

dominating, Europe. No one has expressed the ideal more directly than Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany.

“It is my firm conviction that both German states will bring about this unification in the awareness of their responsibility for freedom, democracy, stability and peace in Europe. That is in keeping with our aim of creating not a German Europe but a European Germany.”

In light of these considerations,

“The Committee welcomes the strong evidence of German commitment to peaceful and constructive membership in the community of Europe. In that connection, we declare that respect for the Poland-German border is, and must remain, a cornerstone of German unification.

2. Germany and the European Economic Community

An essential element in the anchoring of a united Germany in Europe is its membership in the European Economic Community, which is itself pushing ahead with further economic and political union. Lutz Stavenhagen, State Minister in the Government of the Federal Republic Germany, told us that the EEC would adjust to accommodate the enlarged Germany but that he did not think there would be other new members admitted before 1992. He envisaged the following sequence: first, completion of the internal market, then political union and, only then, the admission of new members, beginning with Austria, Turkey and the EFTA countries. As for Eastern Europe, he thought there would be closer association but no consideration of membership for at least five years because of the comparative weakness of those economies. He put the Soviet Union still further down the list.

Clearly, Germany's economic vision is turned westwards but there is also a recognition that East Germany is an important part of Comecon and remains integral to the economic relations among the countries of Eastern Europe. It was taken for granted by virtually everyone we met in the Germanies that Comecon was essentially finished but it was also stressed that the transformation of its state-centered networks of economic exchange and inter-dependency could only occur gradually. The Government of the Federal Republic has stated on more than one occasion that a united Germany would honour contracts entered into by the GDR and otherwise seek to promote economic cooperation with its neighbours to the East. While there was considerable scepticism about the potential of these markets in the near term, it was also suggested that East Germany might prove to be a very useful launching pad for a powerful and united Germany to extend its economic presence and influence throughout Eastern Europe.