



Adis Ahmetović, MdB

Mitglied des Auswärtigen Ausschusses
Obmann im Unterausschuss für
Internationale Klima- und Energiepolitik

Press release

Speech by Adis Ahmetović, MP, in the German Bundestag - "We are in favor of a growing EU, not a shrinking one"

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Adis Ahmetović, MdB

Mitglied im Auswärtigen Ausschuss
Platz der Republik 1
11011 Berlin
Telefon: +49 30 227-73194
adis.ahmetovic@bundestag.de

Wahlkreisbüro:

Im Kreuzkampe 1
30655 Hannover
Telefon: +49 511 699 805
adis.ahmetovic.wk@bundestag.de

Pressekontakt:

Jasmin Schönberger
adis.ahmetovic.ma07@bundestag.de
Telefon: 0176-22882667

<https://adis-ahmetovic.de/>

Speech by Adis Ahmetović, Member of the Bundestag, on March 20, 2024 on TOP 2 "Debate following the government statement on the European Council on March 21/22, 2024 by Chancellor Olaf Scholz"

- The spoken word prevails -

Dear Madam President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

What is the difference between Ms. Wagenknecht's speech and Ms. Weidel's speech? Not much. They both confirm and attest that they are anti-Europeans and have a problematic relationship with Russia. That is what we have just witnessed.

We are talking here today about the future of Europe - two days of European Council. Don't take it amiss when I say that I am really proud to be standing here today because something very special can be decided. I would like to thank this German government for the fact that, from the moment it took office in this parliamentary term, it has spoken out in favor of a growing European Union rather than a shrinking European Union. That is a massive success, ladies and gentlemen. And also, the fact that we are not just talking about it, but also taking action.

On the one hand, we are talking about EU enlargement and accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova. On the other hand, something will happen that does justice to European responsibility. Among other things, we are talking about Bosnia-Herzegovina, a country that was still in a bitter war 30 years ago.

I can tell you that the country of Bosnia-Herzegovina and its people know what it means to defend themselves and to fight to live in freedom, in peace, in democracy, to fight to grow up with European values. This is not only demonstrated by the people living in Bosnia-Herzegovina. More than two million people fled in the 1990s and are now living with us, whether in Bavaria or Baden-Württemberg or in Hamburg or in Lower



Saxony, and as part of this German society they are showing that they not only think and feel Europe, but also live it every day. That is why, ladies and gentlemen, this is a great signal today.

And that is why I would like to thank the President of the European Commission, who comes from a neighboring constituency of mine in Hanover – she is a former CDU member of parliament and therefore a former colleague of yours, dear Mr. Hoppenstedt – for making this proposal.

At the same time, I would also like to thank the German government, for example Annalena Baerbock, who has been to Sarajevo several times, Boris Pistorius, who was there recently, and our Chancellor Olaf Scholz. He answered my very first question, which I was allowed to ask as a newcomer: "Mr. Chancellor Scholz, dear Olaf, will you work hard to ensure that after 30 years my parents finally get the feeling that they might become part of the European Union, or at least experience a rapprochement?", in December 2021 at a parliamentary group meeting: "Yes, that will work." And this is a truly historic moment. Thank you very much, Mr. Chancellor! Thank you for this moment.

Because the statement on the European Council not only discussed the possible opening of accession negotiations with Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also Ukraine – and in this context the question was asked: "What is the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag actually doing?", I would like to say something about this. I am a fan of a culture of debate. It's in my nature; I'm from Hanover. We are known for being temperamental.

But I was shocked to see the way things were discussed last week, both on talk shows and here in the Bundestag. It had nothing to do with objective discussion, but was malicious and once again, as is unfortunately so often the case, testified to poor character. This is a shift in the mores of debate culture.

That is why I would like to make it very clear here: 28 billion euros in financial support for Ukraine, taking in millions of refugees - with direct support, 2 percent of GDP for our own defense, 100 billion euros in special funds – none of this would have been possible without this SPD parliamentary group; it was only possible with this government and in good cooperation with the CDU/CSU, with the opposition parliamentary group.

It therefore surprises me all the more that they now have doubts about the SPD parliamentary group. Let us rather pull together! This is the only way we will ultimately achieve exactly what the majority wants: peace, stability and a growing European Union.

Thank you very much.