

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

PRESS RELEASES

PRESIDENCY: DENMARK

JANUARY-JUNE 1993

Meetings and press releases January-February 1993

Meeting number	Subject	Date
1637 th	Economics/Finance	18 January 1993
1638 th	Agriculture	18 January 1993
Special meeting	Environment/Transport	25 January 1993
1639 th	No record of a meeting	
1640 th	Internal Market	8 February 1993
1641 st	Agriculture	9-10, 12-13 February 1993
1642 nd	Economics/Finance	15 February 1993
1643 rd	Industry	25 February 1993

PRESS RELEASE

4007/93 (Presse 6)

1637th Council meeting

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

Brussels, 18 January 1993

President: Mr Thor PEDERSEN
Minister for Economic Affairs
of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

<u>Belgium</u> Mr Philippe MAYSTADT	Minister for Finance
<u>Denmark</u> Mr Thor PEDERSEN	Minister for Economic Affairs
<u>Germany</u> Mr Horst KÖHLER	State Secretary for Finance
<u>Greece</u> Mr Stefano MANOS	Minister for Economic Affairs
<u>Spain</u> Mr Carlos SOLCHAGA Mr Pedro PEREZ	Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance State Secretary for Economic Affairs and Finance
<u>France</u> Mr Michel SAPIN	Minister for Economic and Financial Affairs
<u>Ireland</u> Mr Bertie AHERN	Minister for Finance
<u>Italy</u> Mr Piero BARUCCI	Minister for the Treasury
<u>Luxembourg</u> Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER	Minister for Finance
<u>Netherlands</u> Mr Wim KOK	Minister for Finance
<u>Portugal:</u> Mr Jorge BRAGA DE MACEDO	Minister for Finance
<u>United Kingdom</u> Mr Norman LAMONT	Chancellor of the Exchequer

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<u>Commission:</u> Mr Jacques DELORS	President
Mr Henning CHRISTOPHERSEN	Vice-President

The following also attended:

Mr Jean-Claude TRICHET	Chairman of the Monetary Committee
Mr José Juan RUIZ	Chairman of the Economic Policy Committee
Mr Ernst Günther BRÖDER	President of the EIB

MULTILATERAL SURVEILLANCE - PRESIDENCY CONCLUSIONS

The Council noted that the economy of the Community had now reached a critical stage and was in danger of going into recession. Progress had to be made towards an acceptable degree of nominal convergence outside EMU. This meant that low-growth problems had to be solved. The Council agreed that each individual Member State would maintain and step up its efforts to that end. On that basis the Council reaffirmed its desire to strengthen co-ordination of Member States' economic policies at Community level in order to encourage economic growth and reduce unemployment in accordance with the Edinburgh conclusions.

In both cases, the problems would be lessened by having a more flexible monetary policy. But it was agreed that it was first necessary to create the conditions for a responsible lowering of interest rates. This could be achieved inter alia by wage restraint and more healthy public finances with increased emphasis on investment.

The Council noted with interest Germany's intentions regarding budget policy and wage formation. In the other countries Ministers had confirmed their intention of introducing measures to strengthen confidence in economic policy.

The Council noted that the Commission would be establishing bilateral contacts with all Member States with a view to providing a general picture of their concrete plans at the ECOFIN Council meeting in February.

Finally, the Council was pleased to note that the Commission would be consulting management and labour in order to obtain their recognition of the importance for the Community's competitive ability of flexibility on the labour market and wage restraint. The Commission would try to ensure that management and labour made their contribution to efforts by the Community and the Member States to increase growth and employment. The Council looked forward to the Commission's report on the outcome of these contacts.

LOAN TO THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

The Council adopted a Decision concerning a loan of ECU 8 000 million (or the equivalent amount in other currencies) to be granted by the Community to the Italian Republic as medium-term financial assistance intended to support its balance of payments and to enable it to implement its economic adjustment and reform programme.

The loan will be made available to the Italian Republic in four instalments, each of ECU 2 000 million for an average of six years.

The four instalments will be paid out respectively on 1 February 1993, 31 July 1993, 1 February 1994 and 1 February 1995 at the earliest.

Payment of the instalments will be subject to the effective implementation of the budgetary reform programme for the three-year period 1993-1995 submitted by the Italian Government, of which the measures agreed are set out in the recitals to the Council Decision, namely:

The budgetary targets for 1993, 1994 and 1995 are set in order to achieve the stabilization of the public debt ratio by 1995. On the basis of a projected GDP growth of 1,5% in 1993, 2,4% in 1994 and 2,6% in 1995 they are:

- for 1993, LIT 150 trillion for the state sector borrowing requirement, with a surplus for the state sector borrowing requirement net of interest payments (the primary surplus) of LIT 50 trillion;
- for 1994, LIT 125 trillion for the state sector borrowing requirement, with a primary surplus of LIT 77 trillion;
- for 1995, LIT 85 trillion for the state sector borrowing requirement, with a primary surplus of LIT 115 trillion.

These amounts represent:

- for the state sector borrowing requirement, 9,3% of GDP in 1993, 7,3% in 1994 and 4,7% in 1995;
- for the primary surplus, 3,1% of GDP in 1993, 4,5% in 1994 and 6,4% in 1995.

The corresponding development of the state sector gross debt/GDP ratio is 110,6% at end 1993, 112,5% at end 1994 and 112,4% at end 1995.

PROMOTING ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN EUROPE

The Council heard presentations by Commissioner CHRISTOPHERSEN and Mr BRÖDER, President of the Investment Bank, on action taken or planned in order to comply with the brief given by the Edinburgh European Council on the establishment of a European Investment Fund (EIF) of ECU 2 000 million and the setting up within the EIB of a temporary lending facility known as the "Edinburgh facility" of ECU 5 000 million.

With regard to the "Edinburgh facility", the EIB Board of Directors would examine on 26 January 1993 guidelines on financing infrastructure in the three main sectors of intervention, namely transport, telecommunications and energy, and infrastructure in the assisted regions.

Regarding the EIF, the Council noted the Commission's proposals firstly, to give the EIB the power to contribute to the EIF and secondly, to make provision for the Community to contribute to the Fund.

During the ensuing exchange of views the importance was stressed in particular of joint action by the Member States, Commission and European Investment Bank in order to achieve tangible results. The importance was also emphasized of financial institutions taking part alongside the EIB and the Commission.

The Council wanted these proposals to be discussed swiftly and therefore asked for the European Parliament's Opinion as a matter of urgency.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to prepare the discussion on the matter so that the two new instruments could be implemented quickly.

In addition, it was noted that the Commission and the EIB had already begun identifying projects which might be suitable for intervention under the two new instruments.

FUNCTIONING OF THE EMS

The Council noted and welcomed the decision of the new Irish Government to maintain the existing parties of the Irish pound within the ERM. Ireland will continue to use all the instruments at its disposal to maintain the present parities and will underpin this position with domestic arrangements.

The Council considers that this policy is entirely justified.

Member States whose currencies currently participate in the ERM are committed within the rules of the EMS to giving the full support that is needed for all participating currencies.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Transport

Following the political agreement reached at the meeting on 7 and 8 December 1992, the Council formally adopted the Regulation on common rules for the allocation of slots at Community airports.

The Regulation establishes a framework of behaviour to ensure that slots are allocated in a transparent, efficient and non-discriminatory way within a context of growing difficulties regarding airport capacity.

Anti-dumping

The Council adopted Regulations extending for a maximum of two months given that the examination of the facts is not yet complete the provisional anti-dumping duty on imports of dead-burned (sintered) natural magnesite and magnesium oxide originating in the People's Republic of China.

Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania - Negotiation of agreements on wine

The Council decided to authorize the Commission to open negotiations with Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania with a view to concluding agreements on mutual protection and control of wines and on establishing reciprocal tariff concessions.

Iron and steel industry

The Council adopted the Decision designating organizations representing producers and workers required to draw up lists of candidatures for producers' and workers' representatives on the ECSC Consultative Committee.

PRESS RELEASE

4006/93 (Presse 5)

1638th Council meeting

AGRICULTURE

Brussels, 18 January 1993

President: Mr Laurits TOERNAES

Minister for Agriculture
of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr André BOURGEOIS Minister for Agriculture

Denmark:

Mr Laurits TOERNAES Minister for Agriculture

Mr Nils BERNSTEIN State Secretary for Agriculture

Germany:

Mr Ignaz KIECHLE Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Forestry

Mr Walter KITTEL State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry

Greece:

Mr Christos KOSKINAS Minister for Agriculture

Spain:

Mr Pedro SOLBES MIRA Minister for Agriculture

France:

Mr Jean-Pierre SOISSON Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Ireland:

Mr Joe WALSH Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forests

Italy:

Mr Giovanni FONTANA Minister for Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Mrs Marie-Josée JACOBS Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development

Netherlands:

Mr Piet BUKMAN Minister for Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries

Portugal:

Mr Arlindo CUNHA Minister for Agriculture

United Kingdom:

Mr John GUMMER Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

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Commission:

Mr René STEICHEN Member

ADJUSTMENT OF THE COMMON ORGANIZATION OF THE MARKET IN BEEF AND VEAL

Further to the compromise package agreed on at its meeting from 14 to 17 December 1992 the Council adopted, by a qualified majority, the Regulation adapting the basic Regulation on beef and veal, which formed part of the compromise.

