

The Future of the Enlarged EU and Its Relations with Asia, Especially Japan

Lecture Transcript

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I was asked to make a presentation about the relations of the European Union (EU) with Asia, taking into account, of course, our relationship with Japan and what has happened recently—the EU enlargement¹ and the discussion of a Constitution for Europe.

We had a party yesterday at the Imperial Hotel to welcome the 10 new Member States. We used the occasion of Schuman Day, which is sort of the national holiday of the EU, because Robert Schuman, who used to be the French foreign minister, made this famous declaration that in order to prevent further war in Europe there should be close cooperation between the archenemies France and Germany. The means he chose was to establish common control over what used to be the main raw material for making war, coal and steel. As you know, this was the beginning of the EU, which developed step by step from a community that was just taking care of coal and steel, the European Coal and Steel Community, into the European Communities—we added an “s”—which signified that we also had a separate organisation that was called EURATOM (European Atomic Energy Community), which still exists, controlling nuclear energy and its applications. Then we felt that having various different organisations in which the same Member States were participating was not the most effective structure, so we united all these communities and established the European Community. And then we felt that we had to press ahead with the integration process and add more competences, and therefore we formed the European Union.

That is a very short outline, but the main idea, which is the idea that I think is catching on now in Asia and Japan, is to learn how countries which were enemies over a long period of time can live and work together peaceably. Do not forget that Europe was not a very peaceful continent. We had two world wars which started in Europe, we had the Franco-Prussian War which started in 1870, so there was quite a tradition of conflict, and this unfortunate tradition was coming back to one of our trouble spots, the Balkans, only recently, and it was not easy to control. But we are convinced that the EU is a guarantee of peace, and so far the system has worked, because no Member States have ever gone to war with one another, and that is one of the reasons we feel we should enlarge, and the reason that the recent enlargement of the EU has added 10 new Member States that were until very recently—in historical terms I think 10 to 15 years is recent—part of the Soviet Union or were controlled by the Soviet Union. I think this is quite a remarkable achievement, and it also explains why these new countries were not only interested in joining the EU but also interested in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, (NATO) because security is still a major issue for them.

After this short historical flashback, let me turn to the present and have a look at this year, since 2004 has for the EU quite a heavy agenda. The future of the EU will depend on the successful mastering of two challenges. One I have already mentioned, enlargement—in the last 10 days we have increased from 15 to 25 Member States. The second is this little book here, the Constitution of Europe. This is what we are trying to give ourselves, with a lot of difficulties, I must admit, because the first attempt to agree on this constitution, which was developed at a convention² more than a year ago, was unsuccessful. If you remember from reading the newspapers, it was the former French

¹ For more details see Michael Reiterer. “Japan-EU relations after EU enlargement”. *Asia Europe Journal* (2004)2; pp. 33-42.

² <http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=EN>

president Giscard d'Estaing who presided over this convention. So this project was developed, but the Member States which had to endorse it could not agree on it in December last year, therefore we will have another go at the European Council meeting in June this year³, which is actually right before the president of the European Council, Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, and the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, will come to Japan for the regular EU-Japan summit meeting, which will take place on June 22⁴.

In addition to these two challenges, we will have direct elections for the European Parliament, which will take place in July. We will have to select a new European Commission, which will take over on November 1 this year, with a new president, who hopefully will be chosen this June as well, to succeed Romano Prodi⁵. We have to press ahead with what we call the Lisbon Process, an ambitious policy agenda which was decided in the year 2000 by the European Council and which has the goal of making Europe the most dynamic economy in the world within a decade. This of course needs continuous attention and care irrespective of political distractions.

Last but not least, you can only do what you can finance, and therefore the financial regulations and budget of the EU also need attention. As you may know, we have a limit, which is that the budget of the EU cannot exceed 1.27 percent of the gross domestic product of the EU, which is very little money in terms of percentage of gross domestic product; right now we are using not 1.27 percent but only 1.24 percent, which is about a billion euros. Less than 50 percent is used for agricultural purposes, which I must admit is a little strange for an association of highly industrialised countries, but we are working on lowering this percentage and putting more money into projects like the Lisbon Process.

On the EU-Japan relationship, the upcoming summit in June will be an occasion to review our relationship, especially in economic terms. Japan and the EU, are two of the largest economies in the world, have a special responsibility of giving impetus to the world economy. This is of course true in particular for Japan, which has been in recession and even deflation for the past 14 years, which means that it has not been performing an important role as a motor for the international and regional economies. The Japanese government is now waking up to the challenge posed in East Asia and internally, not least because of the competition between Japan and China. There is a lot of investment going into China, and I think this is one of the reasons that Prime Minister Jun'ichiro Koizumi, in his opening speech at the Diet in January last year, declared that investment promotion, but this time inward investment, is very high on the political agenda. I must admit that at the time this came as a big surprise to me, because this was a very different country from the Japan I served in as an Austrian diplomat from 1985 to 1988. Japanese companies at the time were going overseas and buying and investing in everything. Japan invested heavily in the United States, in

³ EU leaders have reached agreement on a new Constitutional Treaty for Europe at the European Council in Brussels on 17 and 18 June 2004. A Summary of the Constitutional Treaty is available at http://europa.eu.int/futurum/documents/other/oth250604_2_en.pdf

⁴ The results of the Summit can be found at <http://jpn.cec.eu.int/frame.asp?frame=english/press-info/4-1-1-190.htm>

⁵ The European Council designated Mr. José Manuel Barroso, the former Portuguese Prime Minister, as the new President of the European Commission and he was confirmed by a vote by the newly elected European Parliament.

California and the entertainment industry; insurance companies were buying Van Gogh paintings, and did all these things which were typical of the bubble economy. Things are different these days, but I think it has had a good effect on Japan, because I see that the projects that are dealt with now are much more realistic, and I think that will help Japan in the long run.

It is also interesting that the second reason given by Prime Minister Koizumi for inward investment was to improve Japanese management techniques. When I was here the first time I was quite busy organising hoards of managers who came to Japan for the purpose of learning Japanese management techniques. Just-in-time was being developed, and everybody wanted to see and learn. Now Japan is eager to get investment to improve management. Nissan is always given as the outstanding example, and while I don't want to get too much into politics, Mitsubishi may be another example, although not along exactly the same lines. But I think that some interesting developments are occurring.

