairer, distribution of burdens should be attempted, since at the moment the EU's engagement is over-sized compared to industrial countries outside Europe. Like the war in former Yugoslavia, these conflicts also demonstrate that the EU/WEU must be prepared to take on larger responsibilities. But it is just as important for the medium- and long-term prevention and resolution of conflicts to encourage and support the establishment and strengthening of security structures in the different regions.

41 The EPP aspires to the development and strengthening of relations and dialogue between the European Union and Latin America. Current negotiations, especially those with the MERSOSUR countries, must have a successful conclusion.

42 Europe must advance towards a strategic partnership with nations which are taking the path of democracy and modernisation, and which share our system of values. It is with sadness that the EPP observes the situation of the Cuban people who continue to suffer under one of the last dictatorships.

Democracy and Security in Asia

43 Many Asian economies have seen dynamic growth over the last decade. It has made them into significant economic actors, and it is to be expected that their economic and political standing will grow over the next few years. This remarkable transformation has evidently had a benign knock-on effect on regional security. It has offered new opportunities to solve traditional problems like overpopulation, migration, social tensions, and exclusion.

44 Rapid economic development over such a short period of time has positive aspects, but also creates power shifts that can be destabilising. A complex five-sided balance in the Asia-Pacific region is now emerging, involving China, Japan, India, the United States, and Russia. This evolving theatre of competing international economics, politics and security challenges should not be neglected by the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy.

45 A growing security dilemma is evident from the massive arms race in process in the region. At the same time numerous countries in this region reject even the understanding of democracy and human rights. The EU's priority, strategic as well as

moral, is therefore to foster democracy, which we see as the basis of long-term regional stability.

46 This cannot be achieved by economic and political exclusion. Such a strategy is not effective, and may even be counter-productive. A balance has to be found. Increased trade and cooperation makes a vital and positive contribution to political development. But it must go hand in hand with genuine, and intensified, political and diplomatic pressure for democracy and human rights. To be successful, however, this can only be achieved by means of EU solidarity. Common action by the European Union is also essential for fostering dialogue, and prompting other confidence and security-building measures with regard to the arms race, border and maritime disputes etc.

CHAPTER VII CARING FOR CREATION

Our Environment is Vital

1 The globalization of environmental protection has become a reality. Caring for the environment touches mankind very directly. Without preserving our world and our natural environment, both human existence and progress are limited. Although situations may differ between Member States, air, water, earth, flora and fauna are pre-conditions for human life everywhere. Safeguarding the environment is the *conditio sine qua non* for human life itself. Stewardship is the starting-point for environmental protection. Maintaining the natural fundamentals of life for future generations is therefore the foundation stone for any environmentally-oriented policy committed to the goals of sustainability. We recognize the responsibility we have for our planet. It is our responsibility to look into the future. The EPP is strongly committed to an "Environmental Contract" with future generations.

2 International cooperation, especially with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, has become especially important. Ever since the UN's Rio de Janeiro Conference in 1992, environmentally-sustained development has become a leading principle of environmental policy. The "Agenda 21" measures, signed and accepted by all European Member States, should progressively be implemented through suitable measures based on the principle of subsidiarity. Economic, social, durable and ecological development should be seen as belonging together.

3 Economic growth has meant that modern society offers people in a modern society a better life. Today, a family with an average income enjoys a standard of living very few could have allowed themselves 100 years ago. Average life expectancy has risen considerably, as well as the level of education. In the meantime modern societies have also developed environmental problems. Air and water have been polluted by substances that are harmful to people, fauna and flora. Noise, pollution, and the problem of waste disposal are serious concerns in many places.

The EPP supports a comprehensive environment policy

4 The EPP supports European laws intended to secure the best possible common environmental standards in the Single European Market. Preventing distortions in competition, European programmes and decisions should aim at the highest environmental standards found in Europe Member States. Environmental dumping as resulting from different environmental standards should be avoided at all costs. The goal is the integration of environmental principles into all aspects of politics. So, allowing for appropriate transition periods, there must be binding environmental standards and

norms for all states which must be seriously respected. A simple harmonisation of procedures, variously applied and interpreted, and producing new distortions to competition, is inadequate.