The adjustments to the Regulation cover three points:

- extension of the suckler cow premium to producers whose reference quantity for milk production is between 60 000 and 120 000 kg;
- the deseasonalization premium, slaughtering of steers replacing that of male bovine animals in order to encourage deseasonalization in other regions of the Community;
- a temporary solution for the new German Länder whereby dairy cows covered by beef bulls are eligible for the premium.

The Council also noted the Commission's readiness to seek a solution better geared to Portugal's situation and that a new proposal on such a solution could be submitted shortly.

The Council further noted the Luxembourg delegation's position regarding the problem created in Luxembourg by the allocation of premiums decided on in December. It noted that the Commission was prepared to examine the problems.

URUGUAY ROUND - AGRICULTURE

On the basis of an introductory statement by the Commission, the Council examined the progress of the negotiations. It reiterated its commitment to a comprehensive and balanced solution.

With specific reference to agriculture, the Council considered that work on the technical points should continue and gave the necessary instructions to that effect.

It will return to this issue at its next meeting.

PRESS RELEASE

4009/93 (Presse 8)

Extraordinary meeting of the Council

- ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT -

Brussels, 25 January 1993

President:

Mr Guy COEME (+),

Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Communications
of the Kingdom of Belgium

(+) Replacing the Danish Minister being sworn in as a member of the Danish Government.

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Ms Laurette ONKELINX Minister for the Environment

Denmark:

Mr Joergen BREDHOLT State Secretary for Industry
Mr Erik LINDEGAARD State Secretary for the Environment

Germany:

Mr Günther KRAUSE Minister for Transport
Mr Klaus TOEPFER Minister for the Environment

Greece:

Mr Alexandros PAPADOGONAS Minister for Merchant Shipping
Mr Achilleas KARAMANLIS Minister for the Environment, Regional
Planning and Public Works

Spain:

Mr José BORRELL Minister for Public Works, Transport and
Communications

France:

Ms Ségolène ROYAL Minister for the Environment
Mr Charles JOSSELIN State Secretary for Maritime Affairs

Ireland:

Mr David ANDREWS Minister for the Marine
Mr John BROWNE Minister for the Protection of the
Environment

Italy:

Mr Giancarlo TESINI Minister for Transport, and temporarily
Minister for Merchant Shipping
Mr Carlo RIPA DI MEANA Minister for the Environment

Luxembourg:

Mr Alex BODRY Minister for the Environment

Netherlands:

Ms J.R.H. MAJ-WEGGEN Minister for Transport

Portugal:

Mr Eduardo AZEVEDO SOARES Minister for Maritime Affairs
Ms Teresa GOUVEIA State Secretary for Environment
Mr Joao BEBIANO State Secretary for Maritime Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr John MacGregor State Secretary for Transport
Mr Ian LANG Secretary of State for Scotland
Lord CAITHNESS Minister of State, Department of Transport

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Commission:

Mr Abel MATUTES Member
Mr Ioannis PALEOKRASSAS Member

SHIPPING SAFETY AND POLLUTION PREVENTION IN THE COMMUNITY

After hearing statements from the Spanish and United Kingdom delegations on the recent oil tanker accidents at La Coruña and the Shetlands, the Council held a general discussion on shipping safety and pollution prevention in the Community, after which it approved the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL,

Recording its great concern for the large number of maritime accidents that have occurred, in particular those involving the loss of human life and those which destroy the marine environment, such as the recent oil spillages at La Coruña and the Shetlands,

Welcoming the prompt and effective response of the Spanish and United Kingdom authorities to these incidents,

Welcoming the swiftness of aid by the Commission to the regions concerned;

Regretting the number and increased frequency of serious accidents that have recently occurred at sea, in particular to oil tankers, leading to major damage to the marine ecosystem;

Recognizing that, despite the measures over the last thirty years, shipping activity still poses risks to the marine and coastal environments and that, in consequence, further concerted action at national and Community levels and in the IMO is essential to minimize threats to those environments from oil and hazardous cargoes;

Stressing the high priority given by the Community to the protection of natural habitats and wild flora and fauna;

Recalling that the EC Treaty, as amended by the Single Act, lays down that Community environmental action shall be based on the principle of preventive action, taking into account the Council Resolution on the fifth Environmental Action Programme which stresses the importance of integrating environmental policies into other policies, such as transport policies,

Bearing in mind the provisions of the Treaty on European Union, signed at Maastricht on 7 February 1992,

Recalling the Council Resolution of 25 February 1992, on the future Community policy concerning the protection of European coastal zones, Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Council Resolution 90/C206/01 on the prevention of accidents causing marine pollution,

Recognizing the need for intensified action at Community or national level, as appropriate, to ensure more adequate protection of the fishery resources and coastal areas of the Community,

Recalling the Resolutions adopted by the European Parliament on 17 December 1992 and on 22 January 1993 on safety at sea and prevention of pollution,

Noting that the environmental action programme (agenda 21) adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) stresses that new approaches - integrated in content and precautionary in scope - are required for marine and coastal area management and development at national, subregional, regional and global levels,

Stressing the role of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) with regard to maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution,

Drawing attention to the value of national contingency planning and

the Council Resolution of 26 June 1978 setting up an action programme of the European Communities on the control and reduction of pollution caused by hydrocarbons discharged at sea, which provides an immediate response capability,

Reiterating the need to comply with the rules of international law,

Having noted

- the IMO's recent adoption of more rigorous measures concerning construction of oil tankers, including double hull or other alternative methods which will enter into force on 6 July 1993, and a related phasing-out scheme for existing oil tankers,
- current work in the IMO on improving the regulations for ships, including those for oil tankers, chemical tankers, bulk carriers and passenger ships,
- IMO initiatives on ensuring that existing regulations are complied with in an effective and harmonized way by all flag States,
- that a number of "areas to be avoided" and "deep water routes" have been established in European waters within the IMO framework,
- on-going work within the four regional agreements on co-operation in dealing with pollution in the North Sea (Bonn Agreement), the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), the North-East Atlantic (Lisbon Agreement) and the Baltic Sea (Helsinki Convention),
- the importance of the human element in the safe operation of ships,
- the need for emergency towing under all weather conditions of damaged or abandoned ships,
- the recent preliminary conclusion of the Council on the content of the draft Council Directive concerning minimum requirements for

vessels entering or leaving Community ports and carrying dangerous or polluting goods and in particular the acceptance by the Commission of the Council's request for the submission of new proposals for the introduction of a fuller reporting system for the Community which may also cover those ships only transiting along the coasts of the Community,

Stressing the importance of European co-operation within the Paris Memorandum in order to improve the effectiveness of port state control, including operational control,

Bearing in mind that the implementation of the action required will also safeguard the functioning of the internal market,

Welcoming the recent announcement from the Commission in its White Paper on the Future Development of the Common Transport Policy of a specific Communication on "A common policy on safe seas",

Noting the Commission's intention to develop a Community action programme to

- establish strict convergent implementation for the whole Community of international rules,
- reinforce port state control through appropriate measures,
- promote coherent and harmonized development of maritime infrastructure, including traffic surveillance, aids to navigation, routing systems and reception facilities,
- promote the adoption by the IMO of adequate and up-to-date regulations and standards,
- establish minimum training requirements for crews of Community vessels and associated training programmes,
- develop relevant research and development projects,

Whereas this Communication will address, in particular, how the Community and its Member States can play a greater role in the development of international safety and pollution prevention standards, in particular in the IMO, and in their enforcement,

Recognizing that, although the investigations of the causes of the recent accidents have not yet been completed, the lack of effective and uniform implementation of existing international rules is a major cause of maritime pollution accidents,

A. URGES THE COMMUNITY AND THE MEMBER STATES

1. as appropriate, to support and promote further and more co-ordinated and firm action in the on-going work in the IMO concerning inter alia the following areas:

- = the establishment of requirements for recognition of classification societies,
- = the establishment of requirements for the delegation of statutory surveys from flag States, with a view to limiting the misuse of flags of convenience,
- = the development of guidelines for improved surveys of oil tankers,
- = the development of adequate and up-to-date rules and standards,
- = the reduction of accidents caused by human error,
- = a revision of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW), including special qualification requirements for tanker crews,
- = the development of the ability to communicate in a common language on board ships,

- = the reduction of the safety gap between new and existing ships by up-grading and/or phasing-out existing ships, including ferries, built to earlier standards after a reasonable period of operation, paying particular attention to oil tankers not meeting the MARPOL standards which entered into force in 1982,

 - = the promotion of early adoption and full implementation of the IMO's safety management code and ship identification scheme,

 - = the submission, as appropriate, of proposals to the IMO for additional mandatory routing measures applicable to vessels carrying hazardous cargoes in order to protect vulnerable areas,

 - = assurance that environmental considerations are taken explicitly into account in the formulation of its actions,

 - = the mandatory reporting of ships entering an area covered by Vessel Traffic Services (VTS),
2. to ensure more effective application and enforcement of adequate international maritime safety and environment protection standards and to implement the new measures when adopted,

 3. to revise and if necessary improve existing contingency planning and emergency measures at EC and international level, also taking into consideration the best available technologies,

 4. to consider whether and if so how the principles of potential risk assessment developed for other major risks can be applied to the sea transport of freight,

 5. to examine the feasibility of developing a system of penalties and civil liability for environmental pollution,

6. to implement IMO Resolution A.722 (17) on the application of tonnage measurement of ballast spaces in segregated ballast oil tankers,
7. to review uniform requirements for the use of pilotage on approaches to EC ports.

