



Recommendation 1318 (1997)¹

Council of Europe and Expo '98

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly notes that Expo '98 - the last major world exhibition of the twentieth century - will be held in Lisbon (Portugal), from 22 May to 30 September 1998. It will mark the 500th anniversary of the meeting of civilisations that followed the discovery of the Indian sea route by the Portuguese navigator Vasco de Gama, in 1498.
2. The main theme of Expo '98 will be "The oceans - a heritage for the future". The theme will be analysed and debated from all angles: educational, cultural, scientific, ecological, economic and artistic. This debate will not only seek to evaluate existing knowledge of the subject but will, above all, contribute to the creation of new systems for managing the world's oceans and to sustained efforts to preserve the ecological balance, by laying down criteria for the rational use of marine resources.
3. The organisers have decided to build the pavilions and allow participating countries and international organisations to use them free of charge. Over 140 countries are ultimately expected to take part. Some 118 countries and several international organisations - such as the European Union, the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee - and non-governmental organisations have already confirmed that they will participate. Some 15 million visitors are expected.
4. The Assembly welcomes the interest shown by the Portuguese authorities in Council of Europe participation. When addressing the Assembly on 23 September 1996, Mr Sampaio, President of the Republic of Portugal, said that he expected the Council of Europe to be represented at the exhibition.
5. In its [Resolution 1025 \(1994\)](#) on the future of international exhibitions the Assembly emphasised the role of such exhibitions in fostering cultural exchanges with a view to a better understanding between peoples and the strengthening of peace in the world. The theme of Expo '98 would appear to meet this criterion. The exhibition could also be an appropriate place for the Council of Europe to present its work in this field, not only at European but also at world level.
6. It would also seem desirable that the Council of Europe has its own pavilion at the exhibition. Consideration should be given to whether the Council of Europe could meet the costs involved in arranging and manning this pavilion. Further concessions could possibly be negotiated with the Portuguese organisers and contributions sought from the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity in Lisbon.
7. Therefore, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 7.1. take, as soon as possible, a preliminary decision on the advisability of the presence of the Council of Europe at Expo '98, with an independent pavilion;
 - 7.2. consider the possibility of making available, if possible within such a pavilion, an area where Council of Europe meetings, both at intergovernmental and parliamentary level, could take place during the duration of the exhibition;
 - 7.3. consider other possible forms of actively contributing to the exhibition.

1. See [Doc. 7729](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education, rapporteur: Mr Niza. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 19 March 1997.