5 Protecting our environment must be taken into account right at the start of economic and administrative planning. That is why the goal of a forward-looking environmental policy must be set in granite at European level. It is definitely not just a matter of removing existing damage. The major EPP concern is to avoid environmental damage, or reduce it where encroachments on nature are unavoidable.

6 Yet the final touchstone of every environmental policy remains the consumer. The way each and every one of us purchases and consumes holds the key to a better environment. Preference has to be given to environmentally-friendly products; those products which are not environmentally-friendly should be avoided. Yet the environmental effects of our behaviour are not always obvious to the individual.

7 Forging an environmental consciousness is a goal of EPP policy. The EPP attaches great importance to communication with the younger generation. The EPP therefore calls for comprehensive environmental education in schools, youth organisations, and other institutions.

The environment and the market economy

8 The collapse of the Socialist central planning system in the countries of the former East Bloc exposed, to our horror, how catastrophic and devastating the results of a purely materialistic exploitation of nature and earth can be. In a system without private ownership, prices on resources and personal responsibility, the environment will not be taken into consideration at all. The social market system, with its decentralized and flexible decision-making, has shown it is better placed to react quickly, flexibly, and appropriately to environmental imperatives. The market economy is a priori more efficient in the use of natural resources. No company can afford to use more resources than necessary. On the other hand, the free market has proved to be insufficient when dealing with public goods, negative external effects and income distribution, which has led to over-exploitation of natural resources, pollution, and social injustice. The economy must therefore rely on environmental and social principles; an eco-social market economy.

9 The economy and the environment are inseparable. The EPP declares itself in favour of an environmental policy which reacts to the causes, not the symptoms, of environmental problems. Development which is oriented towards the environment requires a clear, radical environment strategy in order to secure Europe's long-term economic competitiveness. A clear, reliable legal and policy framework for sustainable development is needed.

10 The EPP is convinced that the social market economy must be completed in the area of environmental protection. Existing European legislation on the environment must be controlled with a view to introducing such policies and making sure they stay in place.

Individual Responsibility for the Environment

11 Many people today consider the environment when they make decisions as consumers. Businesses have to take this into account. Thanks to the economic growth we can also afford to invest in new technologies, cleaner industrial processes, research, and science.

12 This gives us a great responsibility. Harmful environmental problems which demand resolute efforts must not be neglected. Mankind has both rights and responsibilities. As

human beings we have the right to utilise nature to increase prosperity and to make our lives easier. Our responsibility is to do this without circumscribing the lives of future generations.

The role of the European Union in environmental policy

13 The European Union has an important role in protecting nature and ensuring a clean environment. Common European environmental standards must follow from the firm conviction that environmental problems can only be effectively solved under favourable economic conditions and property rights, functioning markets, well-informed consumers, and a competitive industrial framework.

14 The completion of the Single Market is the cornerstone of a better environment in Europe. It strengthens competition and forces producers to be more environmentally-friendly.

15 Many environmental problems cannot be solved without strict environmental standards. These standards must often be set at a European level to avoid distortions in competition and dumping due to differences between national legal rules. Europe suffers from cross-border pollution problems. Emissions in one Member State can cause serious air and water problems in other Member States. Those problems can only be approached with a common environmental policy. The European Union should therefore concentrate on cross-border emission problems and on harmonised rules that prevent dumping and make competition easier.

16 The European Union also has an important mission in the global drive to improve the environment. Together, the Member States form a strong force thanks to their economic strength. Europe has a great opportunity to facilitate the development of property rights institutions, working markets, democracy, and free enterprises in the Third World.

Making Environmental Policy

17 The EPP strongly believes that only a general mobilization of Europe's forces - producers, consumers, and emphatically not just politicians and administrators - can protect the environment, and preserve and improve living conditions for humankind and nature. Economic productivity and an environmentally-friendly approach to nature do not have to be opposites. The EPP is convinced that a sincere commitment to the environment does not clash with economic development.