B. URGES THE MEMBER STATES

1. to ratify as soon as possible

= the International Convention on civil liability for oil pollution damage, 1969 (CLC) and the 1971 International Convention on the establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, 1971 (FUND) where they have not yet been ratified,

= the protocols to the 1969 Liability Convention and to the 1971 Fund Convention, as agreed upon in 1984 and revised in 1992, and concerning increased compensation amounts,

= the 1989 International Convention on Salvage,

= the 1990 International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation,

2. to take into consideration the possibility of establishing an exclusive economic zone, or at least extending the jurisdiction of the coastal State to implement and enforce marine environment protection provisions more effectively.

C. URGES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, within the framework of the Paris Memorandum on Port State Control,

1. to reinforce port state control through appropriate measures, including the mandatory implementation of agreements reached

under the Paris Memorandum with special emphasis on the control of operational requirements related to the safety of ships, pollution prevention and adequate qualification of the crew,

2. as a matter of priority to develop procedures for targeting ships for priority inspections - including the possibility of publishing the results - and harmonized criteria for detaining substandard ships, irrespective of flag,
3. to promote co-operation with other countries and regions for the implementation and development of similar ship control systems,
4. to convene as soon as possible a Ministerial conference on port state control in order to decide the measures which should be adopted to achieve the objectives of the Memorandum.

D. URGES THE COMMISSION

to present without delay its communication on "A common policy on safe seas", which will comprise a cohesive action programme on priority measures to be taken by the Community and its Member States to enhance maritime safety and pollution prevention, noting that the Commission intends to include initiatives to:

1. establish strict convergent implementation for the whole Community of international rules, in particular on
 - = construction, certification and maintenance of vessels,
 - = the revision of port and transit dues which have the effect of penalizing modern vessels,
 - = the possibility of refusing access to European Community ports to ships found to be below internationally agreed standards and which refuse to be upgraded as required,
 - = a study of the financial liability of owners of hazardous cargoes using substandard ships,

2. promote the cohesive and harmonized development of maritime infrastructure including:
 - = traffic surveillance and aids to navigation, such as the establishment of Vessel Traffic Systems (VTS) and the installation of shore-based radiocommunications facilities to support the "Global Maritime Distress and Safety Systems (GMDSS) as well as additional technical equipment to be installed on board to facilitate control,
 - = the identification of zones of great ecological interest in the Community with regard to the adoption, through the IMO, where necessary of appropriate traffic restrictions, including routing measures and areas to be avoided,
 - = a fuller ship reporting system which may be extended to ships in transit along the coastal waters of the Community, taking into account a possible Electronic Data Interchange Systems (EDI) application,
 - = appropriate measures concerning emergency services, in particular towing and co-ordination of the availability of salvage capacities,
 - = appropriate action for the creation of reception facilities and waste management,
3. establish minimum training requirements and, taking due account of existing Community support instruments, appropriate training programmes, ensuring in particular:
 - = the employment of highly qualified and specifically trained seafarers on board vessels carrying hazardous cargo,
 - = the improvement of vocational training,
4. develop relevant research and development projects, in particular with regard to:

- = the promotion of advanced technological solutions to the problems of maritime safety and the protection of the environment,
 - = safety features for oil tankers, chemical tankers, bulk carriers and passenger ships,
 - = environment-friendly oil tankers, chemical tankers, bulk carriers and passenger ships,
 - = human error in shipping,
5. assess scrapping requirements and facilities for phased-out ships,
 6. submit a revised proposal on the introduction of a Community register (EUROS) also with a view to safety at sea under European flags;

THE COUNCIL

AGREES to examine as soon as possible, both in its composition of Ministers of Transport and of Ministers for the Environment, the Commission communication on "A Common Policy on Safe Seas" at the latest at its meeting in March 1993 with the objective of giving further impetus to decisions as of June 1993".

PRESS RELEASE

4520/93 (Presse 11)

1639th Council meeting
- GENERAL AFFAIRS -
- POLITICAL CO-OPERATION -

Brussels, 1 and 2 February 1993

President: Mr Niels HELVEG PETERSEN,

Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Willy CLAES Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Robert URBAIN Minister for Foreign Trade and European Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Niels HELVEG PETERSEN Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Jorgen ØSTRØM MØLLER State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Klaus KINKEL Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mrs Ursula SEILER-ALBRING Minister of State, Foreign Affairs
Mr Johann EEKHOF State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs

Greece:

Mr Michel PAPAConstantinou Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Georges PAPASTAMKOS State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr José SOLANA Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Claudio ARANZADI MARTINEZ Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism
Mr Carlos WESTENDORP State Secretary for Relations with the European Communities
Mr Miguel Angel FEITO HERNANDEZ State Secretary for Trade

France:

Mr Roland DUMAS Ministre d'Etat, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mrs Elizabeth GUIGOU Minister for European Affairs
Mr Bruno DURIEUX Minister for Foreign Trade

Ireland:

Mr Dick SPRING Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Tom KITT Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach with special responsibility for European Affairs

Italy:

Mr Emilio COLOMBO Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Claudio VITALONE Minister for Foreign Trade

Luxembourg:

Mr Jacques POOS Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr P. KOOLJMANS Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mrs Y. VAN ROOY Minister for Foreign Trade
Mr Piet DANKERT State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr José Manuel Durao BARROSO Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Vitor MARTINS State Secretary for European Integration

United Kingdom:

Mr Douglas HURD Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Mr Timothy SAINSBURY Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry

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Commission:

Mr Jacques DELORS President
Sir Leon BRITTAN Member
Mr Manuel MARIN Member
Mr Jaoa PINHEIRO Member
Mr Hans VAN DEN BROEK Member

PRESIDENCY'S WORK PROGRAMME

The Council first held an open debate, which was televised to the public ⁽¹⁾, on the Danish Presidency's work programme for the first half of 1993.

This first public debate of the Council took place further to the conclusions of the Edinburgh European Council aimed at achieving greater transparency of the Council's proceedings. It enabled delegations to take stock of the problems facing the Community and to state their priorities regarding the identification of solutions.

ENLARGEMENT

The Council prepared for the Ministerial meeting opening the Conferences on the accession of Austria, Sweden and Finland to the European Union by approving the Union's general negotiation framework.

The ministerial meeting was held in the afternoon of 1 February and televised to the public ⁽¹⁾.

During the opening meeting the President of the Council outlined the Union's general negotiation framework. Commissioner VAN DEN BROEK also spoke on behalf of the Commission. The position of the three applicant countries was set out respectively by Mr Alois MOCK, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, Mr Ulf DINKELSPIEL, Minister for European Affairs and Foreign Trade of Sweden and Mr Pertti SALOAINEN, Minister for Foreign Trade of Finland.

(1) The broadcast was made with the technical co-operation of the audiovisual departments of the European Parliament. The audiovisual departments of the Commission also gave their assistance. The debate was broadcast live by several TV stations and excerpts were shown later by a number of other stations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EEA

The Council authorized the Commission to open negotiations for an agreement on the implementation of the EEA following Switzerland's non-ratification.

RELATIONS WITH ROMANIA

The Council adopted the Decision on the signing of the Europe Association Agreement with Romania and the Interim Agreement concerning the advance implementation of the trade component.

The Agreements were signed at the end of the morning of 1 February (see Press Release 4011/93 Presse 10).

RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The Council was briefed by the Presidency on the Trialogue with the Presidents of the European Parliament and the Commission which took place on 20 January in Strasbourg on the negotiation between the three institutions of interinstitutional agreements on subsidiarity and on discipline and improvement of the budget procedure.

The Council also noted that the Presidency intended to pursue the Trialogue on both subjects and subscribed to its views concerning the desirability of making rapid progress in these negotiations in accordance with the conclusions of the Edinburgh European Council.

FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The Ministers had an in-depth discussion on the various aspects of the crisis in former Yugoslavia, in particular, from the standpoint of developments at the Geneva Conference and in the light of developments on the ground. In this connection they also heard a presentation by Dame Anne WARBURTON of the report on the results of the enquiry she had conducted regarding the treatment of Muslim women in former Yugoslavia.

The Ministers adopted two statements which are set out in the Annex, on Bosnia-Herzegovina and the follow-up to the WARBURTON mission.

ZAIRE

A statement by the Ministers on Zaire will also be found in the Annex.

GATT - PRESIDENCY CONCLUSIONS

The Council took note of a progress report by Commissioner Sir Leon BRITTAN on negotiations under the Uruguay Round. It took note of delegations' comments and positions.

The Council reconfirmed the Community's commitment to a rapid conclusion of the negotiations with a global, substantive and balanced agreement, as advocated by the Edinburgh European Council. It expressed its confidence that the chief negotiator for the Community, Sir Leon BRITTAN would act accordingly.

The Council agreed to take up this matter again at its next meeting.

US DUMPING DUTIES ON STEEL AND ACTION ON PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

The Council, recalling and reaffirming its conclusions of 6 October and 7 December 1992 about the numerous anti-dumping and countervailing actions filed in the US against steel imports, denounced the latest decisions by the US Department of Commerce of 27 January subjecting imports of flat steel products from its main steel trade partners, including the European Community, to prohibitive preliminary anti-dumping duties.