Japan and the EU should also work hard to get the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Doha Round back on track. You know that the WTO is always working with rounds where there are waves of liberalisation and deregulation going on. This present round is called the Doha Development Round, and it is placing a special focus on developing countries. What has come out as one of the main goals and at the same time obstacles of the Doha Round is the agricultural issue. The European Commission has just launched, two days ago, a new initiative in trying to get these negotiations back on track, in offering quite considerable reductions in export subsidies for agricultural exports. This is certainly a challenge, because the EU is giving export subsidies, as do other countries like the United States, and we have to live up to the challenge⁶.

We all have to recognise that world trade is not just world trade in agricultural products. Agricultural products make up only 6 percent of all trade worldwide, so we have to take care of the remaining 94 percent, including trade in services. There we do hope and wish that the Japanese government will give us its support and take a more proactive role in the negotiations in order to move the process forward. I think it is the responsibility of one of the largest economies in the world to contribute to the development of international rules and to secure the multilateral framework. As you all know, in international politics right now multilateral rules are not in such high demand. In order to avoid getting too much unilateralism in international politics, we should work together to strengthen the multilateral trading system as represented by the WTO.

This is also necessary, in light of the ongoing negotiations all over East Asia over free trade agreements (FTAs) and closer economic cooperation partnerships agreements, which reflects the fact that the Doha Round is not making much progress. Countries which never negotiated FTAs are entering the game. Japan is one example. It has negotiated a FTA with Singapore, which was comparatively easy, because—as we all know—Singapore is known for many things, but not agricultural exports. The negotiations with Mexico were much more difficult, and it was very interesting to see that during the summit meeting in Tokyo, when President Vicente Fox was here, the Japanese prime minister and the president, helped by their respective ministers, were not able to agree on a quota for oranges, grapefruit, and pork. Afterwards, everybody did a

⁶ After the failure of the Ministerial Conference in Cancun, negotiators finally struck a deal by the end of July 2004 in Geneva which allows the Round to continue. For details:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/newround/doha_da/pr310704_en.htm

bit of soul searching and it became very clear that these products should not be the limit to politics and the problem was solved relatively quickly, and the deal will be signed soon. In addition, Japan is also engaged in FTA negotiations with Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia. There is also an attempt to have a trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). As China had offered such a deal to the ASEAN countries, Japan had to increase its activities in turn. But in order to achieve or maintain order in all these efforts we must make sure that the WTO can fulfill its function of controlling international trade in a multilateral manner.

We also have to talk a little bit about the exchange rate between the euro and the dollar and the euro and the yen, because this is quite important for international trade. Japan is always intervening very strongly to influence the exchange rate, and that has repercussions on international trade flows. Let me also say in passing that the introduction of the euro, the fact that we now have it in our hands and can use it in 12 countries in Europe, is probably one of the greatest achievements we have had lately. As you may imagine, it was not easy for quite a few countries to accept this new currency and give up their own currency, such as the deutsche mark and the French franc. In that sense the euro was quite an extraordinary achievement: If you think about what states use as a symbol, in addition to the flag, it is very often the currency. Prove for the success is that more and more of the Member States want to join the euro as soon as possible.

On the political side, the cooperation between Japan and the EU is showing signs of vitality. The EU and Japan used to concentrate on trade issues—trade conflicts or antidumping issues. That was our policy relationship. But now we are changing, and the EU is showing more interest in the Asian region. Let me just mention the Korean Peninsula, where we sent troika missions and participate in the Korea Energy Development Organisation (KEDO). We cooperate with Japan to try to bring peace to Sri Lanka. We are concerned about and are discussing with all partners the situation between China and Taiwan. We have cooperated in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), where Japan, as well as the EU, acts as a regional coordinator. We have a close relationship with the ASEAN nations. We are trying to make sure that the ASEM process overcomes its recent problem, which is the same problem we already had in the ASEAN context, the relationship with Myanmar, which is certainly not the most democratic nation in the region. Therefore we are not happy if it wants to join the ASEM process. But I will deal with that later on.

On the Japanese side, Japan is also now looking far across its borders. I am not making any comments on the Japanese participation in the Iraq war, but I note that it is extraordinary that Japanese troops are there. Japan has also shown considerable interest in the Balkans and has participated in efforts to establish peace there. Very recently, at the beginning of April, Japan organised a conference on the Balkans here in Tokyo. Japan also continues its activities in the Gulf, in sending and refueling ships and destroyers as part of the war against terrorism around Afghanistan. Japan is an important contributor to the United Nations and is working hard to reform the UN, which is certainly necessary. Japan is still one of the largest donors of official development assistance (ODA). These are areas which have increased the political dealings between Japan and the EU, but which are also the kind of policies that have an influence on the rest of Asia.

I think what Japan and the EU to some extent have in common is that people

often say that we are both economic giants but dwarfs in political terms. Both of us have an interest in getting away from that stereotype, and our cooperation could help to achieve this goal. Although I will not go into too much detail about the organisational setup of the EU-Japan relationship, let me just point out that since 1991 we have had a more institutionalised relationship. The first summit meeting was in 1991, and 10 years later we jointly established the EU-Japan Action Plan⁷, which is discussed on a regular basis between the heads of state and government.

One of the issues I would certainly like to mention is an issue that comes up all the time, namely that knowledge about the EU in Japan and about Japan in Europe is not sufficient. Filling this gap is one of the tasks which I now have to achieve here as a European diplomat—to try to pass on information about what we are doing, why we are doing what we are doing, and how we are doing what we are doing. This is especially difficult, I must admit, for the EU; probably 90 percent of EU citizens don't understand how the EU works, so we can't really expect Japanese people to know how it works. But as we are gaining more influence, I think it is worth doing that. We will also make an effort next year, in 2005, which was designated the EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges⁸ by the heads of state and government in 2002. Officials are supposed to come up with ideas of what to achieve this goal. Therefore we are now in the process of planning for 2005, trying to make sure that we organise events where people can actually meet. We want to avoid organising conferences where officials meet to assure each other that ordinary people should meet. If anybody has any bright ideas, I am very willing to take them on board. We will also have a call for proposals on our website⁹, and if anybody wants to develop a project, there will be some financing available, so please check out our website.

