

**AD 17/24**

**LIMITE**

**CONF-ALB 2**

**DRAFT SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS**

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Subject: Ministerial meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference on the accession of Albania to the European Union held in Brussels on Tuesday, 19 July 2022

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## **1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

The Conference adopted the meeting agenda as set out in doc. AD 4/22 CONF-ALB 1.

## **2. OPENING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS:**

The Conference took note of:

- The General EU position, as set out in doc. AD 5/22 CONF-ALB 2 which was presented on behalf of the Presidency of the Council of the EU by Jan Lipavsky, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, and of his statement;
- the statement of Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;
- the statement of Olivér Várhelyi, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement;
- the General Position of Albania, as set out in doc. AD 7/22 CONF-ALB 3 which was presented by Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania, and of his statement.

The statements made by Jan Lipavsky, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Oliver Várhelyi, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, and Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania, are contained in the Annexes hereto.

The Conference took note of the remarks by Greece, France, Germany, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain and Hungary. All Member States that took the floor congratulated Prime Minister Rama and Albania. Many stated their readiness to continue supporting Albania on its EU path. Some Member States highlighted issues of specific reform significance to them.

### **3. OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business points were raised.

The Conference concluded:

On the basis of the positions of the Parties, the first Intergovernmental Conference at Ministerial level on the accession of Albania agreed on the opening of the negotiations on the accession of Albania to the European Union.

The Conference agreed to enter into its minutes the General Positions of the Parties to the Conference, as they appear in docs. AD 5/22 CONF-ALB 2 and AD 7/22 CONF-ALB 3 respectively.

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**MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE  
ON THE ACCESSION OF ALBANIA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 19 July 2022**

**Intervention by Jan Lipavsky, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Presidency  
of the Council of the EU on behalf of the European Union**

On behalf of the European Union, I am delighted to welcome here today the distinguished representatives of Albania to the opening of accession negotiations of your country with the European Union.

This is a historic moment for us all, which marks a milestone in the evolution of our relationship. The enlargement process gives strong encouragement to political and economic reforms and reinforces peace, democracy and stability in Europe and brings people closer together.

The decision to open accession negotiations, on the basis of the enhanced enlargement methodology endorsed by the members of the European Council in March 2020, is not only an important step in Albania's relations with the EU but is also a clear demonstration of the EU's unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkans, expressed in the Thessaloniki Agenda, as well as in the Sofia, Zagreb and Brdo Declarations and confirmed most recently by the June European Council. Your country is part of European history, heritage and culture, and we look forward to further intensifying our already well-established ties.

We welcome Albania's determination to advance on the EU reform agenda and expect continued political commitment to carry out necessary reforms thoroughly and vigorously.

Albania - a candidate country since 2014 - is a close partner of the European Union as part of the Stabilisation and Association Process. Our Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with Albania is in force since 2009 and is the basis for our extensive cooperation in a broad range of areas. Albania continues to implement its obligations under the SAA. Our political and economic dialogue has been developing, notably within the SAA bodies.

The benefits for both sides of our close relations are evident. The EU is your biggest trading partner, with obvious benefits for business and foreign investment. For your citizens, travel to the EU has become easier since visa liberalisation entered into force in 2010. The EU has been providing financial and technical support under various financial instruments, and will continue to do so including under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance. After the earthquake hit Albania in November 2019, the European Union took a lead role in support of the reconstruction effort, quickly raising €1.15 billion in donor support. Moreover, Albania participates in a number of EU programs, including Erasmus+, Creative Europe, the program for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME) and Europe for Citizens. Albania is also an observer of the Agency for Fundamental Rights and a contracting party of the Energy Community Treaty and Transport Community Treaty.

