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11, Belgrave Square.  
London, SW1X 8PP

Op. cc. Mader  
Subject.

Prime Minister.

A date reply will follow.

European Policy - Enlargement of European Community # 2 A.F.C. 31/10

London, 31st October, 1983

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PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T170/83

My Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you in order to raise again the subject of the accession of Portugal to the E.E.C., a subject, to which my Government attaches paramount importance and, consequently, of the next summit meeting in Athens.

On the 28th March 1977 I had the honour of presenting on behalf of the Portuguese Government, the formal demand of Portugal to join the European Economic Community.

The presentation of this request marked the end of an era of political and social agitation in Portugal and was in itself a clear affirmation of my country's new political and economic options.

Five years have elapsed since the solemn opening of negotiations on the 17th October 1978. I regret having to state my disappointment now for the lack of political will that led to the slackening of a process which at the start had the general support of the E.E.C. member states and did not present, already at that time, any unsurmountable difficulties for its conclusion. I must tell you that my disappointment is also shared by all the portuguese who believe in Europe and in its prominent role in the shaping of World economic and political realities.

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We are well aware of the difficulties the Community has to face but we believe that they can easily be solved if the will to build a stronger Europe prevails over the narrow approach that makes the survival of great political designs dependent on short-term economic interests. As an old European nation, Portugal has the right to participate in the definition and resolution of all the problems which Europe will be confronted with. This is also, I think, in the interest of Europe.

We think that the reinforcement of the European idea cannot be achieved without the strengthening of the solidarity between the North and the South of Europe, through a dialogue that pays due attention to the peculiarities and the specific problems of the different parts of Europe. We think therefore that, although accepting that the accession of Portugal and Spain could be simultaneously effective, that is to say on the 1st of January 1986, Portugal's treaty of accession should be signed earlier than Spain's, and already during the first half of 1984, as the Portuguese dossiers do not present any difficulties for rapid conclusion. This would be the logical result of the separate consideration of each candidature and its appreciation on its own merits, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Rome.

The Portuguese people are going through a period of restraint meant to overcome a serious economic crisis. It is our duty to show now to the Portuguese public opinion the new roads leading to the future, which cannot be actually defined if we do not know whether we can pursue the previously chosen trend which aimed at full E.E.C. membership or, failing that start in a different direction if Europe refuses us. It is now imperative to know if we are really going to join "Europe", under what conditions and when.

Every historical option has a proper time for its fulfilment. The time for the fulfilment of Portugal's European option is gradually coming to an end. It would be an error, in which we are not ready to incur, to further delay the necessary decisions in this matter. Portugal hopes that a decision

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will be taken soon because we cannot lose the opportunity to start in a different direction.

We want to be part of a politically and economically coherent Europe, and therefore we are waiting for an unequivocal answer and steps forward from the E.E.C. countries. The Athens Summit and the subsequent months should bring forth the completion of this process.

Yours sincerely,

s) Mario Soares  
Prime Minister of Portugal

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London, S.W.1.