I should also say a few words on the enlargement of the EU. The enlargement of the EU began in 1989, when the communist regimes in Eastern Europe crumbled under their contradictions. The economic dimension of enlargement is certainly important, but we also shouldn't overlook the political dimension of enlargement in European history. This enlargement is based on the freely expressed will of millions of people who see their future within the EU. With the new countries joining the EU—since the first of May we have gained 75 million new citizens, or in economic terms, consumers. Therefore the EU now accounts for a quarter of world trade and 40 percent of the world's outward investment. That is certainly a signal of interest for companies. Businesses will profit from this enlarged EU, as the same rules and regulations are now applied in 25 countries in the Common Market. Applying the same standards and specifications makes it much easier for Japanese companies, because they can sell their products according to the same specifications all over the EU.

Politically, the positive impact will be that the new Member States will participate in the political process in Brussels and will therefore deal much more closely with Asia and Japan than ever before. This is a phenomenon that we have already seen in the "old" union of 15 countries. If I take the example of Luxembourg: because of its size it would not have very intensive contacts or dealings Asia or Japan. However, in our system we have weekly meetings of the so-called Asia Group in the Council, which

⁷ <http://jpn.cec.eu.int/english/eu-relations/index.htm>

⁸ Information on 2005 can be found on the Delegation's website
<http://jpn.cec.eu.int/frame.asp?frame=english/eu-relations/e3-13.htm>

⁹ http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/japan/grants/index.htm

means that each and every administration has to deal with Asia on a weekly basis. Naturally nobody wants to sit in a meeting and not understand what is going on. This applies to the official level, and also to the foreign ministers who meet once a month and they always have Asia on their agenda. Officials have to prepare the ministers, so countries, not only Luxembourg but also new Member States, such as Malta, Cyprus, and the Baltic states, will engage very much in the preparatory process. That is what I have always call the “educational value” of the EU. We have to deal with all parts of the world, not only Asia. We have the same kind of groups for Latin America, the Mediterranean and Africa. I think this educational aspect facilitates bilateral cooperation between Asian countries and all members of the EU.

Now let me turn from Japan to Asia in general. I think this is necessary because we are still hearing from some Asian partners that Europe is not interested in Asia. This is normally measured by participation in international meetings, especially ASEM. If ministers do not have time to participate in meetings, it is interpreted as a sign of neglect and not too much interest. Sometimes it’s only a matter of agendas. Our foreign ministers especially have to attend a lot of meetings not least because of the many internal meetings in addition to many other international obligations. But in order to be a little bit more coherent we have developed an Asia strategy. It was first published in 1994¹⁰ and updated in 2001¹¹. We have now added some specific regional strategies, and in 2003 we published our latest one, the Southeast Asia strategy¹². So we have a global Asian strategy, a regional strategy, and then either country-specific programs or, as we call it in the case of Japan, action plans, which are very concrete devices developed through bilateral negotiations.

It is of course not easy to develop a strategy for Asia, because we have to take into account that Asia is a rather diverse continent. You have in Asia one of the biggest countries in the world, China, and one of the smallest, Brunei. You have some of the richest countries in the world—Singapore and Japan—and some of the poorest—Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar. You have highly populated countries like Singapore and Japan, and you have countries like Mongolia, where you hardly find anybody. So it is not easy to have one strategy that fits all of Asia. Therefore, we have had to define strategies for South Asia, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and Australasia, which is Australia and Oceania. That was the only way that we could deal with Asia. It is interesting to note that there are very few Asian countries that have a Europe strategy. The only one that comes to my mind is China, which has published the “China’s EU Policy Paper¹³”. It would be interesting to discuss, why Asian countries are not developing a coherent approach to Europe.

When we deal with Asia, in addition to these bilateral relationships we have, as I mentioned earlier, ASEM, we have a structured dialogue with the ASEAN countries¹⁴, including what we call “post-ministerial meetings”. We also participate in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which is the only security forum in the region. In economic terms, the relationship between Asia and Europe has developed quite strongly over the years, especially since the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997–98. I must admit that

¹⁰ http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/asem/asem_process/com94.htm

¹¹ http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/asia/news/ip01_1238_en.htm

¹² http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/asia/doc/com03_sea.pdf

¹³ <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/xos/dqzywt/t27708.htm>

¹⁴ http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/asean/intro/index.htm

at the time we were fortunate in creating at the second ASEM summit in London what has come to be known as the “ASEM Trade and Investment Pledge”. If you think back to 1997–98, Asian currencies were devalued by about 50 percent to 60 percent. This of course reduced substantially the prices of exports. But as we had made this pledge, we had to fight protectionist pressures at home in order not to close the markets and to allow the countries that were severely hit by the Asian Financial Crisis to export themselves out of the crisis. This was an important contribution to the rebalancing of the situation: in 1996 we had a trade deficit with Asia in the range of 13.3 billion euros, which exploded in four years to more than 1.2 trillion euros. So our trade deficit became roughly six times larger because we kept the markets open. I think if you take into account the fact that all the Member States of the EU also constitute a majority in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), then we contributed to overcoming the Asian Financial Crisis.

The reaction to the crisis was quite interesting. At the time Japan proposed an Asian Monetary Fund in addition to the IMF, in order to make additional money available. The idea probably wasn’t bad, but there was strong resistance from the United States, not least because there was the fear that in creating an additional fund more “easy” money might be available, which would make it more difficult to bring back financial control and discipline to the affected countries. What was left over from this Japanese initiative is the so-called Chiang Mai initiative, which is an arrangement among currencies—a sort of clearinghouse—which could potentially be the nucleus for a more coherent monetary cooperation in Asia. This issues attracts a lot of attention. I was very surprised to see that the *Far Eastern Economic Review* carried a cover article which I think had the title “Is the Miracle Possible?” The miracle would be the introduction of an Asian currency inspired by the euro. I think it is not for tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, but it is interesting that it is being discussed seriously in Asia¹⁵.

