



## **JOINT DECLARATION ON THE XXth ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPOSIT OF THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS AT THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE IN FLORENCE**

On 17<sup>th</sup> December 1984 the European Community Institutions decided to deposit their archives of historical interest at the European University Institute. In thus doing they had three main objectives: to provide a solid archival and historical base for research on the European unification process, to promote the idea of integration through increased transparency regarding the European institutional functioning, to consolidate the role and the authority of the European University Institute as a centre of excellence for studies on European affairs.

In its 20 years of activity the Historical Archives of the European Communities has not only fulfilled its mission of conserving and making available to the public the Community archives which are over 30 years old, but it has also become a true resource centre on the history of European integration, as was intended by its promoters ROY JENKINS, EMILE NOËL and WERNER MAIHOFFER. It has a collection of over a hundred archives of personalities, organisations and movements that played a prominent role in the process of construction of Europe from 1930 until today.

In the accomplishment of this mission the Historical Archives of the European Communities benefited from the stimulating co-operation of donor Institutions, represented by the European Commission, and from the never-faltering support of the European scientific community. Since the creation of the Archives, the Italian authorities have expressed their interest in the deposit in Florence of this patrimony of the Communities. They have recently donated a prestigious seat to the Historical Archives, putting to its disposal the Villa Salviati.

On the occasion of the celebration for the XXth anniversary of the deposit of the Historical Archives of the European Communities Institutions, in a moment when the debate on the future of Europe makes it necessary more than ever for Europeans to draw encouragement and inspiration from the "memory of the Community", and with the European Institutions placing more than ever the accent on transparency and good governance, the underwriters of this Declaration:

- emphasise the importance of opening the Historical Archives of the European Union Institutions to the public,
- remind that all archives older than 30 years emanating from the Institutions of the European Union must be made available to European citizens so as to respond to the legitimate expectation about communicability of sources,
- underline the importance of the deposit of archives at the European University Institute of Florence, a centre for high level research, scientific contact and exchange, diffusion and outreach of the common patrimony, in the service of European citizens,
- stress the importance of the parallel acquisition of private archives so as to achieve the greatest intelligibility and comprehension of the history of the construction of Europe,
- underline the importance that these European Institutions establish together with the European University Institute criteria and rules for the reception and selection of such collections in future,
- believe it necessary, considering the developments in the archival field and in particular the development of new technologies in recent years, to continue to develop technical solutions suitable to ensure the long term authenticity, integrity, conservation and availability of the electronic archives emanating from the Institutions of the European Union.

Established in Florence, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2004

For the  
European Commission  
Institute



The President  
ROMANO PRODI

For the  
European University



The President  
YVES MÉNY