

RESTRICTED

FM OSLO

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 497

OF 231045Z DECEMBER 91

INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS, STOCKHOLM, HELSINKI, COPENHAGEN, ACTOR  
INFO ROUTINE THE HAGUE, LISBON, BONN, PARIS

MY TELNO 481 (NOT TO ALL) : MRS BRUNDTLAND ON EC MEMBERSHIP.

## SUMMARY

1. MRS BRUNDTLAND SAYS SHE WILL DECLARE HER OWN POSITION ON EC MEMBERSHIP IN APRIL/MAY 1992. TIMETABLE FOR PARTY CONFERENCE DECISION NOT (YET) AFFECTED.

## DETAIL

2. ON 20 DECEMBER, AT HER FINAL BRIEFING THIS YEAR, PRIME MINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND ANNOUNCED THAT SHE WOULD DECLARE AS EARLY AS APRIL/MAY 1992 WHETHER SHE WISHED NORWAY TO APPLY FOR EC MEMBERSHIP AND FOR WHAT REASONS. SUCH A DECLARATION, WHICH EVERYONE EXPECTS TO BE POSITIVE, WOULD CLEARLY PUT PRESSURE ON LABOUR'S PARTY CONFERENCE TO VOTE THE SAME WAY. BUT MRS BRUNDTLAND ALSO REPEATED IN HER PRESS BRIEFING THAT SHE SAW NO REASON TO BRING THE PARTY DECISION ITSELF FORWARD FROM NOVEMBER. SHE AGAIN URGED THE STORTING TO APPROVE THE EEA AGREEMENT 'SO THAT NORWAY CAN TAKE ITS PLACE IN EUROPE TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER NORDIC COUNTRIES'. A TRADE AGREEMENT WOULD NO LONGER BE A PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE.

## COMMENT

3. MRS BRUNDTLAND'S NEW MOVE ON THE EC DEBATE TIMETABLE WAS TYPICAL OF THE GENERAL TONE OF HER PRESS CONFERENCE, IN WHICH SHE SOUGHT TO SIGNAL UNBROKEN CONFIDENCE AND TO PROMISE INCREASINGLY FORTHRIGHT POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. HER MORE FORWARD TACTICS ON THE EUROPEAN QUESTION (CF. MY TUR) WERE ECHOED IN A WARNING TO THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY OVER THE WEEKEND BY GUNNAR BERGE, LABOUR'S PARLIAMENTARY LEADER, WHO SAID THAT REJECTION OF THE EEA BY THE STORTING WOULD MAKE EC MEMBERSHIP AN IMMEDIATE ISSUE. BERGE ADDED THAT LABOUR'S PRESENT TIMETABLE SHOULD IN ANY CASE ALLOW AN EC APPLICATION TO BE MADE AND NEGOTIATIONS TO START IN EARLY 1993, BEFORE THE NEXT NORWEGIAN GENERAL ELECTION.

4. I HAVE NOTED THE INSTRUCTIONS IN YOUR TELNO 200 WHICH I BELIEVE I CAN MOST APPROPRIATELY CARRY OUT WITH BJORN TORE GODAL HIMSELF. THE EARLIEST APPOINTMENT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SECURE WITH HIM IS 3 JANUARY

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: I WILL REPORT FURTHER THEN.

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ADDITIONAL 1

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