Now, the question one could ask regarding both continents, Europe and Asia, is why should we take care of each other? I think there the clear answer is that if globalisation does exist, and I think it does, not only in economic terms but also in political terms, this process has certainly brought the two continents closer together. I have already referred to the situation on the Korean Peninsula. If there were a crisis, either a nuclear crisis because of North Korea or a sudden reunification of Korea, it would have repercussions for the whole world. A crisis between China and Taiwan would have an effect on the South China Sea, which in turn would have an effect on the important shipping lanes. The situation in the Strait of Malacca is already a critical one; the security situation is bad and piracy is on the rise, which already has negative repercussions for international trade as the Strait of Malacca is one of the main shipping and trading routes. They are not only of strategic importance for Japan, since 75 percent of its oil from the Middle East comes through the strait, but also for the EU. These are some of the reasons why we need to turn to each other and try to improve our relationship.

The other issue, which I have already touched on briefly but would like to expand now, is the strengthening of multilateral institutions. The EU is an example of integration. We are probably the most integrated form of cooperation of states existing in the world; we are a sort of champion of multilateralism. This is an important issue in

¹⁵ “East Asian financial union plan is outlined” *Financial Times*. May 17, 2004; p.1.

regional organisations and in multilateral organisations like the UN and the WTO. This was underlined by the speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. Yohei Kono, who recently said that Japan and the EU have to work together to make sure that the major powers in the world, and he mentioned the United States, are kept on the multilateral track. I fully agree, this endeavor deserves our support.

The EU and Japan have another issue in common. The foreign policy we are conducting is concentrating more on non-traditional security concerns, which means we care more about the human factor. Japan is very active in that area, and so are we. We work against trafficking in women and children and against sexual exploitation, and we recognise that the eradication of poverty is necessary in order to have security—not only military security but also human security and economic security. It is worthwhile to work for peace, in the sense that one tries to prevent conflicts, but once conflicts arise, we engage in conflict management and peace building.

As the EU doesn't have an army, we are in the process of building up our military element in order to be able to keep our own house in order. Now, we are terribly inefficient, I must say. If I compare the military budget of our Member States with that of the United States, it's about the same size, but we are less efficient because we have 25 different policies. The same is true of diplomatic services. We have 26 diplomatic services, including us from the European Commission. We have more diplomats worldwide again compared with the United States, but cannot wield the same influence. Therefore, in the long run there will be some changes. Just to give an example, it doesn't make sense that 26 embassies are reporting that "Prime Minister Koizumi said this or that." We could make one report and distribute it to all members. Of course, the problem is that if we do that from the European Commission, we would write in English or French. We usually do not write in Finnish, Estonian, and so on. This would be a kind of learning process—that people accept reports in one language which is not necessarily their own. However, otherwise we respect cultures and languages. Brussels by now is the largest language centre in the world—we use 20 languages in interpretation and translation. Thus, we are heaven for interpreters. They all flock to Brussels now, and when we increase the number of officials in Brussels by 5,500 because of enlargement, 3,700 will be dealing just with languages. This is the sort of price we have to pay for integration. One should not forget that when ministers are taking decisions in the European Council, they are taking decisions like a parliament and many of their decisions are directly applicable in each and every EU Member State. Therefore every citizen in every Member State has the possibility to read and understand a law in his or her mother tongue. A cynical person, and I am not a cynical person, would say that we have to do that because politicians generally only speak one language, which is their own. But this is certainly a very bad joke that does not apply.

In concluding, I will only say a few words about this little book, *The Constitution for Europe*, because it is a major part of our endeavors. What we are trying to do here is bring the EU closer to the people—to ensure that we have one instrument where we can see how the EU is functioning. We intend to simplify our legislative procedures. We used to have 16, but the Constitution will bring it down to six. We plan to have one European foreign minister—not liked too much by some Member States, because countries all want to be their own masters in foreign policy. But we know that we can be coherent only if we have one face that is expressing European policy. You may remember Henry Kissinger asking, "Can anybody give me the telephone number of

Europe?” This is certainly a problem, because we still have 25 foreign ministers, a commissioner for external relations, a high representative for foreign policy, and the president of the European Commission, so we have at least 28 telephone numbers to call. You can imagine that Colin Powell or George W. Bush wouldn’t want to call 28 phone numbers but would rather call just one person, and that is certainly something that we need to work on. We also include in this Constitution a charter of rights and duties, a sort of human rights clause, which is very important.

We still have one major problem, however, and this is the main reason there was no agreement in December last year. That is the question of how we make decisions in the EU. That was an unresolved question. So the proposal that is now being discussed is that we need a double majority. A double majority would mean a majority of all Member States and representing at least, and this is up for discussion, 55 percent to 60 percent of the population¹⁶. We have to solve this problem, because we cannot continue what we used to do, which was to seek unanimity too often as reaching consensus among 25 countries is very difficult. But that means that not only individuals but also states have to accept that if they lose a vote, they have to accept the outcome. This is difficult for states, knowing that the EU is not just dealing with irrelevant things but is primarily dealing with issues of domestic policies, normally off-limits for other states. This was the major stumbling block, but hopefully now, if we reduce the margin from 60 percent to 55 percent of the population, it might work.

You can also imagine how difficult it was to draft such a Constitution, when you think how many years Japan has been discussing its constitution, especially Article 9—how to change it, whether to change it. You have a lot of trouble with this single article, but we have a few hundred articles here, starting from starch. So just imagine how difficult it is. You may have also heard that UK Prime Minister Tony Blair would like to have a referendum on the Constitution, which is a dangerous concept. I’m not saying we shouldn’t ask people what they think, but the United Kingdom is an especially interesting case, because it doesn’t have a written constitution itself. The UK is the origin of parliamentary democracy, but it doesn’t have a written constitution. Its constitution is built on precedence and is under the control of the House of Lords. Now, explaining to a nation that is eurosceptic and does not have a constitution that you need a European Constitution is not going to be easy! In my mind, referendums would make sense only if they were held in all Member States, not just in one. If held only in one, this would give that one country a sort of veto right if the result is negative as the European Constitution has to be accepted by consensus. Majority voting can only be foreseen in the Constitution, but in accepting the Constitution in the first place, consensus is required, otherwise there will be no European Constitution.

