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FOR THE EDITOR

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Foreign Ministers meeting,
Parliamentary Assembly,
Inauguration of the new building
by President GISCARD D'ESTAING
Strasbourg, 24 - 28 January 1977

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

During the week from 24 to 28 January 1977, there will be several newsworthy events taking place at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Some preliminary information about these is given below ; I shall be sending you more details early in January with the usual summaries of the Assembly's reports.

1. Parliamentary Assembly, Monday 24 to Thursday 27 January

The political highlights of this parliamentary session will be a debate on Wednesday 26 January on European solidarity including a statement by Dr Garrett FITZGERALD, the Irish Foreign Minister, as representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the Committee of Ministers, and a debate on Thursday 27 on the development of democratic institutions in Europe, with a statement by Mr Gaston THORN, the Luxembourg Prime Minister. Other points of interest will be a statement during the debate on Tuesday 25 on the evolution of agricultural structures in Europe, by Mr Christian BONNET, the French Agriculture Minister, the introduction of summer-time in Europe, the law of the sea and the conservation of fishing grounds, and the protection of workers against the effects of unemployment.

2. Committee of Foreign Ministers, Thursday 27 January

The main items on the agenda of this meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Council's 19 member States will be : Progress of European Co-operation and the follow-up to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and preparation for the Belgrade Conference.

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The meeting will as usual be held in private, but a press communiqué will be published and the Chairman, Mr Dimitrios BITSIOS, the Greek Foreign Minister, will give a press conference at the close of the meeting.

3. Inauguration of the new building, Friday 28 January

Mr Valéry GISCARD D'ESTAING, President of the French Republic, will preside over and deliver the closing speech at the inauguration ceremony of the new Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg which is to serve as the headquarters of the 19-nation Council of Europe and as the meeting place of the 9-nation European Parliament for its sessions in Strasbourg. The ceremony will open at 16.00 p.m. in the new Assembly Chamber.

We will do our utmost to facilitate the work of journalists on this special occasion. Please note, however, that there will be 115 seats reserved for the Press and we shall consequently have to allot them on the "first come first served" principle and, in case there are not enough seats for everyone, reserve not more than one seat for each paper or agency. If you wish to attend the inauguration ceremony, please fill in the attached form and return it to us. We will, of course, take account of the time required for delivery by the post when answering requests for seats.

Accredited photographers and cameramen will be able to work on the floor of the Assembly Chamber during the ceremony but we have been asked to ensure that they do not block the view between the rostrum and those seated in the parliamentary benches. We shall have to ask for understanding when trying to meet this request whilst giving film operators maximum facilities for carrying out their tasks.

Hoping that I will be able to welcome you in our new premises on this occasion, may I take this opportunity of presenting to you my very best wishes for the New Year.


Göran LOFDAHL