



EUROPEAN COUNCIL  
THE PRESIDENT



Brussels, 24 June 2011  
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PR PCE 6

**Remarks by President Herman Van Rompuy  
on the occasion of the political agreement  
on the accession of Croatia**

We are pleased to welcome Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor in Brussels and meet her right after the European Council. In later years, this European Council will be remembered as the meeting which paved the way for Croatia's membership of the European Union. It is a milestone for Croatia and for the Western Balkans as a whole.

We concluded today that the accession negotiations with Croatia have reached their final stage. The European Council expects the Council to finalise the work swiftly and conclude the negotiations by the end of June. This would allow the Accession Treaty to be signed before the end of the year.

Madam Prime Minister, I thus have the honour to convey to you the good news on behalf of the 27 Heads of State and Government: **Croatia will become the 28th Member State of the European Union.**

I wish to congratulate you wholeheartedly on this achievement, allowing Croatia to fully join the European family. It would have not been possible without the hard work of the Croatian government and the Croatian people nor without your personal leadership.

Your country has turned the fundamentals of the State inside out to be fully aligned with European standards. It performed impressively through the past months -- even up until the last weeks and days. Moreover, we are confident that you will continue to pursue the necessary reforms with the same vigour until the accession date, and beyond.

Croatia's achievement serves as an inspiring example for the other countries of the Western Balkans. Croatia demonstrates that with political will, a strong national consensus and dedicated work, it is possible to overcome the shadows of the past and to move towards membership of the European Union. From our side, we confirm our commitments as regards the European vocation of the whole region.

Finally, I would like to compliment the European Commission and the Hungarian Presidency of the Council. You have played a pivotal role in Croatia's accession process.

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Dirk De Backer - Spokesperson of the President - ( +32 (0)2 281 9768 - +32 (0)497 59 99 19  
Jesús Carmona - Deputy Spokesperson of the President - ( +32 (0)2 281 9548 / 5150 - +32 (0)475 65 32 15  
[press.president@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:press.president@consilium.europa.eu) <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>

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