My last thought is that we have to try to implement our guiding principle, which is “unity in diversity.” That is the success story of the EU so far, and we have to preserve it, but also modify it so that it can continue to function in the future. In the words of the preamble of the Constitution, “*Remaining proud of their own national identities and history, the peoples of Europe are determined to transcend their ancient divisions and, united ever more closely, to forge a common destiny.*”

That’s what we are trying to build. It’s not easy. The idea which I think is of

¹⁶ The compromise reached establishes a majority of 55 Percent of Member States representing 65 Percent of the EC citizens; a blocking minority needs at least 4 Member States to avoid that a minority of larger Member States.

interest to many Asian partners is exactly that: how to work together without creating one super-state, without imposing one culture, one philosophy, one language on the rest of the partners. This is an area where we seek discussion with our partners all over Asia, and recently there has been a growing interest in that aspect of European integration, which is the element that is exportable. I am not saying that the concept of the EU can be transferred to Asia, but the idea of working together, respecting diversity, that is an idea that is exportable.

Thank you very much.

Question-and-Answer Session

Q: I have a couple of questions and comments. Toward the end you talked about the EU constitution and governance. It appears that the EU is undergoing a phased integration process, involving integration of countries of different sizes as well as different economic and social systems. So my first question is what do you think will happen regarding competition between the large nations, such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, as well as cooperation among the different member countries? And my second question is related to ASEM—an area that you are both an expert¹⁷ and a pioneer in. What are your thoughts and ideas about the future of EU-Asia cooperation in the area of human rights?

A: Let me start with the first question, the relationship among Member States in the EU and in particular whether there are rivalries among EU Member States. The way the EU is constructed is that the smaller states are granted a preference. Remember that when the EU was set up with six countries, from the very beginning there were three small countries in the club: Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. They entered into the first cooperative agreement with France, Germany, and Italy. So from the beginning “minority protection” was built into the system. When you look at the voting rights of the Member States, the smaller countries have nearly double the influence in terms of size, GDP, in what ever way you want to measure it. This inbuilt preference for smaller countries was the only way to make sure that they would participate in the EU, because they did not want to be outvoted or dominated by the larger countries.

On the other hand, of course, there is a certain responsibility for larger countries to ensure cooperation. If you express it positively, you can say there is the French-German engine that is moving, or used to move, the EU forward. Especially the cooperation between former German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, and the former French president Mitterand was instrumental in moving the project forward. Attitudes of politicians change with the times, and the current relationship between Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and President Jacques Chirac is certainly different from the relationship in the past. Now we don’t talk so much about an engine, which had a positive image; discussions now centre on the “directorship”, and suspicions about the directorship, which is not only France and Germany—the United Kingdom, Italy, and

¹⁷ Cf. Michael Reiterer. *Asia–Europe: Do They Meet? Reflections on the ASEM Process*. World Scientific/ASEF; Singapore, 2002; 269p.

Spain all want to be a part of it. This directorate idea has come back especially since the failure to agree on a constitution last December. This talk about a directorate is creating a certain sense of urgency among other Member States to make sure that we have a constitution with clear rules and regulations so that a directorate is not taking over, neither formally nor informally. If only some leaders arrange dinner meetings among themselves, you cannot tell him that he should not have dinner with his/her colleagues or friends. However, such gatherings create suspicion, and therefore there was for some time in Europe a rather ridiculous discussion about who was going to be invited, and more importantly, who was not going to be invited to a dinner. I am just making the case that the rules and regulations laid down in the Constitution are necessary in order to prevent unofficial arrangements and agreements.

On ASEM and human rights: first of all let me say that human rights are one of the pillars of European foreign policy, we are trying to promote human rights wherever we can, and I mentioned earlier the human-security factor or non-traditional security concerns. We are spending quite a sum of money to help refugees, for example. We are intervening in countries that have the death penalty. I myself have seen two different Japanese ministers of justice to protest against the death penalty in Japan. For that very reason, Japan would not be able to join the EU, by the way, because you can join the EU only if you have abolished the death penalty. Furthermore, we organise human rights seminars and human rights dialogues with partners.

We are rather harsh on one country because of human rights violations, and that's Myanmar. Myanmar would like to join the ASEM process because Myanmar is one of the three ASEAN countries that are not yet part of it, the other two being Cambodia and Laos. The EU has agreed to Cambodia and Laos joining but not Myanmar, because of human rights violations by the military regime in Rangoon. That is also a good example of different approaches to a problem. We have taken the approach of not having Myanmar sit at the same table with other ASEAN countries, whereas Japan takes the completely opposite approach. Japan holds the view that sanctions are wrong and that it is necessary to help Myanmar join the club of more civilised countries through engagement, dialogue, and incentives. It is a valid argument, but the problem is that in 1997, when Malaysia had the presidency of ASEAN, the regime in Rangoon promised to fellow Southeast Asians that the situation would improve once Myanmar became a member of ASEAN. Now, looking back at the last seven years, that was simply not true. This is not a good recommendation that once a country is a member of ASEM it will behave in a better way. But it is certainly an issue that can be debated as to what the better policy is. I am just using it to underline the fact that human rights still play an important role. But of course it is not an easy issue, as some of our Member States have a colonial history. We do not want to go around Asia lecturing others on what they should do and what they shouldn't do, but at the same time it is important to spread the message that human rights should be respected. So it's a rather delicate exercise. You also have huge countries in the area like China, where we also have established human rights dialogue—especially in human rights policy, one has to take a balanced approach. We have, of course, economic and trade relations with countries whose human right records are far from ideal. Therefore, striking a balance between persuasion, education, dialogue, and doing business is not always easy, and always depends on where you put the focus.

Q: Speaking of human rights, there has been a lot of reporting in the Japanese press about the government of Estonia's treatment of the Russian minority population that has been left there. I understand that the Russians are forced to take a language proficiency test and if they do not pass they are not eligible for citizenship, which means they cannot obtain certain jobs or qualify for various kinds of benefits. I was wondering, has Brussels made its feelings about this known to Estonia, and if this falls under human rights, and if so, has Estonia been told that it should clean up its act?

A: Yes, Estonia has been told to clean up its act, because minority protection is one of the pillars of the EU and also out of self-interest, I must say, as there are minorities in each and every Member State. The problem is how you deal with minorities and at what level you recognise a minority as a minority. There are different standards in different countries. In my own country [Austria] we had quite a few problems with minorities in the southern part of the country, bordering Slovenia, but luckily they are solved now. The idea is that within the EU, over time—it is not something that can be implemented immediately—these issues will become much easier because of the freedom of movement of persons within the EU's internal market.

