

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(83) 16 final

Brussels, 27 January 1983

PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC)

on the implementation of the special programme to combat hunger in the world

(presented by the Commission to the Council)

COM(83) 16 final

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

- 1. Special measures to combat world hunger were approved in principle by the budgetary authority in the course of the adoption of the 1983 budget; a new heading (Article 958: Special programme to combat hunger in the world) was inserted, with an appropriation of 50m ECU.

This was the culmination of Parliament's great debate on the subject - the adoption of the Ferrero resolution, and the talks on two Commission Communications to the Council and Parliament, viz. "Towards a plan of action to combat world hunger" (COM(81)560 final, 2 October 1981) and "A special programme to combat hunger in the world" (COM(82)320 final, 3 June 1982).

- 2. When adopting transfer proposal No. 30/82, the Council made the following statement imposing certain conditions on the use of the funds to be released for implementation of the planned measures:

"The Council has not been able to agree to the transfer proposed by the Commission relating to hunger in the world, in the absence of a decision on the substance of the action plan which the Commission communicated to the Council.

As soon as such a decision is taken, on the basis of a formal proposal from the Commission on implementation of this action plan, on which the Council undertakes to take a decision as soon as possible, the Council will make any necessary budget provisions in accordance with the appropriate procedures."

- 3. The Commission has accepted that the implementation of the new Article 958 in the 1983 Budget would entail application of the provisions of the Joint Declaration on various measures to improve the budgetary procedure signed by the Council, Parliament and the Commission on 30 June (statement by Mr. Tugendhat at the plenary session of Parliament on 26 October 1982).

Under the Joint Declaration, the Commission is obliged to submit a proposal for a Council regulation by the end of January, while the Council and Parliament must do all they can to get the regulation adopted by the end of May.

The text of the proposal in question is annexed to this communication.

OBJECTIVES: SCOPE OF OPERATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

- 4. The basic guidelines for the campaign to tackle world hunger have already been described in the two earlier Commission communications, and will here be summarized only briefly insofar as they come within the scope of the proposed regulation.

Sectoral breakdown

- 5. The Community operations would fall into two main categories:
 - support for beneficiary countries' food strategies or policies; such operations, aimed at increasing these countries' self-sufficiency in food, would provide assistance in the rural sector and in particular with the production, marketing, storage and transportation of food;
 - operations with a specific "theme", i.e. structural projects designed to protect natural resources in the developing countries and improve the way they are utilized. They would pave the way for work in areas of general interest such as the efficient use of fuelwood, reforestation, control of desertification, village water supplies and improvement of the domestic and wild livestock population.

Training operations could also be financed in the above fields.

Geographical spread

- 6. The least developed countries should have a priority claim on aid to improve the food position.

Nature of operations

- 7. Community aid can be provided either separately or in combination with external finance from other sources. It can either be supplied direct

or channelled via national regional or international financial bodies.

8. Procedures and conditions

Given the objectives to be attained, the type of country concerned and the sectoral guidelines put forward in this communication, the Commission feels that the only conceivable form of aid would be grant aid.

In its view all natural and legal persons of Member States or of the beneficiary state should be eligible to participate on equal terms in invitations to tender and contracts. The possibility of extending eligibility to other developing countries which are recipients of Community aid should also be kept open.

9. Implementation

The appropriations the budget authority has entered in the 1983 general budget are non-differentiated, which means they must be committed within the year, otherwise they will be cancelled.

The Commission will be attempting to reconcile demands made by the administration of these appropriations with the implementation of the planned measures. The supply of inputs such as fertilizer, seeds and tools, for which non-differentiated appropriations can easily be used, will generate counterpart funds which can be used in turn to develop agricultural and food production over a number of years.

10. Consultation and notification procedures

The financing decisions relating to the various measures will be adopted by the Commission, taking into account the opinion of an advisory committee.

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The Commission proposes that a committee of Member States' representatives be set up, to be chaired by a Commission representative.

It is proposed that the new committee be consulted in accordance with the procedure laid down for the "food aid" committee by Council regulation EEC No. 3331/82 of 3 December 1982 on food aid policy and food aid management. This would enable the Commission to take immediately-applicable decisions, provided the committee returned a favourable opinion. Otherwise, the Commission would lay the matter before the Council within a month, and postpone application of the decisions concerned for a maximum of two months. The Council, acting by a qualified majority, could take a different decision within the two months .

The Commission will report to the Council and Parliament on implementation of the regulation.

Conclusion

On the basis of the proposal in this Commission communication, the Council is asked to adopt the regulation at annex.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC)

implementing the special worldwide famine relief programme

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 235 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission (1);

Having regard to the Opinion of the European Parliament (2);

Whereas the Community, as part of its development policy, is to undertake a world famine relief campaign in the form of a "special programme" comprising structural measures to promote rural development and food self-sufficiency in the short term and thus provide backing for food policies or strategies, plus longer-term operations in specific fields vital for the future and survival of many rural communities;

Whereas the implementation of this special programme would be likely to contribute to the attainment of the Community's objectives;

Whereas the action to be taken to implement the aid provided for under the programme and the objectives to be attained should be laid down;

Whereas provision should be made for a procedure for the management of such aid;

Whereas the Treaty does not provide specific powers for this purpose,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION.

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(1) OJ No C

(2) OJ No C

Article 1

The Community shall, on an experimental basis, implement special famine relief measures to combat world hunger, in accordance with the criteria and procedures provided for in this Regulation.

Article 2

The aid granted under this Regulation shall be directed to all developing countries, especially the least-developed.

Article 3

1. Community aid shall take the form both of measures to support the implementation of food policies or strategies which the beneficiary countries have decided to undertake in order to increase their level of self-sufficiency in food, and of structural measures designed to protect the natural resources of developing countries and improve the way in which these resources are utilized.
2. Measures in support of food strategies shall consist of operations in the rural sector relating in particular to the production, marketing, storage and transportation of agricultural products.
3. Structural measures shall consist of the financing of operations to pave the way for action in areas of general interest such as the efficient use of wood fuel, reforestation and prevention of the extension of desert, village water supplies or the efficient management of domestic and wild livestock.
4. Finance shall also be provided for training operations in the fields referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3, vocational and technical training in the field of development, and elementary education in rural areas.

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Article 4

Aid shall be granted by the Community either autonomously or by means of co-financing with Member States or with multilateral or regional bodies.

The Community nature of the aid shall be maintained.

Article 5

Community aid shall be in the form of non-reimbursable grants.

Article 6

Aid may cover both expenditure on imports and local expenditure required to carry out projects and programmes.

Taxes, duties and charges shall be excluded from Community financing.

Article 7

Participation in invitations to tender and contracts shall be open on equal terms to all natural or legal persons of Member States and the recipient state. Such participation may be extended to other developing countries which are recipients of Community aid.

Article 8

1. A Management Committee for the special worldwide famine relief programme is hereby established, consisting of representatives of the Member States and with a Commission representative as Chairman. The Commission shall provide the Secretariat of the Committee.
2. The Committee shall draw up its own rules of procedure.

Article 9

Decisions granting aid shall be taken in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 8 of Council Regulation No 3331/82 (1) on food aid policy and food aid management.

Article 10

The Commission shall report to the Council and the European Parliament on the implementation of this Regulation.

Article 11

This Regulation shall enter into force on the day following its publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council

The President

(1) OJ No L 352, 14.12.1982, p. 1.