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EUROPEAN COUNCIL, BRUSSELS

29/30 MARCH 1982

EUROPEAN FOUNDATION

Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office

POINTS TO MAKE

1. Pleased that it has been possible to sign the agreement during the Council following the French initiative to revive discussion late last year. Grateful to M Tindemans for his original recommendation.
2. Hope that the Foundation will adopt a practical approach to its essential task of promoting a greater awareness of Europe among the peoples of the Community.

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BACKGROUND

References/Annexes

A Text of intergovernmental agreement [to follow when available]

3. Foreign Affairs Ministers will be invited to sign the Final Act establishing the Foundation at the "academic session" on the morning of 29 March as part of the celebrations for the 25th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty of Rome. The text of the intergovernmental agreement and the arrangement setting up the preparatory committee will be signed by Foreign Affairs Ministers in a separate private session.

4. Agreement to set up the European Foundation was reached in principle at the European Council of December 1977 following the recommendation of M Tindemans in his report on European union in 1976 but the problems have only now been resolved. Its general aims are to seek practical ways, without duplicating or overlapping with other organisations, to improve mutual understanding among the peoples of the Community: to promote a better understanding of the European cultural

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heritage; to further a greater understanding of European integration and to ensure that this understanding spreads both inside and outside the Community. Its activities will include encouraging knowledge and use of Community languages, exchanges of professional and other people in the Community, and support for projects demonstrating in a popular way co-operation between the countries of the Community.

5. The European Council in April 1978 agreed that "the Foundation will be set up by means of agreements concluded by Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council" and that its seat should be Paris. Negotiations foundered late in 1978 on the two key problems of Community participation and financing. Work was discontinued until November 1981 when the discussions were reopened on a French initiative. The problems have now been overcome. On finance the Community will provide 4m ecu over the first three years.

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