

The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders in Brussels

January 11, 1994

President Clinton. Thank you very much. We have just had a very productive meeting, President Delors and Prime Minister Papandreu and I. As I have said many times in the last few days, I came to Brussels in the hope of working with the leaders of Europe to build a broader and more integrated Europe. At the heart of this new concept of security is the economic vitality of the relationship between the United States and the European Union. The EU remains America's most valued partner in trade and investment. A strong relationship between us is good for America. It can help to generate more jobs, more growth, more opportunities for workers and businesses at home as well as for those here in Europe.

That is one of the reasons that our administration strongly supported the Maastricht Treaty. We believe a strong and more unified Europe makes for a more effective economic and political partner. I think we proved that through our combined efforts to lead the world to a new GATT agreement in December.

One key to achieving that accord came last spring when President Delors agreed to join me in focusing on market access at last year's G-7 summit. I'm committed to deepening our relationship with the EU through regular meetings at all levels to continue to address other concerns as we address the market access concern and as we work together to get a new GATT agreement.

I have argued in my own country that to advance the global economy and to advance the interests of American workers as well, we must compete, not retreat. All advanced economies can only generate more jobs and higher incomes when they have more people beyond their borders to buy their goods and services. Therefore, we must continue our efforts to expand global growth and world markets. The GATT agreement will help in that regard. I am convinced it will create millions of jobs in the global economy between now and the end of the decade. But we also have responsibilities, the United States, the EU, and others, to continue our own efforts toward open trade and more global growth.

In today's meeting, we discussed four ways in which we can build on the momentum generated by the GATT agreement. First, we stressed the need to finalize and ratify the agreement. The agreement itself was an impressive breakthrough, but there are several areas in which we did not reach full agreement. I emphasized today our strong desire to resolve our outstanding differences. We also agreed that further market access offers from Japan and from other countries are also needed to meet the ambitious goals on which we agreed. The U.S. and the EU cannot alone create the open markets the world needs. We think it is clearly time for the other great economic power, Japan, to join us in this effort to open markets.

Second, we agreed on the importance of putting jobs at the center of our trade and economic agenda. Today, the nations of the European Union are facing high and persistent rates of unemployment and sluggish growth. In the United States, we have begun to generate more jobs, but our Nation still has a long way to go before our unemployment is at an acceptable level and before our workers begin to generate more income when they work harder. The renewal of each of our economies will benefit all of them. We discussed some of the innovative ideas contained in the Delors white paper. President Delors and Prime Minister Papandreu both make very thoughtful comments about the kinds of things we could do to generate more job growth both in Europe and the United States. And we look forward to pursuing those ideas at the jobs conference in Washington this spring and again at the G-7 summit this July.

Third, we agreed to explore the next generation of trade issues. I suggested that the successor agenda to the Uruguay round should include issues such as the impact of environmental policies on trade, antitrust and other competition policies, and labor standards, something that I think we must, frankly, address. While we continue to tear down anticompetitive practices and other barriers to trade, we simply have to assure that our economic policies also protect the environment and the well-being of workers. And as we bring others into the orbit of global trade,