The strength of our relations - our unity and solidarity - has once again been demonstrated during the COVID-19 crisis. The European Union stood by Albania and by our Western Balkans partners. This support and cooperation went far beyond what any other partner has provided to the region with over €50 million in grant aid and €180 million in macro-financial assistance for Albania. The European Union also recognises the valuable support the Western Balkans have given during the pandemic to their immediate neighbours and towards the EU, not least Albania provided urgently needed medical staff to a Member State. This reflects the solidarity and mutual support the EU is built on. Russia's unjustified and unprovoked military aggression against Ukraine is having a significant impact on the entire European continent. Westerns Balkans are expected to commit to European values as future EU Member States. The EU and the Western Balkans have already joined forces in supporting Ukraine and combating Russia's disinformation campaign. We highly welcome Albania's full alignment with all EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) decisions and declarations, and encourage Albania to continue to fully align with the EU CFSP.

The Council in its conclusions of 25 March 2020, which were endorsed by the members of the European Council on 26 March 2020, welcomed that Albania has demonstrated its determination to advance the EU reform agenda and has delivered tangible and sustained results, fulfilling the conditions identified by the June 2018 Council for the opening of the accession negotiations.

Our negotiations are based on Article 49 of the Treaty of the European Union and take account of all relevant Council conclusions, in particular those of March 2020 endorsing the enhanced enlargement methodology, the renewed consensus on enlargement agreed by the December 2006 European Council and the conclusions of the 1993 European Council in Copenhagen.

The Council remains firmly committed to taking the enlargement process forward on the basis of agreed principles and conclusions, which integrate the enhanced methodology so that the accession process is more predictable, more credible, more dynamic and subject to stronger political steering, based on objective criteria and rigorous positive and negative conditionality, and reversibility.

The EU continues to attach great importance to the coherent implementation of the renewed consensus on enlargement, which is based on consolidation of commitments, fair and rigorous conditionality, better communication, combined with the EU's capacity, in all its dimensions, to integrate new members, with each country being assessed on its own merits.

In line with the Council conclusions of 25 March 2020, endorsed by the members of the European Council on 26 March 2020, the Council approved on 18 July 2022 a general Negotiating Framework, taking into account the aforementioned conclusions, as well as other relevant Council conclusions, the renewed consensus on enlargement, and established practice.

The Negotiating Framework, which we present to you today, takes account of the experience of past enlargements and on-going accession negotiations, as well as the evolving EU *acquis*, and duly reflects Albania's own merits and specific characteristics. The negotiations are aimed at Albania integrally adopting the EU *acquis* and ensuring its full implementation and enforcement. It incorporates the enhanced enlargement methodology, which provides for an even stronger focus on the fundamental reforms in the accession negotiations. Albania will need therefore to fully embrace and implement reforms in the fundamental areas of rule of law, in particular judicial reform and the fight against corruption and organised crime, fundamental rights, the strengthening of democratic institutions and public administration reform, as well as economic criteria.

Given the crucial importance throughout the process of the underlying reforms, progress on the fundamentals cluster will determine the overall pace of negotiations. This will allow sufficient time to establish the necessary legislation, institutions and solid track records of implementation before the negotiations are closed. Screening reports to be prepared by the Commission will provide substantial guidance, including on the tasks to be addressed in the roadmaps to be adopted by the authorities of Albania.

The Council in its conclusions in March 2020 underlined that the negotiating framework was to reflect that Albania has successfully addressed all five key priorities. The Council calls on Albania to build on the progress so far and pursue intensively its reform efforts.

The EU *acquis* includes, *inter alia*, the objectives and principles on which the Union is founded, as set out in the Treaty on European Union. As a future Member State, we expect you to adhere to the values, listed in Article 2 in the Treaty on European Union, namely the respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. Furthermore, EU accession implies the timely and effective implementation of the entire body of EU law or EU *acquis*, as it stands at the time of accession. Under the enhanced enlargement methodology, the development of sufficient administrative and judicial capacity, as part of the fundamentals' cluster, is key in fulfilling all obligations stemming from membership.

Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations remain essential elements of the enlargement process. Albania should continue to constructively engage in inclusive regional cooperation and strengthen relations with neighbouring countries.

We highly welcome the fact that Albania has fully aligned with all EU Common Foreign and Security Policy decisions and declarations and encourage Albania to continue to fully align with the EU CFSP.

