

Community cautious on Yugoslav 'success'

By David Buchan in Brussels

THE NEW Dutch presidency of the EC Council of Ministers yesterday outlined ambitious goals for the Community over the next six months but was cautious about chalking up EC mediation in the Yugoslav crisis as its first success.

Mr Hans van den Broek, Dutch foreign minister, warned that the Brioni accords he helped negotiate over the weekend might not stick. In his opening presidential address to the European parliament he said Yugoslavia's "political leaders will undoubtedly find great emotion, and undoubtedly a great deal of resistance [to the accords], in their republics".

His caution was also shared by Mr Jacques Delors, Commission president, who told MEPs that while it was clear the Yugoslav federation in its present form was finished, "we must be careful not to whip up antagonisms" inside the country.

Mr van den Broek acknowledged that EC foreign ministers, meeting today in the Hague, will have to do better than they did at a similar meeting last Friday in agreeing an overall Community approach to Yugoslavia.

He refused to speculate on what stand the Twelve might take if the Yugoslav crisis worsened.

For a Community caught up in ever-greater schemes in the past few years, Mr van den Broek promised a return to basics.

"The Dutch presidency regards the internal market as its absolute priority... without it there would be no monetary union, and without monetary union there would be no political union," he said.

Extending his theme of economic integration to the outside world, Mr van den Broek said the Community needed to open itself more to imports from eastern Europe.