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French minister knocks EU expansion

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28 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy has called for a freeze on European Union (EU) enlargement until it can get its house in order. He said any expansion should be put on ice until internal institutions have been reformed. He feels the inner workings of the EU are too slow at keeping pace with plans to incorporate new members. This is particularly pertinent in light of the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution. Mr. Sarkozy intimated that plans for Romania and Bulgaria to join the Union in 2007 should proceed as their entry process is at too advanced a stage.

Mr. Sarkozy's designs would have huge ramifications for Turkey, with which accession has yet to be decided and whose acceptance is still in the balance. He stopped short of saying Turkey, a candidate country, should never be allowed to join. Croatia might feel justifiably aggrieved at his comments, as it is already in line to join the Euro elite. He declared the EU was not a free-for-all political experiment and not all countries had a "vocation" to be a member of the 25-nation bloc. Mr. Sarkozy is a likely candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections and is in the running to play a major role in the future shaping of the EU.

WARM-UPS

1. EU LEADER: The European Union has decided to have a permanent new leader. Choose your favourite European country (EU or non-EU) to become that leader. The country must be different from your own. Talk with other classmates about why you think your chosen country should be permanent leader.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Nicolas Sarkozy / French politicians / European Union / enlargement / Romania / Bulgaria / Turkey / Croatia / elitism / the future / the shape of Europe

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. EUROPE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Europe. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. CONTINENTS: Is Europe the greatest continent? Talk with your partner(s) about which continent is the best in the world. What are the truly great and wonderful things about Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America? Can you think of five superlative merits for each continent? Change partners and share your positive comments.

5. MEMBER STATES QUIZ: In pairs / groups, take turns in asking each other questions about the 25 member states of the European Union. Write down the questions for which you do not know the answers. Ask these questions to the class after you have finished in your pairs / groups.

Austria	France	Latvia	Portugal
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
Cyprus	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Czech Republic	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Denmark	Ireland	The Netherlands	Sweden
Estonia	Italy	Poland	United Kingdom
Finland			

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. A French politician wants France to join the European Union. | T / F |
| b. The politician wants EU expansion frozen until the EU works properly. | T / F |
| c. He made light of France and Holland rejecting the EU constitution. | T / F |
| d. He said Bulgaria and Romania have to wait to join the EU. | T / F |
| e. The politician said Turkey could never join the EU. | T / F |
| f. Croatia will fully support the politician's comments. | T / F |
| g. He said the EU was a giant political experiment. | T / F |
| h. The politician may be the French president in two years' time. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| a. freeze | mechanism |
| b. put on ice | perplexed |
| c. workings | apt |
| d. pertinent | consequences |
| e. intimidated | has a good chance |
| f. ramifications | halt |
| g. in the balance | calling |
| h. aggrieved | undecided |
| i. vocation | tabled |
| j. is in the running | asserted |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. called for a | on ice |
| b. until it can get | play a major role |
| c. expansion should be put | for Turkey |
| d. too slow at | balance |
| e. their entry process is at | freeze on EU enlargement |
| f. huge ramifications | keeping pace with |
| g. still in the | short of saying... |
| h. He stopped | too advanced a stage |
| i. a free-for-all political | its house in order |
| j. is in the running to | experiment |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy has called for a _____ on European Union (EU) enlargement until it can get its _____ in order. He said any expansion should be put on _____ until internal institutions have been reformed. He feels the _____ workings of the EU are too slow at keeping _____ with plans to incorporate new members. This is particularly pertinent in _____ of the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution. Mr. Sarkozy intimated that plans for Romania and Bulgaria to join the Union in 2007 should _____ as their entry process is at too _____ a stage.

inner
proceed
house
light
advanced
freeze
pace
ice

Mr. Sarkozy's designs would have _____ ramifications for Turkey, with which _____ has yet to be decided and whose acceptance is still in the _____. He stopped _____ of saying Turkey, a candidate country, should never be allowed to join. Croatia might feel justifiably _____ at his comments, as it is already in line to join the Euro elite. He declared the EU was not a _____ political experiment and not all countries had a "vocation" to be a member of the 25-nation _____. Mr. Sarkozy is a likely candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections and is in the running to play a major role in the future _____ of the EU.