18 Shaping an environmental and social market economy means arranging the framework conditions so that every individual is encouraged to behave, as far as possible, in an environmentally-friendly way. Policy based on "environmental correction" of the market economy needs to translate into an "ecologically driven" market economy. The EPP is committed to putting in place the framework that encourages environmentally-friendly behaviour. Regulations and prohibitions should only apply when other means prove inadequate. For the EPP, the founding principles of environmental policy in Europe are clearly "polluter pays" and thrifty use of resources. We believe in a future in which both producer and consumer take responsibility for their impact on the environment.

Policy instruments

19 The EPP is convinced that basic environmental principles are best served when the price of a product reflects its environmental cost as well. At the same time, environmentally-friendly production procedures and products should benefit the enterprises concerned. Those who put strain on the environment should be penalized.

20 More fundamentally, the EPP believes that stimulating the economy, science, research and technology, will advance creative and essentially novel solutions to man's existential challenges. Modern technology and progressive science should be used to protect and improve the environment. Environmental policy delivers the unique possibility of developing new technology and products, and with them competitive advantages in existing and new markets. In this way, it can contribute to creating new jobs.

Need for a European policy

21 European environmental policy and regulation has improved the level of environmental protection in all EU Member States. As has already been stated, the EPP underlines the need for a European environmental policy. It is for the EU to set an international example in these areas. It should be possible for Member States to go further in environmental protection in their national policies. But the condition is that creating such national rules does not discriminate against imports or lead to latent trade restrictions.

22 The Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty created the basis for European environmental policy. The EPP is determined to develop the European Union further, into an environmental union. The EPP therefore explicitly supports the results of the June 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, which set in granite the concept of sustained development in the Preamble and in EC Treaty Article 2. A future Treaty should also anchor the principle that protecting nature is vital to life as a basic goal in the EC Treaty.

23 On environmental issues, the EU Council in principle decides by qualified majority. Where it does not, QMV should be introduced. The EPP welcomes the fact that the Amsterdam Treaty introduces the principle that the co-decision procedure should be applied to environmental legislation. Further, in order to realize comparable ecological standards in the European Union, regional grants need to have stronger links with Europe-wide environmental objectives. The infrastructure funds and support programmes (e.g. PHARE, TACIS and MEDA) should also be aligned with this objective.

24 In this connection, the EPP supports complementing environmental laws with voluntary agreements. Industry should be more involved in problem-solving. In this connection, the EPP supports environmental taxes, ecological regulation, and in particular voluntary but binding agreements. These covenants will allow European policy to advance the cause of the environment in industry and economy without necessarily having recourse to regulatory tools.

25 The EPP stresses the need for coordination and follow-up of Europe-wide environmental policy. The competencies of the EU environmental authority in Copenhagen should be enhanced. European Directives need to concentrate on clearly identifying the policy targets, leaving Member States enough regulatory space to develop their legal framework efficiently. Where necessary, more use should be made of the instrument of European regulation.

Energy

26 World-wide use of energy has seen continuous growth. This trend is destined to continue, since the world population will continue to grow for the foreseeable future and developing countries seek to achieve the standard of living of Western industrial countries. Limited resources and especially materials (e.g. CO₂) which may change the global climate are strong arguments for using energy sources in a less wasteful and more responsible way.

27 The EPP supports priority being given to measures promoting efficient energy consumption. Modest and responsible energy consumption and the establishment of new

and renewable energy sources will be the two pillars on which to build a long-term ecological policy, a policy which will make provision for sustainable development. The instruments of market economy and stimulation of research and development will be key factors in achieving this goal. Environment investments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are more effective and have a more substantial impact than investments in Western Europe, which only lead to marginal improvements.

28 The EPP attaches great importance to the realization of the objectives of the Climate Convention. The European Union should take a leading role in world-wide climate protection. Over the next decade, emissions of carbon-dioxide, nitrogen-oxide and methane need to be substantially reduced. We strongly support the EU's goal of reducing exhaust gases emissions in the EU by 15% by the year 2010. We hope to persuade other leading industrial states to join us in this project.

