

The Council

PRESS RELEASE

In accordance with the decision taken at the 13th meeting of the Association Council held in Luxembourg on 10 October last, His Excellency Mr Jean POISSON, Chairman of the Association Committee and Spokesman of the AAMS, and his Excellency Mr E.M.J.A. SASSEN, current Chairman of the Permanent Representatives Committee and Community Spokesman, met today in Brussels to initiate the procedure provided for in Annex VIII to the Yaoundé Convention, in order to find a solution to the problems posed by the Community's application of the present import arrangements for certain fruit and vegetables originating in the AAMS.

First of all Mr Poisson and Mr Sassen decided on the terms and conditions for accomplishing this task, which will be completed by 31 December 1972.

They then decided to ask Mr Jean REY, Minister of State, former President of the Commission of the European Communities, if he would undertake the good offices mission in question. Mr REY agreed.

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PRESS RELEASE

The thirteenth meeting of the Association Council was held in Luxembourg on 10 October 1972, with Mr Harouna BEMBELLO, Minister of Cooperation and Development of the Republic of Niger, Chairman of the Coordination Council of the AAMS, in the Chair.

The Community spokesmen were successively Mr T. WESTERTEP, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and acting Chairman of the Council of the European Communities, and Mr Lucien HARMEGNIES, Secretary of State, Development Cooperation, Kingdom of Belgium.

The Commission was represented by Mr S. L. MANSHOLT, the President and Mr Jean François DENIAU, Member of the Commission of the European Communities.

At this meeting the Association Council discussed the following points:

ACCESSION OF MAURITIUS TO THE YAOUNDE CONVENTION

As proposed at the time of the signing in Port Louis on 12 May 1972 of the agreement for the association of Mauritius by accession to the Yaoundé Convention, the Association Council adopted a decision to admit the Representatives of Mauritius as observers to its meetings and also to those of the association Committee and working parties, for the period up to the entry into force of this agreement.

Thereupon the delegation from Mauritius was immediately invited to attend the proceedings.

The President bade the representatives of the new Associated State, particularly Mr Gaëta DUVAL, Minister of Foreign Affairs, most cordially welcome, and was highly gratified that this act foreshadowed the actual accession of Mauritius to the Yaoundé Convention.

The Community spokesman for his part expressed warm words of welcome to the Mauritius delegation. He underlined that that same day the Council of the European Communities had put out a solemn appeal to all the Member States to speed up as much as ever possible the procedure of ratification of the agreement on the association of Mauritius.

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE RESULTS OF THE 3rd UNCTAD

The AAMS submitted their observations on the results of the third meeting of UNCTAD (Santiago, Chile, April/May 1972). These observations led them to re-emphasize the importance which they attached to their association with the Communities and to propose concrete measures to be undertaken in this framework.

The Community spokesman thanked the AAMS for this declaration which enabled him, on the eve of the Summit Conference, to have the points of view of the African States on this important question. He then outlined the procedure envisaged by the Community for the preparation of a comprehensive policy of development aid and the prospects for action to be undertaken to this end.

ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

The Association Council took note with satisfaction of the report on activities of the Association Committee, and congratulated the Ambassadors comprising this Committee on the quality of their work.

AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED WITH THE EFTA NON-APPLICANT STATES

The Community spokesman gave the Association Council information on the Agreements signed on 22 July 1972 with the States of the European Free Trade Association not applying for accession to the Communities (Austria, Finland, Iceland, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland).

The AAMS proposed to return to this question after having examined the text of these Agreements.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

The Association Council took note of the resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Conference of the Association at its meeting at The Hague from 12 to 14 January 1972.

CONCEPT OF "ORIGINATING PRODUCTS"

The Association Council approved the decision amending Decision No 36/71 on the definition of origin, consequent on the changes made in the Brussels Nomenclature.

This decision will come into force on 1 November 1972.

GENERALISED PREFERENCES

The Associated States put forward comments on the consequences within the framework of the Association of the Community's system of generalised preferences which, in their view, should be reviewed, particularly in view of the abstention of important developed countries. The Community took note of these comments and announced that it would communicate to the Association Council the draft regulations which the Commission would submit concerning the application of generalised preferences in 1973 and that it would do this before these decisions were formally adopted.