The Council lent its full support to the statement issued by Commissioner Sir Leon BRITTAN on 27 January 1993, which underlined that the imposition of these duties runs counter to the spirit of the previous VRA which existed with the Community until March 1992 and that the extraordinary high level of anti-dumping and countervailing duties to be imposed had no justification whatsoever. This action would further aggravate the difficulties in the Community steel market, severely disrupt exports from a large number of Member States and could also cause deviation of trade in a global context.

The Council invited the Commission in its political contacts with the new US Administration scheduled for 11 February to convey forcefully the Community's view that this action was unacceptable, and confirm that the Community requested consultations with the US under the GATT. It noted that the US action had similarly been condemned as unacceptable by a wide range of other steel producers across the world.

The Council will continue to monitor developments closely over the coming months. It hoped that the new US Administration would adopt a co-operative and constructive approach on the steel issue. Finally, the Council reiterated its support for a comprehensive Multilateral Steel Arrangement as one effective means of achieving a permanent and stable solution to international steel trade problems.

The Council also expressed grave concern regarding the latest announcements made by the US authorities concerning government procurement and endorsed the sharp criticism expressed publicly by the Commission in this regard on 1 February 1993.

The Council reserved its full rights to take whatever action was necessary.

TRADE POLICY INSTRUMENTS

The Council held a wide-ranging discussion on the proposed new common rules for imports from countries with market economies and State-trading countries and the revision of the decision-making procedures for the Community's instruments of commercial defence. The Council examined an informal Commission paper outlining various elements for a possible compromise, but noted that on the question of the proposed changes in the decision-making procedures there was still a divergence between delegations' positions.

The Presidency, noting that a solution on this matter was urgent, made a strong appeal to delegations to show the flexibility necessary to reach agreement and referred the matter back to the Permanent Representatives Committee.

RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

The Danish delegation informed the Council that the Danish Government intended to convene a Ministerial Conference on 13 and 14 April in Copenhagen bringing together the Community countries, the EFTA countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, viz. the four Visegrad countries, Bulgaria and Romania, the Baltic States and Albania. The Commission, the EIB and the EBRD would also be invited.

The aim of the Conference would be to hold a wide-ranging debate on the prospects for economic development in Central and Eastern Europe.

RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

The Council approved the position to be adopted by the Community at the 11th meeting of the Co-operation Council with Israel, which was held in the evening of 1 February.

COCOA

The Council heard a statement by Commissioner MARIN on the next phase of the negotiations for the conclusion of a new International Agreement on Cocoa, which would begin on 22 February in Geneva.

The Council confirmed the importance it attached to the success of the negotiations and the Community's willingness to contribute to a successful outcome by demonstrating the necessary flexibility.

RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO

In response to the letter from the King of Morocco dated November 1992 requesting Community support for a cannabis crop substitution programme in the Rif region, the Council called upon the Commission to submit suggestions to it for Community participation in such a programme.

HUMANITARIAN AID FOR ARMENIA AND GEORGIA

Following a statement by the French delegation, the Council agreed on the need for emergency humanitarian aid for Armenia and Georgia given the current circumstances in these Republics, and took note of the measures the Commission intended to take for this purpose.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Relations with Sweden

The Council adopted the Regulation opening and providing for the administration of a Community tariff quota of 6 000 tonnes for frozen peas originating in Sweden at a 6% duty for 1993.

Relations with the Mediterranean countries

The Council adopted four Regulations opening and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas

- for 25 000 tonnes of fresh or dried hazelnuts, originating in Turkey at zero duty;
- for certain agricultural products originating in Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia.

Environment

As the European Parliament had delivered its Opinion at its January 1993 part-session on the question of the legal basis, the Council adopted the Regulation on the supervision and control of shipments of waste within, into and out of the Community.

The aim of the Regulation, the text of which corresponds to that approved by the Environment Council on 20 October 1992 (see Press Release 9042/92 Presse 179), is to reduce and supervise such shipments by, inter alia, bringing the existing Community system of surveillance and supervision of shipments of waste into line with the requirements of the Fourth ACP-EEC Convention and the Basel Convention.

In this connection the Council also adopted the Decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Community, of the Basel Convention of 22 March 1989 on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal. The date of entry into force of the Convention for the Community will be published later.

The purpose of the Convention is to help to protect the environment as regards waste by more stringent supervision of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes and by an ecologically sound management of such wastes.

Further to the agreements reached at the Environment Council on 15 and 16 December 1992 (see Press Release 10796/92 Presse 248) and after finalization of the texts in the official languages of the Community, the Council formally adopted

= the Resolution on a Community programme of policy and action in

relation to the environment and sustainable development, submitted by the Commission in March.

This programme, which takes over from the 4th Community environment programme, provides a general framework for an approach to environmental problems centred on the idea of sustainable development;

- = the common position on the amendment of Directive 70/220/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to measures to be taken against air pollution by emissions from motor vehicles.

In the context of the completion of the internal market and environmental protection, the purpose of the amendment is to make the emission standards applicable to light commercial vehicles as stringent as those applying to private cars.

Appointment

On a proposal from the German Government, the Council appointed Mr Gerhard VON HAUS, a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Joachim GAFFRON for the remainder of the latter's term of office, i.e. until 20 September 1994.

Brussels, 1 February 1993

DECLARATION ON BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

The European Community and its Member States express their full and unequivocal support for the comprehensive plan for a peaceful settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, put forward by the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia, in accordance with the commitments reached at the London Conference.

The peace plan and the draft interim arrangements for governing the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina until free and fair elections will take place represent a coherent and comprehensive settlement, taking into account the legitimate interests of the three constituent communities of that Republic.

The European Community and its Member States strongly urge all three parties of Bosnia-Herzegovina to accept the peace plan and the draft interim arrangements. The parties must also fully co-operate in implementing them.

The European Community and its Member States call upon the Security Council of the United Nations to give its full support to this plan and its implementation. The European Community and its Member States are prepared to contribute actively to this end.

The European Community and its Member States reiterate their full support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and multi-ethnic character of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They will continue their efforts to help the Republic recover from the present tragedy.

Brussels, 1 February 1993

STATEMENT ON ZAIRE

The European Community and its Member States deeply deplore the outbreak of violence which has occurred in Zaire and which has caused numerous deaths, including that of the Ambassador of France in Kinshasa.

While expressing their grave anxiety at this new trial facing the Zairian people, the European Community and its Member States are also very concerned for their nationals and hope that the ongoing evacuation can be continued in good order.

The Community and its Member States urgently appeals to the forces involved to put a stop to the fighting.

Political forces in Zaire must do everything in their power to enable the democratic process to make a fresh start, and the transitional Government must exercise its prerogatives in all areas, including the maintenance of order in compliance with human rights, and the economic and monetary control which are necessary for the social situation to be restored.

In this respect, the European Community calls upon the President of Zaire to ensure that an end is put to the actions to obstruct the process of democratic transition. It lends its support to the efforts of the President of the High Council of the Republic, Archbishop MOSSENGWO, to promote a political settlement enabling this transition to free and democratic elections to be properly carried out.

Brussels, 1 February 1993

DECLARATION ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE WARBURTON MISSION

The Community and its Member States welcome the report submitted by the Warburton Mission on the findings during visits conducted from 20 to 24 December 1992 and from 19 to 26 January 1993 ⁽¹⁾.

The decision by the European Council to establish this investigation is vindicated by the findings. Rape has been perpetrated on a wide scale in former Yugoslavia, in such a way as to be part of a clear pattern. The great majority of the many thousands of victims have been Muslims.

The European Community and its Member States are appalled by these crimes and the inhumanity which marks the present conflict. They intend to implement the recommendations in the report on assistance to the Bosnian Muslim women victims of rape and other atrocities.

At a political level, the Community and its Member States will approach the parties to the conflict, and in particular the political leadership, to impress on them the incontrovertible nature of the evidence and the imperative need to bring these abhorrent practices to an end. In this context, the Community and its Member States will pursue full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 798 and will endeavour to inspect the locations associated with the practice of rape.

(1) The Ministers decided to make this report public.

PRESS RELEASE

4523/93 (Presse 14)

1640th Council meeting

- INTERNAL MARKET -

Brussels, 8 February 1993

President: **Mr Jan TROEJBORG,**

Minister for Industry of the
Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Robert URBAIN Minister for Foreign Trade and European Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Jan TROEJBOG Minister for Industry
Mr Christopher Bo BRAMSEN State Secretary for Industry

Germany:

Mr Jochen GRÜNHAGE Deputy Permanent Representative

Greece:

Mr Georges THEOFANOUS Secretary-General, Ministry of Trade

Spain:

Mr Carlos WESTENDORP State Secretary for Relations with the European Communities

France:

Mr Pierre SELLAL Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Charles McCREEVY Minister for Tourism and Trade

Italy:

Mr Raffaele COSTA Minister for Community Policies

Luxembourg:

Mr Georges WOHLFART State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

Netherlands:

Mr Piet DANKERT State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Vitor MARTINS State Secretary for European Integration

United Kingdom:

Mr Richard NEEDHAM Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry

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Commission:

Mr Raniero VANNI d'ARCHIRAFI Member

COMPLETION OF THE INTERNAL MARKET - ABOLITION OF BORDER CONTROLS

The Council took note of a statement by Commissioner VANNI d'ARCHIRAFI concerning the completion of the internal market, including the abolition of border controls. The statement gave delegations the opportunity to express their views on certain aspects considered essential for the implementation of the internal market, such as the free movement of persons, the rapid adoption of legislation making it possible to abolish border controls - including for example legislation on cultural goods, explosives, medical devices and dual-use goods and technologies - and the need for legislation already translated into national law by Member States to be applied in a consistent manner.