29 Anchoring climate protection in the European Treaties is at the centre of EPP policy. In this connection, the EPP strongly supports the development of global strategies to prevent the build-up of gases which negatively affect the earth's atmosphere. An energy tax based on the amount of CO₂ emission could be an instrument in achieving these objectives.

Traffic

30 The increasing traffic in the European Single Market, and the resulting increased pressure on the environment - especially the emission of carbon dioxide and other noxious matter and noise pollution - is a major concern of the EPP. The existing limits should be adhered to.

31 The EPP supports the continuing work on legislation to impose stricter limits on exhaust gas emissions by road vehicles and environmentally-friendly fuels.

32 The EPP seeks better networking of the various means of transport. A harmonised Europe-wide railway network is needed. The present situation with differing standards and bureaucratic problems is no longer acceptable. Harmonisation must aim at making the railways competitive enough to attract future increases in long-distance freight traffic. Infrastructural developments should be innovative. With regard to the Trans-European Networks, the EPP will concern itself with ensuring that the EP Directive on Environmental Protection, making environmental compatibility tests compulsory for Member States, is applied.

Waste

33 The flip-side of a prosperous society is manifest in the constantly growing mountains of waste. EU regulation and policy have resulted in substantial progress, and Directives on waste and dangerous waste in the Member States have been adopted. The harmonization of waste terminology needs a Europe-wide approach. The EU's legal framework on the trans-national shipment of waste is considered the strictest in the world.

34 The EPP supports a policy of avoiding and therefore reducing waste. In this connection, the EPP strongly supports stricter environmental norms on waste-tips and waste incineration plants. EU policy objectives should definitely opt for substantial waste avoidance. Only where this is impossible should more re-cycling mechanisms and the thermal use of waste be considered. The thermal use of waste must be restricted by high emission standards. If those conditions are fulfilled, thermal use can be an alternative energy production as good as bio-fuel.

35 It is long-term EPP policy to see production, distribution, consumption, and waste-

disposal locked into one another through a fully developed product cycle economy. The EPP strongly supports the concept of product responsibility meaning that producer, distributor, and consumer carry the responsibility for avoiding waste, re-cycling, and dumping waste.

36 The EPP is very concerned about the growing illegal transport of toxic waste outside the European Union, especially to Third World countries. The EPP strongly supports the introduction of regulations which effectively counter this development and ensure that illegal transport is brought back at the expense of the sender.

Water

37 The EPP commits itself to the development of a common EU policy to protect water. Only a coherent law on water can ensure that the ecological demands made in multifarious aspects of water use, notably drinking water, can be satisfied Europe-wide. In this connection, the key points as far as Europe's interests are concerned are preventive measures and the same obligation for all Member States of the European Union. Only a preventive water protection policy applied to those causing the damage can stop environmental dumping in Europe. Only by melding together the necessary elements and instruments of water protection into a framework of hydro legislation at EU level can the challenge be matched; such a legal framework must afford effective protection to the eco-system, preserve and improve water quality, develop guidelines on water, as well as harmonise regulations which grab the attention of the media - such as the proposal for guidelines on integrated avoidance and reduction of pollution, the Seveso guideline, checks on environmental costs and eco-auditing, all in line with a European legal framework on water.

38 Environmental problems such as water pollution and the careless use of fishing resources are often due to the fact that no-one owns the water. No-one feels responsible for protecting this resource. For the EPP it is therefore important for property rights to be strengthened and natural resources to be protected.

Agriculture

39 The EPP supports further reform of agricultural policy with the goal of higher environmental standards. Farmers' incomes must be secured on the basis of durable and environmentally-friendly production. The sustainability aspect in agriculture must be given a higher profile in EU agricultural policy and in future WTO negotiations.

40 Priority should be given to the enhancement of agricultural reform measures that serve the objective of environmental protection, reduced production, and the promotion of environmentally-friendly production methods. The EPP is also committed to a Directive on soil protection against harmful products and for sustainable cultivation. The EPP is convinced that this is the way EU agricultural policy will progressively develop into an integrated environmental protection policy.