Let us also recall that parallel to the accession negotiations, the Union and Albania will continue their civil society dialogue and cultural cooperation, with the aim of bringing people closer together and ensuring the support of citizens for the accession process. We expect Albania to accurately and strategically communicate the benefits and obligations of the accession process to its public, including addressing disinformation, in accordance with its pro-European strategic choice.

It will remain up to the Member States to decide whether conditions are right for the conclusion of the negotiations, bearing in mind developments in the EU *acquis* since the date of the opening of negotiations, and Albania's readiness for membership.

The accession negotiations we open today will be rigorous and demanding. With determination and commitment, we are confident in your capacity to bring it to a successful conclusion. We will support you in your efforts and we look forward to welcoming you as a fully-fledged member of the European Union.

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**MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE  
ON THE ACCESSION OF ALBANIA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 19 July 2022**

**Intervention by Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs  
and Security Policy**

Thank you, President [of the Council of the European Union, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Jan Lipavský].

It is evident for all of us that today marks a huge achievement and the result of many years of work.

By starting the negotiation process, Albania will become a member of the European Union and with that, the European Union is taking a decisive step towards its completion.

The Western Balkans are of key geostrategic importance for the European Union – and this is a moment in which this importance is being shown. Importance for Albania, for the whole region and for the European Union as a whole.

In this new phase, Albania will take advantage of this opportunity to accelerate the crucial reforms and move closer to the European Union, building on important work that has been done in the previous years. Reaching European Union standards through this process will transform your society, the Albanese society, and bring concrete benefits to your citizens.

Let me focus on the foreign and security policy aspects.

Your full alignment with the European Union foreign and security policy positions and decisions, as well as your ongoing work and excellent cooperation at the United Nations Security Council, reflect the clear strategic direction that you have chosen. We know that it comes with a price, and part of this price is that you have been added to a certain list of “unfriendly countries”. But at the same time, being part of the most friendly community in the world, which is the European Union.

As I said at our meeting with all Western Balkans leaders in June, your consistent 100% alignment with the European Union's foreign policy and sanctions is not a technical exercise. In these difficult geopolitical times, nothing [is] less technical than foreign policy. It is a political decision, which deserves our appreciation. Our relationship is not just a matter of simple transaction of interests, but a relationship based on shared principles, values and goals.

Let me underline that Albania will be able to count on the European Union's support to counter the malicious influence of third powers, as well as on the European Union's support to build resilience and to help you address the consequences of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Not only on price increases – I know how difficult it has been for you, Prime Minister [of Albania, Edi Rama], to face the consequences of the war in terms of food and energy prices. And more than that, just a few days ago, the Albanian government was targeted by a massive cyberattack. Only last week, we launched a Rapid Reaction Mechanism to tackle precisely cyber threats and disinformation in the Western Balkans with our partners, especially those who are most closely aligned with us on foreign policy matters.

Albania has also been a moderating voice in a complex region, including by helping in the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue. And I continue counting on you for that.

Albania sets an example for good neighbourly relations. And this role will become more important as you move towards European Union membership.

I am looking forward to continuing to walk on our common European Union path together, because we need you. We need Albania in order to complete the European Union nature.

We need each other, because we will be stronger together.

Thank you.

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**Brussels, 19 July 2022**

**Intervention by Oliver Várhelyi, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and  
Enlargement on behalf of the European Commission**

It is a great pleasure for me to address you today. This is a historic day for the EU and for Albania. I think if there is one wisdom we can all conclude for Albania it is that: strategic patience has paid off. On behalf of the European Commission, I congratulate you, Prime Minister Rama, and your team on this success. I want to thank the Czech Presidency and the previous Presidencies, in particular Germany, Portugal, Slovenia and France for their tireless efforts which led to this Intergovernmental Conference today.

Albania is a candidate country with the explicit intention to become a member of the European Union since 2014. The European Commission has supported the decision of Albania and recommended that we open accession negotiations in 2018. Throughout these years, we have worked hard and stood consistently by your side.