After each delegation had spoken in turn, the Council agreed to return to these important aspects of the implementation of the internal market at its next meeting.

OPERATION OF THE COMMUNITY'S INTERNAL MARKET AFTER 1992: FOLLOW-UP TO THE SUTHERLAND REPORT AND TO THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON MAKING THE SINGLE MARKET WORK

The Council held a policy debate on the operation of the internal market after 1992 and, in particular, on the follow-up to the Sutherland Report and to the Council Resolution on making the single market work (for the text of this Resolution see Press Release No 9760/92 Presse 14 - of 10 November 1992).

The debate was conducted on the basis of an oral statement by the Commission and a note from the Presidency.

The debate gave delegations the opportunity to express their views on certain key topics relating to the smooth operation of the internal market:

- the preparation of Community legislative acts, in particular the application of the principle of subsidiarity to the single market;

- the implementation of Community law, in particular the resources needed to inform consumers and economic operators of their rights and of Community provisions;
- the organization of partnership arrangements with Member States, particularly through the establishment of "contact points" in the Member States to accelerate the exchange of information;
- the improvement of the quality of legislative texts, particularly through simplification and consolidation of Community legislation;
- the measures and timetable for future work on the implementation of the single market.

It should be emphasized that the Council continued discussing the implementation of subsidiarity informally over lunch.

Pending proposals to be submitted by the Commission, the Council agreed to return to this subject at its meeting scheduled for 4 April 1993.

CHECKS FOR CONFORMITY WITH THE RULES ON PRODUCT SAFETY IN THE CASE OF PRODUCTS IMPORTED FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

With the abstention of the German delegation, the Council finally adopted the Regulation on checks for conformity with the rules on product safety in the case of products imported from third countries, which was first discussed in December 1992.

The main purpose of this Regulation is to provide customs authorities with a legal basis enabling them to take action on external borders by temporarily suspending the customs clearance procedure where imported products might present a direct health or safety hazard or where they appear not to comply with Community or national rules in force.

The broad intention of the Regulation is therefore to place products manufactured in the Community and imported products on an equal footing. A range of products manufactured in the Community are already governed, or soon will be governed, by mechanisms set up under the Directive concerning general product safety and by obligations arising from Directives in the field of standardization which establish procedures for approving conformity and marking rules.

In case of doubt, this new Regulation will enable customs authorities at the external borders to request action on the part of the market surveillance authorities to check that the imported products provide the same guarantees as are required of Community products. It should be emphasized that with regard to conformity with existing Community or national rules, the Regulation will apply in particular to an initial list of products comprising toys, foodstuffs and pharmaceuticals. These are amongst the products which, prior to 1 January 1993, almost all Member States used to check at their internal borders on an almost systematic basis. As a result of this new Regulation those checks will henceforth take place at the external borders.

MOTORCYCLISTS' HELMETS

The Council took note of a communication from the French delegation concerning the application of Directive 89/686/EEC, concerning personal protective equipment, to motorcyclists' helmets. In this communication, the French delegation, which was supported by most other delegations, requested that helmets for users of two wheel motor vehicles be excluded from the scope of Directive 89/686/EEC when it came to be amended, and that the desirability of a specific Directive on motorcyclists' helmets be examined.

OTHER DECISIONS RELATING TO THE INTERNAL MARKET

Medical devices

Following the political agreement reached at the Internal Market Council meeting on 17 December 1992, the Council formally adopted the common position on the Directive on medical devices.

This Directive, the proposal for which was submitted in the context of the white paper on the completion of the internal market, seeks to harmonize, in accordance with the "new approach" procedure, the conditions for the marketing and placing into service of medical devices with a view to protecting the health and safety of patients and users. To this end, the devices must meet the essential requirements contained in Annex I of the Directive and follow the system of classification provided for in Annex 9 with a view to certifying their conformity with the provisions of the Directive.

Under the Directive, the term medical device is used to mean any instrument, apparatus or appliance intended by the manufacturer to be used in human beings for medical purposes, such as, for example, the diagnosis, prevention, monitoring, treatment or alleviation of a disease. It should be remembered that pacemakers are already covered by Directive 90/385/EEC on active implantable medical devices.

The Directive provides for medical devices to be classified according to the risk which their use entails for human beings. Procedures for assessing compliance with the provisions of the Directive are laid down for each category of device, with a more rigorous assessment the greater the risk involved.

Public works contracts

Following the common position adopted on 7 December 1992 and the completion of the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament, the Council finally adopted the amendment to Directive 71/305/EEC concerning the co-ordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts.

The object of this Directive is to make it possible to adapt by a decision taken by the Commission with the assistance of the Advisory Committee for Public Contracts, certain technical conditions concerning notices, statistical reports and the nomenclature used to classify works.

This amendment aligns the Directive on public works contracts

(71/305/EEC) on the Directives on excluded sectors (90/531/EEC) and public service contracts (92/50/EEC).

Contaminants in food

Following the adoption of the common position at the Internal Market Council meeting on 22 September 1992 and the completion of the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament, the Council finally adopted the Regulation laying down Community procedures for contaminants in food. The Danish delegation voted against this Directive.

The main objective of the Regulation is to prohibit the marketing of food containing levels of a contaminant which are unacceptable from the public health and, in particular, the toxicological point of view. In the context of the Directive contaminant means any substance which has been added to food unintentionally as a result of the production, manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food or as a result of environmental contamination.

It should be emphasized that most national regulations on contaminants are the result of a gradual development over a period of time of measures adopted to deal with specific situations and may therefore vary from one Member State to another and that prior to the completion of the internal market on 31 December 1992 they may have represented an obstacle to the completion of the common market in foodstuffs.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

European Monitoring Centre For Drugs And Drug Addiction

The Council adopted the Regulation on the establishment of a European Monitoring Centre For Drugs And Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the object of which is to provide the Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information at European level on the phenomenon of drugs, drug addiction and their consequences.

To achieve this objective, the EMCDDA performs the following functions in its areas of activity:

- collection and analysis of existing data;
- improvement of data-comparison methods;
- dissemination of data;
- co-operation with European and international bodies and organizations and with non-Community countries.

During the first three years, particular attention will be paid to questions relating to demand for drugs and its reduction.

To avoid any duplication, the Monitoring Centre will take account of the activities performed by other institutions and agencies which already exist or are due to be set up, including in particular the European Police Office (EUROPOL), and will ensure that it adds to their value.

The Monitoring Centre will have at its disposal a computer network, known as the "European Information Network on Drugs and Drug Addiction" (REITOX), forming the infrastructure for collecting and exchanging information and documentation.

The Regulation will enter into force the day after the Decision on the location of the Monitoring Centre.

Relations with Sri Lanka

The Council approved a mandate for the Commission for the negotiation of a new Co-operation Agreement between the Community and Sri Lanka to replace the Commercial Co-operation Agreement of 1975.

As well as extending the area of co-operation with Sri Lanka to all areas covered by the Community, this new Agreement will also seek to introduce as an essential element a reference to respect for human rights and democratic principles as a basis for co-operation, in accordance with established Community practice.

Relations with Mongolia

Following the positive Opinion of the European Parliament of 22 January 1993, the Council adopted the Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement on Trade and Economic Co-operation between the EEC and Mongolia, signed on 16 June 1992.

This is the first Agreement with Mongolia, and under it the parties intend to develop, extend and intensify their trade and economic relations recognizing that Mongolia is making considerable efforts to restructure its society and economy with a view to strengthening democracy and promoting economic and social progress. Moreover, the Agreement stipulates that - in accordance with established Community practice - the co-operative links are based on respect for democratic principles and human rights.

A detailed analysis of the Agreement was given in the Press Release issued when the Agreement was signed in June 1992 (See Release no. 7114/92 Presse 111).

Relations with the EFTA countries

The Council

- approved the draft Decisions of the EEC-EFTA Joint Committees amending Protocol No 3 concerning the definition of the concept of "originating products" and methods of administrative co-operation ("misch metal");
- adopted the Regulation opening and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for certain agricultural and fishery products originating in certain EFTA countries. The purpose of this Regulation is to implement the Agreements concluded between the EEC on the one hand and Norway, Austria, Switzerland and Sweden on the other, approved by the Council Decisions of 15 September 1986. The Regulation provides for the application for 1993 of the Community tariff quotas laid down in these Agreements for certain agricultural and fishery products.

Relations with certain Mediterranean countries

The Council adopted a Regulation establishing Community statistical surveillance for certain agricultural products originating in Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Tunisia, Syria, Malta, Morocco and Lebanon which are subject to reference quantities (1993).