It is already the case in the “old” Member States that you can move around freely, you can work wherever you want, and that is taking away the pressure a little, because if you feel that you don't want to live where you live right now, and you know that you can get work across the border, that will solve the problem over time. With the new Member States, eight of them will remain for some time under a transitional arrangement whereby freedom of movement of labour is limited for seven years. There is a fear in the old Member States that because of the difference in living standards and in wages there may be a strong movement into the old Member States. The reason for the seven years' period is that in seven years the living standards between the old and new Member States will be more equal—they will not be the same, as that will take more time - but there will be less of an incentive to emigrate, which is actually quite natural. We saw this with one of the previous enlargements, when Portugal joined the EU. There was a fear that for example all Portuguese hairdressers would like to work in Germany. This was not the case. Not many of them moved, not even to France. On the contrary, in just a few years the situation changed fundamentally, because the Portuguese who were living abroad were returning to Portugal, as the economic and political situation improved thanks to EU-membership. This is indeed a very instructive example.

The situation in Estonia is one with a very strong political element, because we shouldn't forget that many of these new countries were part of the Soviet Union until 1989. First of all, it's remarkable that these countries can join the EU only 15 years later. In historical terms this is a rather quick development. And also, if you look at the map of Europe, you see that the situation is still a little unclear because you have Kaliningrad, which is a Russian enclave that is now completely surrounded by the EU. It was tremendously difficult negotiating with the Russians to come to an agreement as to how these Russians could go to Kaliningrad, a part of Russia that is not connected to the Russian mainland. Making arrangements for the transit of Russia citizens from the Russia proper to Kaliningrad, whether they needed a visa, or whether they could have a multiple-entry visa for example, was very difficult, and also very difficult for Russian

President Vladimir Putin to accept, because it looked in a way like a defeat for Russia. Many Estonians regard Russians as the relic of the past, because many Russians were brought into Estonia and other Baltic countries as part of Russian policy to create a Russian majority in the country. So those Russians who did not go back and stayed were seen as an occupation force, which is no longer true, because many of the Russians living there are second- or third-generation citizens who are somehow disconnected from the rest of Russia. Many feel like Estonians, but they happen to speak Russian. Now, Estonia had to accept, as part of the deal to become part of the EU, that they would give minority protection to the Russian culture and the Russian language.

Q: In what areas, if any, do you think we can expect strengthened relations and cooperation between fast-growing China and the newly enlarged EU economy?

A: China is very forthcoming, not only in economic terms but also in political terms. The new Chinese leadership is pursuing a very active diplomacy. The EU has annual summit meetings with China. But also in the intervals between summits, top Chinese politicians come to the EU on a regular basis. Only last week Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was in Brussels, and several new agreements were signed. We want to intensify our relationship, put it on a solid basis also in economic terms and of course there is a lot of investment into China. In political terms China has become very active now in foreign policy and Japan is also profiting from that. I am referring to the six-party talks on North Korea, which are held in Beijing and chaired by the Chinese in a very professional manner.

We are perfectly aware that for China strengthening relations with the EU is a policy of counterbalancing the United States. Chinese foreign policy has a declared aim of having a multipolar international system, as they call it. However, in our dealings we do not forget not only about human rights but also about the rule of law and governance. There is no point in making a lot of investments if you cannot use Chinese courts for normal disputes that arise—legal certainty is a real issue. Therefore the legal infrastructure has to be improved. We have negotiated with China over the years to facilitate its entry into the WTO. We are still giving it support and training so that it can participate effectively in the WTO. In sum, we are interested to establish a broad-based relationship with China, without being blinded to the shortcomings that still exist there.

Q: Thank you very much for your interesting, although difficult, talk on the EU today. I have two questions from the perspective of Asia learning from the European experience. When discussing the issue of Asia in Japan, many people are of the opinion that whereas Europe has a common cultural foundation, Asia does not. I didn't subscribe to this idea from the very beginning, and thanks to Professor Robert Frank's explanation, people have come to understand that this is not the case. Having said that, in Asia there is a gap between countries in terms of elements of a modern nation—in terms of both economic capacity and political maturity. My opinion is that therefore Asia has more to learn from the expansion of the EU than from the initial development of the EU. I was wondering if I could have your thoughts on this point.

Second, in terms of the framework for Asia, many Japanese people believe that China and Japan should be at the centre of this framework and that China should be like France and Japan like Germany. But I believe that Asia needs three central countries, the third being South Korea. I won't go into detail as to why right now. Fortunately that appears to be the direction Asia is heading in, but the problem is the existence of the United States. There is no opposing power to the United States, and when it comes to the issue of national security, the United States is using its political power to push for segmentation. For example, I think that the stance taken by the United States and Asia regarding the creation of an Asian Monetary Fund couldn't be more different from the stance taken by France and Germany when creating the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Some people argue that we should prioritise Asia and cut ties with the United States, but of course that is not possible, so my question is what do you think are the most important measures to move these policies forward?

A: On culture: Yes, there exists something like a European culture, but I think the European culture is formed by many national cultures. To give an example: Spanish culture is quite different from the Swedish culture. I think the driving force in the development of European culture was the Enlightenment, which influenced all of Europe. European culture has national components, elements and which explains our principle "unity in diversity." It may also be significant that the EU has very limited competence when it comes to culture. Member States are very much keeping it to themselves, and I think rightly so. Diversity has remained as has been proved by the history of the EU: If you take just the original members, the Germans and the Italians as an example, who have been parts of the EU from the very beginning, they have not merged into faceless Europeans but remain Germans and Italians. So I think that our principle works, but we have to learn to live with this diversity.