accession
free-for-all
short
shaping
balance
bloc
aggrieved
huge

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'house' and 'order'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT EU SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the future of the European Union.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| • freeze | • ramifications |
| • ice | • balance |
| • inner | • never |
| • pace | • aggrieved |
| • light | • vocation |
| • advanced | • shaping |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What were your initial thoughts when you read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the story?
- c. Do you care about what Mr. Sarkozy says?
- d. Are you interested in stories on the European Union?
- e. Would you rather read stories on the EU or on Peruvian frogs?
- f. Do you think Russia or other former Soviet states should join the European Union?
- g. Many Euroland politicians believe the EU should be exclusively Christian and should not accept Turkey. What do you think?
- h. Do you think Turkey is part of Europe?
- i. What needs to be done to make the EU work better?
- j. Do you think the EU will become more powerful than the USA?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What do you think of Mr. Sarkozy's comments?
- d. What do you think about the European Union?
- e. How large do you think the EU will eventually become?
- f. Will the EU always be bullied by France, Germany and the UK?
- g. Do you think there should be just one language in the EU – English?
- h. Do you think the EU could ever collapse or break up?
- i. Should there be an EU army to help police the world's trouble spots?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

WORLD UNION: You are on the committee to set the membership requirements of the new political and economic bloc - the World Union (WU). Decide on the minimum requirements for entry to the new entity.

AREA	MINIMUM MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS
Economy	
Human rights	
Nuclear policy	
Friendliness	
Democracy	
Disputes with neighboring countries	
Other	

Decide which of these countries could join the WU under your membership rules: Brazil, France, Japan, USA, Egypt, China, India, Australia, Bhutan, UK, Zimbabwe, others (?).

Change partners and compare your membership rules. Did you agree to accept or reject the same countries?

Discuss what the rejected countries need to do to be able to join the WU. Do you think these countries could make the necessary changes?

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy has _____ on European Union (EU) enlargement until it can get _____. He said any expansion should _____ until internal institutions have been reformed. He feels _____ of the EU are too slow at keeping pace with plans to incorporate new members. This is _____ of the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution. Mr. Sarkozy _____ for Romania and Bulgaria to join the Union in 2007 should proceed as their entry process is _____ stage.

Mr. Sarkozy's designs would have _____ Turkey, with which accession has yet to be decided and whose acceptance is _____. He stopped _____ Turkey, a candidate country, should never be allowed to join. Croatia might _____ at his comments, as it is already in line to join the Euro elite. He declared the EU was not a _____ and not all countries had a "vocation" to be a member of the _____. Mr. Sarkozy is a likely candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections and is in _____ a major role in the future shaping of the EU.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the candidate countries for EU membership – Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey . Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. THE EU'S WORLD ROLE: Create a poster describing the role the EU should have in the world. Should it have an army? Should it play a bigger role in enforcing human rights? Should it be a check against the superpowers – the USA and China? Should it exert more pressure on countries in the troubled areas of the world to create conditions for peace? Should it lead by example in abandoning nuclear weapons? Etc. Show and explain your fact posters to your classmates in your next lesson.

4. LETTER: Write a letter to French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy about his idea to put a freeze on European expansion. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. F e. F f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. freeze	halt
b. put on ice	tabled
c. workings	mechanism
d. pertinent	apt
e. intimated	asserted
f. ramifications	consequences
g. in the balance	undecided
h. aggrieved	perplexed
i. vocation	calling
j. is in the running	has a good chance

PHRASE MATCH:

a. called for a	freeze on EU enlargement
b. until it can get	its house in order
c. expansion should be put	on ice
d. too slow at	keeping pace with
e. their entry process is at	too advanced a stage
f. huge ramifications	for Turkey
g. still in the	balance
h. He stopped	short of saying...
i. a free-for-all political	experiment
j. is in the running to	play a major role

GAP FILL:

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy has called for a **freeze** on European Union (EU) enlargement until it can get its **house** in order. He said any expansion should be put on **ice** until internal institutions have been reformed. He feels the **inner** workings of the EU are too slow at keeping **pace** with plans to incorporate new members. This is particularly pertinent in **light** of the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution. Mr. Sarkozy intimated that plans for Romania and Bulgaria to join the Union in 2007 should **proceed** as their entry process is at too **advanced** a stage.

Mr. Sarkozy's designs would have **huge** ramifications for Turkey, with which **accession** has yet to be decided and whose acceptance is still in the **balance**. He stopped **short** of saying Turkey, a candidate country, should never be allowed to join. Croatia might feel justifiably **aggrieved** at his comments, as it is already in line to join the Euro elite. He declared the EU was not a **free-for-all** political experiment and not all countries had a "vocation" to be a member of the 25-nation **bloc**. Mr. Sarkozy is a likely candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections and is in the running to play a major role in the future **shaping** of the EU.