PRESS RELEASE

4524/93 (Presse 15)

1641st Council meeting

AGRICULTURE

Brussels, 9, 10, 12 and 13 February 1993

President: Mr Bjørn WESTH,
Minister for Agriculture and
Fisheries of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

<u>Belgium:</u> Mr André BOURGEOIS	Minister for Agriculture
<u>Denmark:</u> Mr Bjørn WESTH	Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries
Mr Nils BERNSTEIN	State Secretary for Agriculture
<u>Germany:</u> Mr Jochen BORCHERT	Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Mr Franz-Josef FEITER	State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry
<u>Greece:</u> Mr Christos KOSKINAS	Minister for Agriculture
<u>Spain:</u> Mr Pedro SOLBES MIRA	Minister for Agriculture
<u>France:</u> Mr Jean-Pierre SOISSON	Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development
<u>Ireland:</u> Mr Joe WALSH	Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry
<u>Italy:</u> Mr Giovanni FONTANA	Minister for Agriculture
<u>Luxembourg:</u> Mrs Marie-Josée JACOBS	Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development
<u>Netherlands:</u> Mr Piet BUKMAN	Minister for Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries
Mr Piet DANKERT	State Secretary for Foreign Affairs
<u>Portugal:</u> Mr Arlindo CUNHA	Minister for Agriculture
<u>United Kingdom:</u> Mr John GUMMER	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Mr David CURRY	Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
<u>Commission:</u> Mr René STEICHEN	Member

FARM PRICES AND RELATED MEASURES FOR 1993/1994

In line with the Edinburgh European Council's conclusions on transparency, the Council held a discussion in public. This began with the Commission outlining its proposals on prices and related measures for 1993/1994. These basically involved the continuation of current prices, especially in sectors not covered by the reform. The main decisions for the other sectors had been taken in the context of the reform.

When the delegations had given their initial reactions the Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to start examining the proposals and report back at its next meeting.

BANANAS

The Council adopted by a qualified majority - the Belgian, German and Netherlands delegations voted against - a Regulation on the common organization of the market in bananas. The Regulation involves a "third country" arrangement based on a tariff quota and including a system of import licences, and an internal arrangement with among other things a system of specific aid for Community produce.

The main features of the external, "third country" aspect are:

- (a) the opening of a tariff quota of 2 million tonnes at a low rate of duty (ECU 100/tonne) with scope for raising it in accordance with the market. Imports exceeding the quota will be subject to a duty of ECU 850/tonne;

(b) zero-duty imports from the ACP States are authorized up to the traditional level, which is laid down in the Regulation. In the case of non-traditional ACP quantities a duty of ECU 750/tonne will be levied;

(c) the introduction of a mechanism for issuing licences which will give access to the low-duty tariff quota and ensure compliance with commitments to Community and ACP producers.

The internal aspect involves:

- the formulation of common quality and marketing standards;
- encouragement for the setting up of producers' organizations and consultation machinery;
- the introduction of structural and compensatory aid.

The Regulation will come into force in full on 1 July 1993. Its adoption will realize the aim of ensuring free movement of bananas in the Single Market.

URUGUAY ROUND - AGRICULTURE

After hearing an assessment by Commissioner STEICHEN of the current position in the Uruguay Round, the Council reaffirmed the Community's interest in a balanced and comprehensive conclusion to those negotiations being reached at an early date. It hoped the new United States Administration would be able to take up the continuing negotiations in a constructive manner, and it noted an oral interim report by the Chairman of the Special Committee on Agriculture on the preliminary discussions concerning the technical aspects of the task of considering whether the results of the prior agreement in Washington were compatible with the common agricultural policy.

The Council instructed the SCA to continue with its analysis and report back at its next meeting.

TRANSITIONAL MEASURES FOR PORTUGAL

The Council re-examined the question of the proposals for repealing or adapting transitional measures applicable to agriculture in Portugal with a view to integrating that country into the Single Market.

At the Council meeting from 14 to 17 December 1992 Portugal had been unable to accept the compensation proposals in the overall compromise.

At today's meeting the Commission put forward new suggestions concerning structural aid, aid for rice, and an increase in the suckler-cow premium and in the Portuguese reservation of such premiums.

On the basis of these suggestions the Council reached a broad political agreement. It instructed the SCA to draw up the legal texts of the various Regulations involved with a view to formal adoption.

SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR DURUM WHEAT PRODUCERS

With the abstention of Greece, the Council adopted a Regulation following on an undertaking given as part of last December's compromise and concerning the system of support for producers of durum wheat.

The Regulation:

- extends the traditional durum-wheat areas in France which

qualify for production aid;

- alters the reference period in Spain and Portugal for calculating the areas eligible for durum-wheat aid.

Following the reform, regions in which durum wheat is traditionally produced will qualify for special aid at a level higher than the aid granted in the other regions.

SHEEPMEAT AND GOATMEAT

The Council adopted a Regulation on sheepmeat following the overall compromise reached in December.

The Regulation:

- provides that, for the purpose of calculating the ewe premium in Ireland and Northern Ireland, the 1992 marketing year will be taken as the last year of transition to a common premium;
- raises from ECU 5,5 to ECU 7, for 1992 only, the "rural world" premium applicable in the less-favoured areas in all Member States.

TOBACCO

The Greek delegation referred to the conclusions which the Council had adopted regarding tobacco (Virginia variety) as part of the compromise of December 1992, and urged that the Commission should take specific action on them.

The Commission confirmed its intention of submitting a report and suitable proposals to the Council for its next meeting.

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CONTROL OF SALMONELLOSIS

Under "Other business", at the request of the German delegation, the Council touched on the question of salmonellosis and the measures to be envisaged for controlling it.

The Commission said it was continuing to study the matter and would consider taking any necessary steps.

OTHER DECISIONS CONCERNING AGRICULTURE

The Council adopted a Regulation laying down marketing standards for poultrymeat.

After a year's implementation the Regulation is adjusted as follows:

- the definitions of poultrymeat will be amended to exclude all types of preparation;
- Member States will be allowed to set specific temperature requirements for the cutting and storage of fresh poultrymeat in the retail trade.

The Council adopted a Decision on the granting of national aid for the distillation of certain wines in the Federal Republic of Germany.

This concerns additional aid granted by the Land of Rhineland-Palatinate in the wine sector for the 1992/1993 marketing year to deal with an exceptional situation. A maximum of DM 50 per hectolitre is being granted for 50% of the maximum volume of 310 000 hectolitres of wine produced in the Land in 1992/1993 and intended for compulsory distillation. The total aid amounts to DM 7 million.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Textiles

The Council adopted a Decision on the conclusion of the Protocol maintaining in force the Arrangement regarding international trade in textiles (MFA).

Under this Protocol, the Arrangement, including the Conclusions of the Textiles Committee adopted on 31 July 1986, as amended by the 1989 Protocol amending the 1986 Protocol extending the arrangement regarding international trade in textiles, will be maintained in force for a further period of twelve months until 31 December 1993.

Fisheries

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2984/92 allocating, for 1992, certain catch quotas between Member States for vessels fishing in the Norwegian exclusive economic zone and the fishing zone around Jan Mayen.

The amendment follows consultations between the Community and Norway and allocates between Member States the increased quotas available in 1992 (9 250 tonnes of "Other Species" in the North Sea) for Community vessels fishing in the Norwegian zone, under the 1993 fishing arrangement.

PRESS RELEASE

4526/93 (Presse 17)

1642nd Council meeting

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

Brussels, 15 February 1993

President: Mrs Marianne JELVED

Minister for Economic Affairs
of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Philippe MAYSTADT Minister for Finance

Denmark:

Mrs Marianne JELVED Minister for Economic Affairs

Germany

Mr Theodor WAIGEL Federal Minister for Finance
Mr Horst KÖHLER State Secretary for Finance
Mr Johann BEKHOF State Secretary for Economic Affairs

Greece:

Mr Stefano MANOS Minister for Economic Affairs

Spain:

Mr Carlos SOLCHAGA Minister for Economic Affairs
and Finance
Mr Pedro PEREZ State Secretary for Economic Affairs
and Finance

France:

Mr Michel SAPIN Minister for Economic and Financial
Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Bertie AHERN Minister for Finance

Italy:

Mr Piero BARUCCI Minister for the Treasury

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER Minister for Finance
Mr Robert GOEBBELS Minister for Economic Affairs

Netherlands

Mr Wim KOK Minister for Finance

Portugal:

Mr Jorge BRAGA DE MACEDO Minister for Finance

United Kingdom:

Sir John COPE Paymaster General

- + -

Commission:

Mr Henning CHRISTOPHERSEN Member
Mr Peter SCHMIDHUBER Member

- + -

The following also attended:

Mr Jean-Claude TRICHET Chairman of the Monetary Committee
Mr José Juan RUIZ Chairman of the Economic Policy
Committee

DANISH PRESIDENCY WORK PROGRAMME - OPEN DEBATE

In implementation of the conclusions reached at the Edinburgh European Council regarding transparency, the Council discussed the economic and financial aspects of the Danish Presidency's work programme at a sitting open to the public (recorded for television broadcasting) (1).

Ministers' interventions focused particularly on action to promote economic recovery in Europe in accordance with the decisions reached at the Edinburgh European Council.

At Community level the need for rapid implementation of the European Investment Fund and of the temporary loan facility (known as the Edinburgh facility) was emphasized. At national level Ministers gave details of the specific contributions their respective countries might make to the growth initiative.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN EUROPE AND REVIEW OF THE CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMES

The Council then turned to a discussion in restricted session on economic recovery in Europe. It began by noting the communication the Commission had just submitted to it on implementation of the measures to be adopted at Community level and noted that this part of the growth initiative was already well advanced. It welcomed the indications received from the EIB to the effect that the first projects to be financed from the Edinburgh facility were about to be decided on by the Bank's Board of Directors.

It also heard a report from Commissioner Christophersen on progress in the bilateral discussions with the Member States on the specific economic policy measures they proposed taking at national level and the incorporation of such measures into concerted action.