The principle "unity in diversity" could also be applicable in Asia. The influence in Asia of Buddhism is not limited to one country. You have strong elements of Chinese culture, which came to Japan over the bridge of Korea. Of course you also have other elements, like Catholic influence in the Philippines and Islamic influence in Indonesia, the largest Islamic country in the world. By the way, I think this is also a big opportunity for the ASEM process. This is one of the issues I am always preaching, that within ASEM, when the 36 leaders meet, they are representing so many different cultures, religions and histories that it would be a very good forum for discussing important inter-cultural issues. This chance we are missing right now. The problems we face now with Islamic extremists and this can be solved only to a limited extent through cooperation of police and military or declaring war on somebody if you are not addressing the root causes. And the root causes have much more to do with culture; they also have much more to do with religion. They also have to do with poverty, with unequal distribution of income and unequal distribution of power and consequently influence. These are the more interesting issues to be discussed in order to overcome this cultural tension and what we call these days—unfortunately—the "war on terrorism." You cannot win this war on terrorism with hardware. You can only win the war on terrorism in the heads of the people. Unfortunately, this is not the trend we see these days.

Regarding the second question, I think you made an interesting parallel

between China and France and Japan and Germany, but I think I would have a problem in comparing them that way. If I think of Germany and France, for example, they were really lucky to have each other after World War II, because they were working together. France was helping Germany to come back into the society of democratic states. Such a partner is missing for Japan. Japan does not have a partner to work with. It's not China. It's not Korea. And the other countries are perhaps too small. I think that is one of the disadvantages for Japan, which also makes it hard for Japan to come to terms with its past because a congenial partner is missing. Therefore, I would have a little bit of a different view on this comparison. On the U.S. presence, I think its international relations theoreticians and most politicians agree that the presence of U.S. soldiers is a stabilising element in East Asia. Even the Chinese recognise that. If you look back at the last 10 years of U.S.-China relations, criticism of the presence of U.S. troops in Asia is on the decline. China clearly sees them as a stabilising factor. It doesn't feel, at least at this time, threatened by the U.S. presence. There is one exception to this, and that is Taiwan. China fears that the U.S. guarantee of Taiwan's security can bring US involvement. But generally speaking, I think it's accepted. The United States is the undisputed number one in the world right now, and we all have to find a modus operandi with it. In international relations theories, if you have to deal with a hegemon, you don't have so many options. Either you follow the hegemon or you try to build up a coalition which deals with the hegemon without irritating the hegemon too much. If you find the right policy mix, then you can have a rather independent policy which only has a red line when you get on the nerves or touch on the national interest of the hegemon. I think what most countries or what the EU is now trying is to find this distance which allows cooperation without domination.

Q: I recently read about the military buildup of the EU and was wondering if you could elaborate on that point.

A: First of all, nearly all Member States of the EU are members of NATO. There are a few exceptions—Ireland, Malta, Austria, Sweden and Finland are all neutral, for example. However, in military terms these countries are not the most important countries in Europe, so these countries not belonging to NATO is not really weakening it. I think it's the declared intention of those members of the EU that are also members of NATO that the security dimension is carried out primarily through NATO, because it doesn't make sense to build up a parallel structure. However, there is the intention to become more independent from the United States. You can do this in two ways. You can do it inside or outside NATO and this is the discussion that is going on. What the EU is setting up right now is a rapid reaction force. Words are important here. It's a rapid reaction force, not a rapid intervention force, which would be a different animal. This rapid reaction force should make sure that within months troops primarily for peacekeeping operations can be deployed quickly and maintained on the ground for at least 12 months.

This was also a lesson learned from the trouble in the Balkans, where we knew the situation was getting worse and worse and out of hand, but there was not the real capability to move troops around, and also the political will was perhaps not strong enough. Then again, it was very important to have a European element, because for a

country like Germany or France it is difficult to intervene under a national flag in an area like Serbia, for example, because there you bring back history. If they were to do it under a European Union's flag, there would not only be French and German troops but also other troops. This would make it a completely different political animal. Let me make a comparison, if Japanese troops were to intervene in Korea, that would not be a good situation. Therefore we are building up a stronger European military element, and we want to make sure we have transport capacity. European armies are lacking transport planes, especially long-distance ones and therefore it is difficult to move troops and equipment. Therefore we need act. Note however the job description of the European military forces: we call them the Petersberg tasks and comprise humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. In short, they are defensive and not offensive.

Q: First of all, thank you very much for your speech. I was hoping you could share your opinions on the issue of Turkey joining the EU.

A: These are not easy questions to which I can only give wrong answers. Officially, the decision was taken at the European Council in Helsinki that Turkey has a European perspective, and therefore we treat it as a candidate country, although we have not started negotiations. As you know, membership in the EU has to be negotiated. Candidates have to accept what we call the "acquis communautaire." That's about two meters of paper if you put all the rules and regulations on it. It looks quite impressive. By the end of this year the European Commission will publish its opinion on whether we should start formal negotiations with Turkey. The issue is now getting quite some political attention in Europe because the election campaign that has started for the European Parliament.

The borders or frontier of Europe has become an issue. How large is Europe? Where does it begin and where does it end? How do you define it? Do you define it in purely geographical terms? Do you define it more in cultural terms? Or do you define it in terms of the capacity of the EU to handle additional members? Whatever the criteria are, it is clear that Turkey is a big chunk in terms of people and landmass. It is a country different from the rest of the European countries because it is an Islamic country, although not a fundamentalist Islamic country. Modern Turkey was founded on the idea of separation of religion and state. It is only recently that there have been some changes in Turkey. The party in power right now is a moderate Islamic party that is accepted even by the Turkish military. I say "even" by the military because the military still has a strong influence on politics in Turkey and it used to watch over the laic heritage. However, when you observe the political development in Turkey, the changes it has made recently.—say within the last two years—are extraordinary. It has granted minority protection to the Kurds. It has abolished the death penalty. This is very important because there are still many political prisoners in prisons in Turkey, some of them have technically already been sentenced to death. It is also improving the legal infrastructure. It has made changes in the constitution. It has reduced the role of the military, it is doing away with the veto power of the army. I would call all this a sort of positive pre-accession effect on Turkey. That does not exactly answer your question, but I think these changes are, hopefully, irreversible and have helped improve the situation

considerably. Even if we decide to start negotiations, there is an expectation that negotiations will last something like 10 to 15 years and then we have to go through the ratification process. An optimist would say 15 to 20 years; a pessimist would say negotiations could last much longer. The European perspective which we have given Turkey I think will allow Turkey in the long run to become a member of the EU.

