

# ACP - EEC CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

CONSTITUENT MEETING

SUMMARY REPORT  
OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF 1, 2 AND 3 JUNE 1976  
ROBERT SCHUMAN BUILDING

LUXEMBOURG

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SITTING OF TUESDAY I JUNE I976

IN THE CHAIR: MR SPENALE AND MR YACE

Presidents

CONSTITUENT MEETING

(The constituent meeting was opened at 10.35 a.m. in the Chamber of the Schuman building in Luxembourg.)

1. Opening of constituent meeting

Mr Spenale declared open the constituent meeting of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly in accordance with the mandate given to him and President Yace at the end of the preparatory meeting held in Luxembourg in November 1975.

2. Adoption of Rules of Procedure

Mr Spenale recalled that draft Rules of Procedure had been unanimously adopted at the preparatory meeting on 26 November 1975.

After pointing out that these Rules could be amended at a later stage in accordance with the procedure laid down therein, the President proposed to the Assembly that they should be adopted.

The Consultative Assembly adopted the Rules of Procedure contained in Document No I/76.

3. Membership of the Assembly

Mr Spénale announced that a list of the representatives appointed to the Assembly pursuant to Article 1 (1) of the Rules of Procedure would be appended to the minutes of the sitting.

He also pointed out that representatives of the Cape Verde Islands, the Comoro Islands, Sao Tomé and Príncipe and Surinam would also participate in the work of the Assembly as observers.

4. Election of the Bureau

Pursuant to Article 6 (1) of the Rules of Procedure, the Assembly elected its Bureau, which would consist of the following representatives:

<u>Presidents:</u>	Mr Spénale and Mr Yacé	
<u>Vice-Presidents:</u>	Mr Bersani	Mr Muna
	Mr Krall	Mr Lock
	Mr de la Malène	Mr Adriko
	Lord Reay	Mr Lewis
	Mr Sandri	1 representative of the three ACP States of the Pacific

(The sitting, which was suspended at 10.40 a.m., was resumed at 11 a.m.)

5. Election of members of the Joint Committee

On a proposal from the Bureau, and pursuant to Article 21 of the Rules of Procedure, the Assembly elected the members of the Joint Committee. A list of members is appended to the minutes of this sitting.

6. Election of the Chairmen of the Joint Committee

The Assembly elected Mr KASONGO and Mr DESCHAMPS chairmen of the Joint Committee.

7. Order of business

On a proposal from the Bureau, the Assembly adopted the following order of business:

Tuesday morning, 11.45 a.m.

- Formal opening sitting

Tuesday afternoon, 4 p.m.

- Meeting of the Joint Committee
- Meeting of the Bureau

Tuesday afternoon 5 p.m.

- Plenary sitting with
  - adoption of the draft agenda drawn up by the Joint Committee
  - statement by Mr Cheysson, member of the Commission of the European Communities, followed by a debate

Wednesday, 2 June

Morning: meeting of the Joint Committee

Afternoon, 4 p.m.: statement by the President-in-Office of the Council of the European Communities, followed by a debate

Thursday, 3 June

9.30 a.m.: plenary sitting and close of proceedings

4 p.m.: press conference

(The sitting was suspended at 11.10 a.m. and resumed at 11.45 a.m.)

8. FORMAL OPENING SITTING

On behalf of the Assembly, President Spenale welcomed their Royal Highnesses Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg and Grand Duchess Josephine Charlotte.

Mr VOUEL, Deputy Prime Minister of Luxembourg and President-in Office of the Council of the European Communities, expressed the Council's thanks, congratulations and best wishes to the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly.

Its thanks, because the movement that was now taking shape had originated from the Assembly, its congratulations, because the diversity of the countries represented in the Assembly had presented no obstacles to this meeting, and its best wishes because the Council hoped that the enterprise would be a success.

The Council needed the opinions and criticisms of the Assembly if it was to achieve the important objectives of the Convention of Lome and help establish a more harmonious economic order in the world. Although the Council was still meeting in Brussels at the present time it was anxious to be associated with such an important event as the first meeting of the Consultative Assembly.