Today's first accession conference is a milestone, which marks an entirely new chapter in the relations between the European Union and Albania. It is a well-deserved recognition of all the progress Albania has made in advancing EU reforms.

Albania continues to fulfil all the conditions to move to accession negotiations. You have reformed your democratic institutions. Albania's reform of the judiciary system is unparalleled. Your commitment to strengthen the rule of law, to fight corruption and organised crime are commendable.

It is crucial that Albania remains fully committed to this process. In this new demanding phase, I count on Albania to intensify its efforts to achieve full compliance with all membership criteria. We need to pay particular attention to the key areas of rule of law, including the reform of the judiciary, the fight against corruption and the fight against organised crime, property rights, minority issues and freedom of expression, the further strengthening of democratic institutions as well as the economic criteria.

The Negotiating Framework presented today provides a sound basis and a wide-ranging set of tools for the accession negotiations. It incorporates the revised enlargement methodology, which puts an even stronger emphasis on the fundamental reforms.

The Commission is ready to start immediately the screening exercise - already this afternoon. This will benefit from the robust preparatory work already undertaken with your administration. The screening process will be an important exercise for all of us. This is a Commission-led process, during which you will get familiar with the latest state of play of the EU acquis and what it entails.

The screening consists of two parts, an explanatory part, where the Commission explains the EU acquis, and a bilateral part, where you will inform us on how you plan to implement it. A lot of work has been already done in 2018 and 2019 with the technical explanations of the acquis. We will now build on this and provide you updates on the EU acquis, which keeps evolving.

Thereafter, we will move to the bilateral part of the screening. This is where we should identify major issues to be addressed during the negotiations as well as areas where preparations need to be intensified. The process will make us grow closer and is an investment in our common future.

We are ready to support Albania to prepare for taking up its obligations as Member State of the European Union throughout the negotiations.

The accession negotiations will require strong political will, active steering and wise guidance. It implies a sustained commitment and robust coordination among all institutions and your entire administration. Preparations for membership will inject change to major parts of society and the economy of the country.

I count on you to ensure an inclusive approach all along the process, working with all stakeholders, the parliamentary opposition, the local authorities, as well as the civil society. It will also be crucial to communicate regularly to the wider public about the benefits and opportunities the accession process creates for all the citizens.

The Commission will continue to accompany, support and advise Albania in taking up the challenges of the European Union membership, including through financial and expert assistance. The Commission's role is to make sure that the process is running according to the European principles and standards. Our objective is to make sure that Albania will be well prepared when it joins, something that should take place soon.

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**MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE  
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**Brussels, 19 July 2022**

**Intervention by Edi Rama, Prime Minister on behalf of Albania**

*Dear Mr Chairman Lipavsky,*

*Dear HR Borrell,*

*Dear Commissioner Várhelyi,*

*Dear Ministers and representatives of the European Union,*

It is really hard to believe this is happening. For quite some time we struggled to believe it will happen at all. Yet, giving up never crossed our mind. You know all too well that within Albania we disagree about everything but there is one belief that survives all of our disagreements: there is no alternative to the EU. It is our dream, our challenge, our mission, it is our faith.

For centuries we had to live under empires and regimes we did not choose. This time it feels different, Europe is the first time we all had a free choice and we chose to give our voice to Europe. We did it because we believe in this space of freedom, stability, security, where our children and grandchildren belong. That also inspires a different way of thinking about belonging to our region, one that breaks with the past once and for all.

Europe with its values, its principles and its standards is what makes another Balkan possible: a Balkan of peace, prosperity and security. An Open Balkan of EU four freedoms too.

Starting today, the accession talks do not make our dream reality but make the reality a better place to pursue the dream. We know what we achieved so far is only just the end of the beginning.

Everyone knows our path to be here today has not been easy. The last few years have been a true saga between hard work, appreciations, expectations, unfulfilled promises and agonising resets. A story of rolling about or up the hill and falling, of trying to reach the top and being turned down again and again, like in the myth of Sisyphus. But we kept going again and again by not losing our faith even when faced with ultimate pain of being unjustly slapped in our faces.