The Community spokesman also stated that the Community, wishing to allay the anxieties of the Associated States, had just taken decisions designed to counter the difficulties experienced by the Associated States which exported blockboard and laminboard.

TREATMENT TO BE APPLIED BY THE COMMUNITY TO SUGAR ORIGINATING
IN THE AAMS

The Association Council discussed the request of the AAMS that the Community should grant them an import quota of 50,000 metric tons of sugar at a preferential price, as from 1 January 1973.

In the debate the Community delegation, while pointing out that the question of sugar would form an integral part of the negotiation which would open during 1973 for the renewal of the Convention, stated that it would consider favourably the possibility of laying down a quota with preferential treatment for a reduced quantity of sugar originating in the AAMS.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY ON THE
INSTITUTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Community spokesman first pointed out that, pursuant to the Treaty of Accession, the relations which the present Community and the six Member States maintained with the eighteen, soon to be nineteen, Associated African and Malagasy States would remain unchanged after 1 January 1973 until the expiry of the Convention of Association on 31 January 1975. The Association regulations deriving from the Yaoundé Convention would therefore not be applicable to the new Member States until that date.

However, on 1 January 1973, the Council of the European Communities would increase from six to nine members. Since the European part of the Association Council was composed of members of the Council of the Communities, the representatives of the new Member States would sit, after that date, on the Association Council, the Association Committee and the Working Parties.

It was made clear that the positions of the Community in the framework of the Association would continue to be determined by the same conditions as before the entry into force of the Treaty of Accession.

The delegation of the Associated States took note of this information, on which further conversations would be held within the Association.

RESOLUTION ON THE GENERAL PATTERN FOR FINANCIAL AND
TECHNICAL COOPERATION (1)

In application of Article 29 of the Yaoundé Convention, the Association Council adopted a resolution on the general pattern for financial and technical co-operation.

This resolution, the first to be adopted since the coming into force of the Convention, deals successively with training, problems entailed in the servicing and operation of investments financed by the Community in the Associated States and the means contemplated to solve them, as well as the action to be undertaken to promote industrialisation in the Associated States.

(1) See in annex the text of this resolution

TREATMENT APPLICABLE BY THE COMMUNITY TO CERTAIN FRUITS
AND VEG TABLES ORIGINATING IN THE AAMS

The spokesman of the AAMS reiterated the anxieties of the Associated States regarding the import treatment adopted by the Council of the European Communities on 25 April 1972 in regard to certain fruits and vegetables originating in the AAMS. In particular he drew the Community's attention to the fact that the products in question had until recently enjoyed complete duty free entry without limitation of time and that the new treatment was less favourable and was likely to be detrimental to crops recently introduced, and about to become profitable, in some of the Associated States.

The Community expressed understanding of the anxieties expressed by the Associated States in this connection; it confirmed its intention of re-examining, before 1 May 1973, the treatment in question. This re-examination would relate to improvements in favour of AAMS exports.

At the end of the discussions, the parties informed the Association Council that they had agreed to implement the measures offered by Annex 8 to the Yaoundé Convention. A good offices procedure would therefore be entrusted to a person to be appointed by the parties; this procedure will terminate on 31 December 1972 at the latest.

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The Council also approved the 8th annual report of the Association Council which will be sent to the Parliamentary Conference of the Association.

With regard to the application to Mauritius of the decisions relating to rules of origin, the Association Council recorded its approval of the decision to delegate authority to the Association Committee to provide for a period of adaptation in relations with that country.

Concerning the anxieties of the AAMS regarding imports into the Community of Malagasy natural vanilla, the Community spokesman announced that the Council of the Communities had decided to speed up the examination of the proposal on this already submitted by the Commission some time earlier.

Finally, the Association Council heard an AAMS declaration on the declining imports into the Community of bananas originating in Somalia, and the causes of this state of affairs.

RESOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
ON THE GENERAL PATTERN FOR
FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

I. TRAINING

1. The Association Council recognises that teaching must be continually adapted to suit local circumstances and the requirements of development. The agencies responsible for the management of Community aid will take account of the priorities determined by each Associated State, particularly as regards the level and sectors of training, working in conjunction with the relevant departments of the Commission of the European Communities.

The Community will take these considerations into account in the framework of the credits available from the 3rd European Development Fund.

2. The efforts devoted to basic and advanced training should also help to put at the disposal of the Associated States an adequate number of people capable of running the various undertakings, bodies or services, whether public or private, which are entrusted with development operations.

Moreover, special importance must be attached to the instruction of teachers responsible for training management and supervisory staff. This instruction should be essentially directed towards a practical approach.

3. In order to keep school buildings in good repair, to facilitate their upkeep and to reduce recurring costs, it should be ensured that the strength of the buildings financed by the EDF is reinforced and that the construction standards for these buildings are adapted to local conditions.

If the investments are to be effective, it is essential for full use to be made of schools, and boarding schools in particular. The granting, as a priority, where necessary, of bursaries to pupils who attend establishments financed partly or entirely by the EDF, will allow the Community to support the efforts made by the Associated States in this direction.

4. The Associated States, with the aid of the Community, will also ensure that students trained in the technical institutions, including those training for agriculture and crafts, may when taking up employment, obtain in the national context, the necessary vocational facilities.
5. The Association Council reaffirms the importance of placing efforts in the field of training and education in a regional context.

II. SERVICING AND OPERATION OF INVESTMENTS

1. The Association Council noted the Community declarations of 22 April 1971 on the servicing and operation of investments financed by the European Development Fund.
2. For their part, the Associated States, conscious that the management and upkeep of the economic and social infrastructure and of production equipment set up by Community aid is the responsibility of the recipients, would take all the necessary measures to ensure, by proper maintenance, that the investments financed by the Community would be satisfactorily managed and operated.
3. If special difficulties prevented investments from being maintained at a time when their financing proved particularly necessary for reasons of development policy the Community would examine certain methods of aid to enable the Associated States concerned to ensure the success of such projects.
4. The Community reaffirmed its willingness to come to the aid of those Associated States which so requested, either to support them in their efforts to meet current upkeep and operating expenditure or to make good any lack of resources for covering major or exceptional expenditure.
5. With regard to road traffic and social infrastructures and the field of education, it was recommended that contributions to their upkeep should be planned in overall programmes so that these infrastructures could be improved and modernised and at the same time maintained in good working order.

III. INDUSTRIALISATION

The Association Council, stressing once more the importance of industrialisation in the Associated States' economic development, considers that general co-operation in this field, in terms of the most urgent needs and requests of the Associated States, should in particular cover the following measures:

1. In addition to the steps taken by the Associated States themselves in this respect, measures for the diffusion of industrial information should be taken by the Community in co-operation with the Associated States, in order to attract the attention of European industrial circles to the industrial possibilities afforded by the Associated States. To achieve this, it is necessary, on the one hand to speed up the studies arranged concerning a certain number of export industries and, on the other hand, to circulate the information which the promoters wish to have available on the subject of socio-economic factors and general investment conditions in the Associated States.

2. Furthermore, in specific cases the Community should foster the organisation of encounters between European promoters on the one hand and between representatives of industrial promotion and businessmen from the Associated States on the other.

3. The Community should welcome requests for technical aid to industrial promotion bodies from the Associated States so as to enable them to fulfil their duties more effectively. Action to be envisaged could consist, in particular, in the supplying of experts and the execution of specific studies.
4. Particular attention should be paid to the different forms of technical and financial aid aimed at the development of small and medium sized undertakings within the Associated States. The Community continues to take this problem into account in its training programmes. Once the principle of co-operation with the development banks of the Associated States serving as a link between Community financing institutions and the small and medium sized undertakings has been adopted, it must be carried out in accordance with the real needs of these banks, with their financial position and with prospects of concrete projects.
5. The Community is asked to pursue actively those studies having a bearing on the creation of a Community system for the guarantee of direct investments by EEC nationals.