(1) Technically, the broadcast was achieved thanks to the co-operation of the European Parliament's audiovisual services. The Commission's audiovisual services also helped with this operation.

In this context the Council welcomed the prospect of the joint conference of EEC and EFTA Finance Ministers scheduled for 19 April.

The Council also heard a report from Mr Christophersen and the Chairman of the Monetary Committee on the implementation of the convergence programmes submitted by some Member States (Italy, Portugal, Ireland, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium) and the adjustments which might be needed.

The Council asked the Commission and the Monetary Committee to continue their proceedings on this matter with a view to submitting updated reports to the Council meeting on 15 March to enable the latter to reach conclusions on this important dossier.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE EDINBURGH CONCLUSIONS ON THE FUTURE FINANCING OF THE COMMUNITY

The Council heard a statement from Commissioner Schmidhuber on the Commission proposals for the implementation of the conclusions of the Edinburgh European Council on the future financing of the Community.

The Council also took note of reports from the President of the Council and Commissioner Schmidhuber on the dialogue between the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament with a view to the conclusion of a new interinstitutional agreement on the financial perspective for 1993-1999. It was in particular informed of the differences of opinion which still remained on this question between the Council and the European Parliament.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN INVESTMENT FUND

The Council agreed to give its opinion in the very near future on the convening of a Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States to adopt the amendments to be made to the Statute of the European Investment Bank with a view to the creation of a European Investment Fund.

OTHER DECISIONS IN THE AREA OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCE

Operations of the European Investment Bank

= Extension of the EIB's operations in countries with which the Community has concluded co-operation agreements

The Council adopted a Decision granting a Community guarantee to the EIB against losses under loans for projects of mutual interest in certain third countries. This Decision will allow the EIB to make available loans outwith the Community in countries with which the Community has concluded co-operation agreements.

An overall ceiling of ECU 750 million has been set for a three-year period (ECU 250 million per year). The loans will be granted in accordance with the Bank's usual criteria for projects of mutual interest.

The countries benefiting from the ECU 750 million in loans will be the developing countries of Latin America and Asia.

= EIB loans to the Baltic countries

Pending receipt of the European Parliament's Opinion and subject to examination thereof, the Council was favourably disposed towards the Commission proposal extending a Community guarantee to the EIB in case of losses on loans in the Baltic countries.

The EIB would assist these countries as it has already assisted other Central and East European countries. The loans would be granted directly by the Bank from its own resources in accordance with its usual criteria. They would be intended for the funding of investment projects.

The overall ceiling on this operation would be ECU 200 million for three years.

Medium-term financial assistance facility

Having examined, pursuant to Article 12 of Regulation No 1969/88 of 24 June 1988, the medium-term financial assistance facility for Member States' balances of payments, the Council:

- considered that the facility providing medium-term financial assistance for Member States' balances of payments still meets, in its principle, arrangements and ceiling, the need which led to its creation;
- agreed with the view expressed by the Commission in its report that the facility should remain in place during the transition to the third stage of Economic and Monetary Union;
- agreed to conduct a further review of the facility before the end of 1996, on the basis of a further Commission report, after the Monetary Committee had delivered an opinion and after the European Parliament had been consulted;

Complete liberalization of capital movements

Having completed its review of Article 3 of Directive 88/361/EEC of 24 June 1988 for the implementation of Article 67 of the EEC Treaty providing for the complete liberalization of capital movements within the Community, the Council considered that the provisions of Article 3 of Directive 88/361/EEC remained appropriate, as regards their principle and details, to the requirements which they were intended to satisfy.

VAT derogations

The Council adopted three Decisions authorizing France and the United Kingdom to apply measures derogating from the sixth VAT Directive.

Under Article 27 of the sixth VAT Directive (77/388/EEC), the Council may authorize Member States to apply measures derogating from that VAT directive in order to simplify the procedure for charging the tax or to prevent certain types of tax evasion or avoidance. The three Decisions adopted authorize, following requests from the French and United Kingdom Governments, three simplification measures.

In fact, the measures put forward by the French Government are intended to extend until 31 December 1996 the derogations the Council already granted in 1989.

The first derogation concerns exemption from or suspension of the payment of VAT for certain taxable operations involving fresh industrial waste and recuperable material.

The second derogation concerns the total exclusion from the right to deduct VAT charged on expenditure in respect of goods and services where the private use of such goods and services accounts for more than 90% of their total use.

The measure proposed by the United Kingdom is intended to extend until 31 December 1996 a derogation granted by the Council in 1990. It involves granting SME the option of postponing the right of deduction of tax until it has been paid to the supplier. At the same time the turnover ceiling for application of this derogation is raised from £300 000 to £350 000.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Environment

The Council adopted a Decision concerning the conclusion of the Protocol to the Convention on the International Commission for the Protection of the Elbe with the aim of giving that International Commission legal capacity to allow it to fulfil its tasks.

The Convention on the International Commission for the Protection of the Elbe was signed on 8 October 1990 in Magdeburg (D) by the Federal Republic of Germany, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and the European Economic Community. The Council ratified it on 18 November 1991.

ECSC

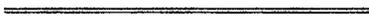
The Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted:

- a Decision on the temporary suspension, until 31 December 1993, of customs duties applicable to imports of ECSC products originating in Iceland;
- a Decision on the opening, for the period 1 January to 31 December 1993, of a 600 tonnes zero-duty tariff quota for flat rolled products of silicon-electrical steel for the Benelux countries.

Appointments

The Council replaced:

- a full member and an alternate member of the Advisory Committee on the Training of Pharmacists;
- three full members and two alternate members of the Advisory Committee on Education and Training in the Field of Architecture;
- three full members and two alternate members of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers.



PRESS RELEASE

5008/93 (Presse 21)

1643rd Council meeting

- INDUSTRY -

Brussels, 25 February 1993

President: Mr Jan TRØJBORG,

Minister for Industry
of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Melchior WATHELET Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Economic Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Jan TRØJBORG Minister for Industry
Mr Christopher Bo BRAMSEN State Secretary for Industry

Germany:

Mr M. Günther REXRODT Federal Minister for Economic Affairs
Mr Johann EEKHOF State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs

Greece:

Mr Vassilios KONTOYANNOPOULOS Minister for Industry

Spain:

Mr Claudio ARANZADI Minister for Industry

France:

Mr Dominique STRAUSS-KAHN Minister with responsibility for Industry and Foreign Trade

Ireland:

Mr Seamus BRENNAN Minister of State with special responsibility for Commerce and Technology

Italy:

Mr Giuseppe GUARINO Minister for Industry

Luxembourg:

Mr Robert GOEBBELS Minister for Economic Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr J.E. ANDRIESEN Minister for Economic Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Luis MIRA AMARAL Minister for Industry and Energy

United Kingdom:

Mr Timothy SAINSBURY Minister of State for Trade and Industry

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Commission:

Mr Martin BANGEMANN Member
Mr Karel VAN MIERT Member
Sir Leon BRITTAN Member

RESTRUCTURING OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY IN THE COMMUNITY

Council conclusions

Conscious of the gravity of the problems currently facing the steel industry in the Community the Council, meeting on 25 February 1993, welcomed the intention of the trade to embark upon an urgent process of restructuring and rationalization, in the interests of increased competitiveness and a lasting re-organization of this sector.

Such corrective action obviously needs to be accompanied by Community supporting measures designed to restore the competitiveness of the steel sector on a lasting basis, essentially through a substantial reduction of capacity coupled with action to cope with the social implications involved.

Although the restructuring of the industry is the key feature of such a plan, the measures to be taken must nonetheless provide a solution to the various problems which exist both internally and externally.

1. The Council heard an oral presentation by the Commission on the results and the evaluation of the appraisal mission given to an independent personality (Mr Fernand BRAUN) as well as the broad outlines of the Commission's recommended approach for facilitating the definition of a programme of voluntary capacity reductions and implementing the necessary supporting measures.
2. Recalling its earlier conclusions, dated 24 November 1992, on the future of the ECSC Treaty, the Council endorses the Commission's overall approach, which consists essentially of:
 - on the one hand, in order to permit a lasting re-organization of the steel sector, the formulation by the industry, before 30 September 1993, of a precise and

sufficiently extensive programme of definitive capacity reductions phased through, in principle, to the end of 1994 or, if warranted, to the end of 1995;

- on the other hand, in order to facilitate completion of this programme and cope with its social implications, the implementation by the Commission, the Council and -where necessary and desirable - the Member States, according to their respective responsibilities, of a package of supporting measures of limited duration which strictly comply with the rules on control of State Aids and include:

- = measures of financial support, particularly in the social field;
- = improvement of structures;
- = market stabilization;
- = external measures.

The implementation of the supporting measures is subject to the previous definition of a credible programme of capacity reductions but will allow the anticipatory launch of certain measures, in particular the external measures and those related to the stabilization of the market, which would be terminated if this programme has not been defined by 30 September 1993. In this context, the Council and the Commission underline the essential role of the Community steel industry and appeal to its sense of responsibility and solidarity, without which a lasting re-organization of the sector cannot be possible.

3. In respect of the programme of capacity reductions, the Council and the Commission share the opinion of the Community steel industry that the closures identified are not yet sufficient and that an additional effort should be made, particularly in the case of less competitive plant; it is necessary not only to confirm potential closures but also to add commitments for significant closures in areas where capacity needs to be adjusted to market trends.

