COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of 21 January 2002

on the role of culture in the development of the European Union

(2002/C 32/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. WHEREAS the Community contributes to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore, and whereas this imperative respect for cultural diversity underpins and sustains the Europe of culture in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

2. RECALLING the need for cultural aspects to be taken into account by the Community in its action under other provisions of the Treaty, for example in the areas of competition policy, the internal market and the common commercial policy.

3. CONSIDERING that it is essential to encourage cooperation and cultural exchanges in order to respect and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe and to improve their knowledge of one another.

4. WHEREAS culture should contribute towards improving the external visibility of the Community by emphasising its cultural diversity and the common dimensions of its cultures.

5. WHEREAS the enlargement of the Union will bring greater richness and cultural diversity.

6. WHEREAS the common dimensions and mutual knowledge of cultures in Europe, in a society based on freedom, democracy, solidarity and respect for diversity, are essential components of citizens' support for, and participation in, European integration.

7. WHEREAS, with this in mind in particular, culture constitutes a very important factor in the development and consolidation of the process of integration of the Community.

8. WHEREAS cultural development, above and beyond the prospects for individual and collective fulfilment that it can create, also generates employment and economic wealth, thus producing added value and making for growth and prosperity,

IN THE LIGHT OF THE FOREGOING, HEREBY:

A. INVITES the Member States and the Commission, guided as they are by respect for cultural diversity, the principle of subsidiarity and the willingness to place culture at the heart of European integration to:

   — develop cultural cooperation, European artistic creativity and cultural exchanges,

   — cooperate in order to enable the Commission to update the assessment of the implementation of Article 151(4) of the Treaty and to report back to the Council;

B. CONSIDERS it important to start work, particularly on the basis of that assessment, on improving the implementation of Article 151(2) and (4) of the Treaty, and INVITES future Presidencies to draw up a work programme and a timetable for that purpose;

C. CALLS ON Member States and the Commission to take these considerations into account and to regard culture as an essential component of European integration, particularly from the point of view of the enlargement of the Union.