

EU - CROATIA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

**14th Meeting
11 October 2011, Brussels**

JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Parliamentary Committee, in accordance with Rule 3 of its Rules of Procedure and Article 116 of the EU-Croatia Stabilisation and Association Agreement, addressed the following recommendations to the Stabilisation and Association Council and to the institutions of the Republic of Croatia and of the European Union:

1. Welcomed the decision of the Accession Conference with Croatia of 30 June 2011 to close accession negotiations, and congratulated the government, parliamentarians and all citizens of Croatia for their efforts and their remarkable success;
2. Recalled that the negotiation process lasted more than five years, throughout which Croatia managed to carry out an impressive number of reforms, and applied a methodology ensuring the highest degree of credibility and transparency;
3. Welcomed, in particular, the progress achieved under Chapter 8 - Competition Policy and Chapter 23 - Judicial Reform and Fundamental Rights, which was judged sufficient to close negotiations on two of the most complex aspects of the process;
4. Took note of the EU's decision to continue to monitor progress closely, in particular as regards the development of Croatia's track record in implementing judicial reforms; committed itself to continue to follow and discuss the full implementation of all necessary measures until accession;
5. Called upon the Croatian Sabor and the European Parliament to enhance preparations for the arrival of Croatian observers in the European Parliament, in view of full membership; underlined the importance of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in facilitating this process;
6. Took note that Croatia made significant progress in finding mutually acceptable solutions to bilateral and regional issues, such as on borders, succession related questions, cross-border cooperation in fighting organised crime and refugee return. Croatia pursued efforts aimed at reconciliation among citizens in the region. Croatia's experiences in regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are positive examples for all countries in the region;
7. Stressed the positive impact of Croatia's accession to the EU, not only for Croatia, but for the future of the European project as a whole; emphasised the positive signal that Croatia's accession sends to its neighbours in terms of their own accession prospects.