The programme of capacity reductions thus completed should be coherent overall and assure as broad a participation as possible by the companies in the sector, taking into account the specific situation of companies, including those which are the subject of State Aids procedures under Article 95 ECSC.

In this context, the Council takes note of the Commission's intention to renew the mission given to Mr BRAUN in order to assist the companies concerned in finalizing their programmes of capacity reductions and working out the details of the various conditions and methods of finance planned.

4. The Council welcomes the Commission's initiative to implement, with due consideration for the respective responsibilities of the parties involved, a package of measures, of which the broad outline would be as follows:

A. Support measures

- With the objective of offering an additional incentive for capacity reductions the Commission will supplement the traditional social aids laid down in Article 56(2)(b) of the ECSC Treaty by additional contributions, designed to reduce the costs resulting from the need to ensure adequate social rehabilitation for workers who lose their jobs under definitive closure programmes from 1 January 1993 onwards. This supplementary contribution will be paid as part of a Steel Social Programme in partnership with the Member States concerned, using efficient and rapid management procedures and taking into account existing national schemes.
- Member States' contributions to the social measures may be supplemented, using the possibilities authorized by the Aids Code (social aid and aids towards the closure of companies).
- The structural funds have a major role to play in the redevelopment of steel regions. The conditions and arrangements for such action will be addressed as part of the

reform of these funds, which will be discussed in the near future.

- On the basis of Article 53(a) the Commission will give favourable consideration to mechanisms which groups of companies may submit to it for the joint financing of capacity reduction programmes and which may cover a sector of production or a particular region.

B. Improvement of structures

The Commission will examine, rapidly and in accordance with the competition rules of the Treaties, any agreements on specialization, concentrations or creation of joint ventures making for the rationalization of production which are submitted by companies to facilitate a lasting re-organization of the industrial structures of the sector.

C. Control of State Aids

The Commission confirms its commitment to rigorous and objective application of the Aids Code and will ensure that any derogations proposed to the Council under Article 95 contribute fully to the required overall effort to reduce capacity. The Council will act promptly on these proposals, on the basis of objective criteria.

D. Stabilization of the market

As part of its mission to provide guidance as laid down in Article 46 and in addition to its six-monthly forward programmes, the Commission will formulate overall quarterly indications regarding production and deliveries in the Community, broken down by category of product.

The Commission will keep market developments and price trends under constant review. These indications will be transmitted to all companies, together with a request to inform the Commission about how they intend to comply with them on a voluntary basis.

E. **External measures**

A comprehensive approach to the problems of restructuring must be rounded off by an external package. Subject to the Community's international commitments and in keeping with its intention of negotiating a multilateral steel agreement in order to reorganize international trade in this sector, the Commission will:

- extend the ex-ante and ex-post surveillance measures on imports;
- update the basic import prices, if necessary, at regular intervals;
- in accordance with existing directives or directives adopted in future by the Member States meeting within the Council, negotiate with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CCEE) whose exports of sensitive products over the period in question so warrant the conditions whereby gradual access may be gained to the Community market by fixing appropriate tariff quotas throughout the period 1993 to 1995, subject to a periodic review clause in the light of developments; each agreement's review clause will provide that the situation must be reviewed at least once a year on the dates specified in the agreement, in order to examine whether the conditions for maintaining the tariff quota still obtain, due account being taken also of the progress of restructuring in the Community;
- propose to the Council that it extend for 1994 and 1995 the Community quotas set on 1 January 1993 in respect of certain imports from the Republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS);

- use its best endeavours in the appropriate bodies, including on a bilateral basis, to avoid definitive adoption of the excessive and unjustified trade measures recently taken by the United States;
 - ensure that the instruments for protecting trade available to the EEC are deployed rapidly to deal with unfair imports from other third countries.
5. The Council requests the Commission to report back to it - and also to Parliament - by its next meeting on the implementation of this package to measures, in particular those requiring immediate action, on the progress made in its contacts with the industry and on the follow-up to the conclusions of the Council meeting on 24 November 1992 on the future of the ECSC Treaty.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Council heard an introductory statement by the French delegation on the future of the ECSC Treaty, which it agreed to discuss at its next meeting.

The Commission made the following statement on the conclusions adopted by the Council on the restructuring of the steel industry in the Community:

"The Commission states that in implementing the Council decision concerning external measures it will take full account of the document entitled "Towards a closer association with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe", which it had submitted to the Edinburgh European Council, and of the Council's conclusions thereon, as well as of its obligations under the Europe agreements and other agreements concluded with both the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and those of the former Soviet Union."

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Establishment of the European Investment Fund

Further to the European Parliament's Opinion delivered on 12 February 1993, the Council in turn agreed to call a Conference of Representatives of the Governments of the Member States for the purpose of adopting by common accord the amendments to be made to the Protocol on the Statute of the European Investment Bank with a view to the establishment of a European Investment Fund in accordance with the conclusions of the Edinburgh European Council.

Relations with ex-Yugoslavia

The Council adopted two Regulations (EEC) and a Decision (ECSC) on the opening of Community tariff quotas for agricultural products and establishing ceilings for certain industrial products and ECSC products originating in the Republics of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia and the territory of the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (1993).

On 3 February 1992 the Council adopted a series of measures so that the Republics of Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the territory of the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia might benefit from trade provisions equivalent to those contained in the EEC-Yugoslavia Co-operation Agreement, suspended and later denounced by the Community.

Given that there are no conventional relations with most of these countries and that the preferential arrangements from which they benefit must be retained, the Council extended the 1992 provisions into 1993.

Relations with Norway

The Council adopted the Decision concerning the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Economic Community and the Kingdom of Norway concerning the adaptation of the Agreement on reciprocal trade in cheese, which

maintains the quantities of cheese and the import duties laid down by the Agreement unchanged for 1993.

Trade measures

The Council adopted the Regulation temporarily suspending the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duty and the agricultural levy on, and opening and providing for the administration of a Community tariff quota for, certain mixtures of malt sprouts and barley screenings originating mainly in the United States.

The Regulation provides in particular for the non-collection of import duties on the products in question (or the reimbursement of duties already collected) for the period from 1 January 1992 to 31 December 1992 and for a Community tariff quota of 35 000 tonnes for the period from 1 January 1993 to 31 March 1993.

Internal market

- Fruit juices and similar products

The Council adopted a common position concerning the Directive on fruit juices and similar products. The Directive constitutes a consolidated version of Directive 75/726/EEC and the subsequent amendments to it.

The consolidation is designed to simplify all Community law already in force in this sector so as to make it more accessible to consumers and to economic operators.

More specifically, the Directive establishes that Member States must take all necessary steps to ensure that these products can be marketed only if they comply with the rules laid down in the Directive. These rules concern, inter alia, the substances, treatments, processes, additives and descriptions authorized in the manufacture of each type of fruit juice.

- Scientific examination of questions relating to food - definitive adoption

After the adoption of the common position at the Internal Market Council on 22 September 1992 and the completion of the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament, the Council definitively adopted the Directive on assistance to the Commission and co-operation by the Member States in the scientific examination of questions relating to food.

The aim of the Directive is to make available to the Scientific Committee for Food the necessary resources for carrying out its various tasks of prelegislative scientific evaluation required by the internal market programme and the implementation of existing legislation on food.

More specifically, the Directive provides that the Member States' competent authorities and bodies will co-operate with the Commission and lend it the assistance it needs in the scientific examination of questions of public interest in the field of public health through disciplines such as those associated with medicine, nutrition, toxicology, biology, hygiene, food technology, biotechnology, novel foods and processes, risk assessment techniques, physics and chemistry.

- Two or three-wheel motor vehicles

The Council adopted common positions on Directives on

- identification of controls, telltales and indicators for two or three-wheel motor vehicles,
- audible warning devices for such vehicles,
- stands, and

- passenger hand-holds for two-wheel motor vehicles.

These Directives form part of the approval procedure for two or three-wheel motor vehicles covered by framework Directive 92/61/EEC. They lay down the technical requirements which, together with those for other components and characteristics set out in Annex I to the framework Directive, must be met so that these vehicles can be approved and placed on the Community market.

Transport

The Council adopted the Decision concerning participation by the Community in negotiations for a Convention on an international customs transit procedure for goods carried by rail.

Social affairs

- HELIOS II

The Council adopted a Decision establishing a third Community action programme to assist disabled people (HELIOS II).

The programme is designed to promote equal opportunities and the integration of disabled people for the period from 1 January 1993 to 31 December 1996 with a budget of ECU 37 million.

The programme's objectives may be summarized as follows:

- (a) to continue to develop and improve exchange and information activities with the Member States and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerned;
- (b) to promote the development of a policy at Community level of co-operation with the Member States and the organizations and associations concerned with integration based

on the best innovative and effective experience and practice in the Member States;

(c) to continue co-operation with European NGOs and NGOs which are regarded as representative in the respective Member States, through national disability councils where they exist, and which have expressed a desire to co-operate at Community level.

These objectives will be pursued through general measures:

- co-ordinating, undertaking and encouraging activities based on specific annual themes, with the involvement of disabled people, their families and representative organizations;
- meeting the information needs of disabled people;
- encouraging disabled people to take part in Community programmes, inter alia in the areas of training and preparation for working life, new technologies, vocational training and employment;
- ensuring close co-ordination with activities undertaken by organizations at international level.