What we have not done in the past is to define the borders of Europe. To my own mind, it's about not only geography but also what we can digest. We have to digest 10 new members now. In 2007 most likely we will have the membership of Romania and Bulgaria and perhaps of Croatia. We have other countries knocking on the door, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Moldova—even Russia. President Putin has voiced the idea that he would like to join the EU. At some point in time the European politicians will have to say “no”, because if we turn the whole world into the EU is not the right concept. North African countries like Morocco have also expressed interest in joining the EU. Our answer is our active Mediterranean policy, the Barcelona Process and we also pursue an active European Neighbourhood Policy¹⁸. So we will have to intensify our relationship with our neighbours to give them a chance to participate in the development—not only the economic development but also the political development—of the EU as a sort of a stabilising factor, but I think at some point we are going to have to say membership in the club is closed.

Q: I would like to ask your advice to Japan and to Japanese citizens. Currently Japan is very U.S. oriented and is not placing equal emphasis on the EU. Moreover, Japan does not have the trust of the other Asian countries and citizens. While European countries have taken good care of their neighbouring countries, Japan has been taking a very U.S.-centred approach and has not taken good care of its neighbours, and may even be looking down on them. I would like to ask your advice as to how Japan should maintain a good balance in this area.

A: Another difficult question. Please note that I am speaking only in my personal capacity, so do not take what I say as advice given by the EU. I think that the relationship between Japan and the United States has grown historically, especially after World War II, with the granting of the Japanese Constitution and most importantly the Security Pact, which has also allowed Japan to concentrate on economic development and basically neglect military development and related expenses. Japan is a clear ally of the United States and has supported its policies in the past, not only now in Iraq. The alliance is based on very real factors. I mentioned the Security Pact, the presence of U.S. troops on Japanese soil including Okinawa. Japan has taken that route voluntarily, and what are the alternatives? The alternatives are being discussed now in Japan: Should Japan rearm? How far? Is rearmament the only way to get more freedom? These are questions asked by politicians and academics here in Japan. It is a valid discussion, which is also centred on the revision of the famous Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. This is very much for the Japanese to solve themselves. I would be very reluctant to give any advice.

When it comes to Japan's relations with Europe, however, I think there has

¹⁸ http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/index_en.htm

been a change. I mentioned that since 1991 we have had annual summit meetings, which of course increase contacts and cooperation. Japan has also made some gestures. For example, two years ago President Prodi was the first president of the European Commission to be invited to address the Diet. This gesture is important in political and diplomatic terms. The former foreign minister and current speaker of the House of Representatives, Yohei Kono, gave a very impressive speech on EU-Japan relations in 2000 in France¹⁹, where he was developing a vision of cooperation between Japan and Europe without mentioning economic cooperation even once in his whole speech. He really wanted to stress that Japan and the EU should also work together in political terms. This was a very important achievement because of the thinking of Mr. Kono, who is still a great friend of Europe and the EU.

There is of course this picture of a triangular relationship of the EU, Japan or Asia, and the United States. In this triad there are different forces at work. The economic forces are more or less equal among the three. The military forces are completely different. Therefore the countries or groups of countries have to figure out how they can relate to and deal with one another. The Japanese and European new approach is to underline the political nature. This is a new element, and I think this will help in the long run to have a more balanced relationship.

Japan is in the process of reorienting itself a little bit. If I may overstate it, Japan is discovering Asia. I always make the comparison between Japan and the United Kingdom. People in the United Kingdom talk about Europe as being “over there” i.e. on the other side of the Channel. This reflects the island mentality. I think this is also the problem in Japan, if I may compare these two island nations. There is, by the way, a study done by professor Takasi Inoguchi from the University of Tokyo²⁰. He conducted a survey that asked Japanese people if they felt Japanese, Chinese people if they felt Chinese, and Korean people if they felt Korean. I think that about 90 percent answered that they did. The interesting thing is that while 80 percent to 90 percent of Chinese and Koreans chose “Asian” as a second choice, only 26 percent of Japanese did. I think this tells you something about where Japan really belongs, mentally. Therefore, we discussed the problems with coming to terms with neighbours.

I think it was in the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s that Japan was underlining that it was a member country of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It was probably the only country which was proud of being in the OECD. The former president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, once said, “You can’t fall in love with the common market.” as it is an abstraction. So it is very striking that in the late 1970s and early 1980s Japan felt like an OECD country, because nobody else did. But it was part of the feeling of belonging to Western industrialised countries. The OECD was basically the club of the rich. So I think it was a very interesting signal, but again, that was the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. OECD-ness is no longer an issue in Japan.

Q: I would like to ask another question in relation to the Turkey issue. I personally think that it may be a more practical approach for the EU and Turkey to discuss

¹⁹ <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/fmv0001/speech0113.html>

²⁰ “Is Japan to mainland Asia what Britain is to Europe?” *Japan Times*, November 9, 2003; p.13.

the possibility of providing Turkey with a special status, as opposed to trying to integrate it into the EU. Are such possibilities being discussed? What are your thoughts on this?

A: I see that you are an expert on the Turkey question. I have to clarify one thing. We are not negotiating with Turkey yet. The European Commission has to give its opinion by the end of the year, as I was saying earlier. If we recommend that negotiations should take place, and if the recommendation of the Commission is accepted by the Member States, then it is clear that we are negotiating toward membership. Therefore we will be at a crucial time at the end of this year and the beginning of next year, when a decision is taken. If the decision is that we do not start membership negotiations, we have to think about something else. And that something else could be—well, we already have constructions like this—for example, the European Economic Area²¹, in which Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland are associated with the EU. Switzerland is linked through an intense network of treaties with the EU. We already have a free trade agreement with Turkey, although it is not very well known. But for the time being, the signal we are getting from the Turkish government is “We want membership and we are not even ready to think about anything else officially.” So for Turkey there is a very clear line, and in terms of international negotiating tactics, that’s the only way they can go. I am a negotiator myself, so I know that. If you want to achieve something, you cannot give signals that you are settling for the second best. You have to go for the first best. Personally, I think that we will offer something else if it is decided that membership is not an option. And I imagine that a negative decision would probably have a backlash on the political situation in Turkey. I think we will officially only start thinking about another solution if we are not working toward EU membership.

²¹ http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/eea/index.htm



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