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COMMUNICATION

from the Commission to the Council
on raw materials in relations with
the developing countries which
export raw materials

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1. The purpose of this communication is to provide for requirements arising from the programme of forthcoming international discussions and, in this context, it refers especially to the problems facing the developing countries which export raw materials. Other aspects of the very broad questions connected with raw materials are and will be dealt with elsewhere. These include questions concerning the developing countries' own supply in commodities, particularly food products, and the Community's own supply in raw materials, a problem discussed in a Commission communication to the Council of 5 February 1975, of which certain basic facts are recapitulated in Annex I.

INTRODUCTION

2. World economic events in recent years and recent political trends underline the need for a thorough reexamination of international economic relations. These events have revealed the extent to which the economic development of all categories of countries depends on a continued and balanced growth of international trade. In view of this interdependence, it is essential that relations of solidarity and co-responsibility are established in a climate of cooperation in which the developing countries will no longer simply appear as the suppliers of a limited range of goods required by the industrialized countries, but as partners in the world's economic growth, in which a larger and fairer share should fall to them.

3. More particularly, this reexamination should cover two major questions which are closely connected: the conditions in which raw materials produced by the developing countries are developed and marketed and, as far as is possible, the acceleration in the growth of the developing countries.

4. These questions are vital for all countries which are consumers of raw materials, whether they are non-producer developing countries or industrialized countries whose industrial activity depends on the regular supply of raw materials in the broad sense, including products of first-stage processing. They are of particular importance to industrialized countries which, like the Community, depend to a large extent on external sources for their raw materials. These countries are dependent on a stable supply at reasonable prices. These questions are also vital for the producer countries, and first and foremost those whose export earnings depend mainly on their sales of raw materials. This is the case with a large number of developing countries, which are therefore dependent for their economic development on the protection of these earnings.

5. These questions concerning raw materials have been the subject of special attention in international discussions for a year or so. The discussions which have been held in various international forums (Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations - UNCTAD - GATT - Second UNIDO General Conference at Lima - Conference of the non-aligned countries at Dakar - negotiations for the Lomé Convention - Algiers Conference - Paris preparatory Conference - United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea - Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference at Kingston) have clearly pointed up the developing countries' claims in the matter of raw materials and their united front, despite their sometimes diverging interests, vis-à-vis the developed countries.