The good news is that we are done with Samuel Becket. Let me quote here Albert Camus from his masterpiece *The Myth of Sisyphus*, to better express the depth of our belief and the strength of our conviction in Europe despite the hostilities of the last years: "*What I believe to be true I must therefore preserve. What seems to me so obvious, even against me, I must support.*".

In a few terrible years left behind, the chain of refusals to formally start the accession talks was stretched further by terrifying events like the earthquake, the pandemic and last but not least the war in Ukraine. If a God had planned these obstacles to test our commitment to the EU integration process they would not have been able to come up with a more devastating combination of challenges. But we managed to prove that we are better and stronger than even most of us believed we could be.

Because it is not just about us but it is about what European future and this Union too is for us. The EU was always for the Albanians much more than reports, benchmarks, deadlines and paperwork. All of those rolling stones would have easily been lost down the hill under the heavy pressure of these extremely difficult years. Our seeking for Europe would have turned into uninspiring business as usual. If this did not happen it is because being fully integrated in Europe is for Albania and the Albanian nation a matter of life and death, of thinking about life in the future and relegating death in the past.

This is why although we were unfairly pushed back for 3 long years in a row we endured the backlashes by pushing our reforms further with even more perseverance. Justice reform went through the implementation phase and as we speak Albania is the most advanced country in the region in this regards. Of course there is more to do but the foundations for a credible, fair, independent, professional, transparent, accountable and efficient justice system - one that finally after long centuries can be trusted by the public - are set.

These very challenging years have made us more determined in our fight against organised crime and corruption. We obtained concrete results and we became a valuable partner in many international operations against criminal networks, while enhancing our cooperation with EUROJUST. We tore down the whole old palace of the old crooked justice and now we have fully operational brand new institutions for a new era of rule of law, which is just beginning. The Special Prosecutor against Corruption and the National Bureau of Investigation are crucial elements of this new era. If only a few years back you have asked anyone in Albania about the chances to see in their lifetime a politician behind the bars they would have laughed at your face. The reality is now very different: nobody is immune in front of justice. Neither rank, nor party card nor money can protect you any longer. Like never before in its history as a state a genuinely independent judiciary and true equality in front of justice are now possible and within reach for Albania.

I stand here today as a leader of the democratically elected majority that nor has shielded anyone from the arrow of justice and neither has ever used the arrow of executive power to change the course of judiciary events, in someone's favour. This did never happen in our nation's history. Of course many shadows of the past persist, this is why we are here, so eager to bring our fight to another level by making the best use of the accession talks as an ongoing state building tool for the new democratic Albania.



During the last 3 difficult years Albania's role in the international scene became increasingly relevant, first as the OSCE's Chair-in-Office and then as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council where we joined the United States in holding the pen on the war in Ukraine. We stand for full implementation of international law and unconditional respect for rule of law and human rights; We will continue to play a key role to the new European geopolitical configuration, first and foremost remaining active in building long lasting peace in our complicated region. Albania has a proud record of 100% alignment with EU related declarations on the CFSP following a path of consistency with the EU since 2004. We take part in regional initiatives, such as the South East European Cooperation Process, the Regional Cooperation Council, the Berlin Process, the Regional Economic Area and we initiated with two other regional partners the first Balkan in-house initiative in history, named Open Balkans. I want to remind here that from now on there will be not just 2 but 4 Western Balkan states to negotiate their entry to the EU. In an area like the Western Balkans, more concerns with the ideals of European integrations means less ghosts from history in our political life and increased space where to project a joint hopeful future and speak with one voice, disperses the whispers from the past, it condemns to absurdity hatred, xenophobia and nationalist megalomania in Balkan peoples' life. Being four negotiating countries to join the EU rather than just 2 doubles the purpose of unity and halves the spirit of division. Notwithstanding our frustrations, it is also important to emphasise that the EU is not simply a project that will deliver one day, it has already delivered on many dimensions. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude once again. Just to name a few: the EU's financial assistance in preparation for accession, the strong support for the post-earthquake recovery, the anti-Covid vaccine help during the peak of the pandemic and the European and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans have played a very crucial role to protect our bones despite the backlashes on the integration side. We strived to ensure that our political, economic and financial positions as a future EU member are commensurate to a EU MS of a similar size. Our main goal is to boost our competitiveness, strengthen our productivity capacities and build a resilient just society.

Our EU accession will focus on the need to improve social and economic cohesion within the country. In these very challenging times Albania is turning as a destination to create new synergies for a stronger energy security in our region. We are 100% renewable but still too much dependent on the vulnerable hydro resources. Diversifying is our main objective and becoming net exporter of energy within 2030 is our strategic goal.

Agricultural and rural development is a significant economic sector in our country with direct impact on environment, green growth, full security and technology advancement. Raising this sector's policy standards is indispensable to us and we have increased our efforts to ensure full and rapid integration into the Common Agricultural Policy by remaining committed to protect and improve the environment. Longstanding moratoriums on forest explorations and hunting have helped substantially to recuperate a part of what has been devastated during a harsh transition.

We will engage in transport community activities and Action Plans to improve road safety, railways, waterborne and multimodal transports and extend green lanes with EU Member States as well. We will continue to invest substantially in a national and regional interconnectivity by doing our best to use properly the tools of the EU Economic and Investment Plan.

On the other hand we want to become regional infrastructure champions of the digital era. New technologies are already serving us well in delivering quick paperless public services with completely new speed and zero corruption. As we speak we are struggling with a massive cyberattack at home from a country hostile to the European Union and to us too as committed member of the Euro-Atlantic community. But our system is resisting and we are pushing back the enemy by bringing our digital services back in the coming hours. We see the start of accession talks with the EU as a fresh start at home too where we need to reinvent ourselves as a community of democratic values and as a space of European standards. Also as a majority in government we are aware of the need to reinvent ourselves in any further steps. We will not only continue to periodically report on membership negotiations to the Parliament and the National Council for European Integration but we will find ways with your help to raise the quality of these processes by improving the interaction with as many different actors from as many ways of life as possible. At the same time we will work to make sure that civil society criticism and freedom of media continue to be encouraged so the citizens remained as aware and alert as the government try to be about all the challenges and opportunities of this new path towards the EU membership.

Very dear, already old friends, while we enthusiastically celebrate today the beginning of a new chapter in our relationship with Europe and the European institutions, we have never been more aware of the challenges not just to us as individual aspiring Member State but to the project as a whole. Those challenges will strengthen our resolve not just for our sake and the sake of our children and our grandchildren but also for the sake of yours, European Union fellows. Not simply for the benefit of aspiring Members but also for that of existing ones. As they wake up to the spectre of a new global war, many Europeans that seemed since quite long time to have forgotten that the EU was born to put an end to war once and for all, need to fully understand now that the EU needs the Western Balkans literally as much as the Western Balkans need the European Union.

Many of them will no longer remember what motivated the project in the first place and what values it serves. They should see now as clearly as possible and as soon as possible that this is a new year of new challenges, that needs a renewed Europe with a renewed faith and strength. For our citizens the nightmares of the past, the spectres of war and unfreedom are all too recent. And we are here to also remind your citizens of why it all matters to all of Europe and its future. Yes it is an ongoing struggle.

Let me conclude with Albert Camus interpretation of the Myth of Sisyphus: "*the struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart.*" This is also why Camus suggests that "*One must imagine Sisyphus happy*". Today I am happy: the hearts of the people I represent are filled with happiness. I never thought I would feel happiness in this building by the way. They are filled with a new resolve to continue rolling the boulders of the European Union's integration up the hill. They are also full with hope: the hope that for once myth and politics will break apart, the hope that for once the reality of our ascent and the faith of Sisyphus will be different. That one day we will succeed in reaching the top of the mountain and no longer be forced to roll back and that maybe there was one thing the Myth of Sisyphus never told us, that place at the very top of the mountain is also called home and it is where we always belonged, in the European Union family.