The Council was determined to fulfil its responsibilities in regard to the implementation of the Convention of Lome. For the Council, a directly representative body such as the Consultative Assembly was a partner to be reckoned with and one on which it would rely at every stage of the joint implementation of the Convention of Lome.

Although there were a number of differences of opinion between the European States, it was gratifying to note that on the subject of the Lome Convention they were, exceptionally, in complete agreement so that the chances of achieving concrete and satisfactory results were considerable.

The Consultative Assembly was the first institution to begin working actively since the Convention had entered into force. He paid tribute to the example set by this first parliamentary meeting and expressed the hope that the ministerial body would also be functioning effectively in the near future.

(Loud Applause)

After paying tribute to Their Royal Highnesses the Grand Duke Jean and Grand Duchess Josephine Charlotte of Luxembourg, Mr YACE, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of the Ivory Coast and Co-President of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly, thanked the Luxembourg Government for its hospitality.

The fact that this meeting was being held two months after the Convention had entered into force reflected a desire to set the Consultative Assembly in operation as soon as possible. The drawing up within a very short time of draft Rules of Procedure acceptable to all concerned was a further achievement. Mr Spenale's efforts to expedite the ratification of the Convention in the Community were also to be welcomed. Thirteen months after the signature of the Convention, this important undertaking was now fully operative.

The first meeting of the Consultative Assembly was being held at a time when the industrialized and developing countries were considering how a new international economic order could be established. It was noticeable that over the years relations between rich and poor countries were concerned less and less with the balance of power and were affected less and less by political considerations. It was gratifying that certain ideas were beginning to gain ground, particularly in regard to the organization of the primary commodity markets and to a certain extent the serious problem of the debt burdens of the developing countries.

However, it must be admitted that the results of recent international meetings had not been a good example of what the more developed countries could contribute to the developing countries they wished to help.

In this troubled world, the Convention was recognized as a unique model in the history of international economic relations and already its export revenue stabilization machinery had aroused considerable interest.

Now the agreement had to be consolidated. The provisions of the Convention were valuable at the present time and could serve as a model for the future.

If the full benefit was to be derived from the Convention, a dialogue would have to be initiated in which the stronger parties renounced their own interests rather than imposing their will on others. Although based on fundamentally unequal relations, the Convention was clearly designed to establish between the ACP countries and the EEC a cooperation founded on complete equality.

However, true equality should not give the impression that matters that already appeared to have been settled were now once again being called into question, particularly when products of vital importance for the survival of certain ACP countries were involved. In the case of, for example, sugar or beef and veal a fair agreement must be reached as a matter of priority. In general terms, it was essential that the liberalization of trade did not cancel out certain of the advantages granted to the ACP countries under the Convention. It must be remembered that eighteen ACP countries were among the twenty-five poorest countries in the world.

The determination to set the Consultative Assembly in operation without delay was a clear indication that the ACP States were prepared to play their part in implementing the LOME Convention.

(Loud Applause)

Mr SPENALE, President of the European Parliament, co-President of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly, welcomed all those taking part at the first meeting of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly, the largest international Assembly in the world.

He thanked particularly their Royal Highnesses, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg and Grand Duchess Josephine Charlotte, as well as the numerous prominent personalities who had honoured the official opening session with their presence.

The President went on to stress that the meeting of the Consultative Assembly was the first step in the negotiation of a 'revolutionary' Agreement, which, at the institutional level, envisaged the creation of a permanent body, the Consultative Assembly, whose function would be to ensure permanent democratic control and to play the part of guarantor.

This agreement is, however, also a point of departure, which should lead to more equitable, just and humane relations than had been the case in the past.

As far as their economies went, the Convention of Lome was based on complementarity while from the point of view of principles, it was based on solidarity. In the history books it will go down as the symbol of a revolution which gave the Third World access to co-responsibility and to increased prosperity. Already new candidates for accession are coming forward: Sao Tome and Principe, Cape Verde, Surinam, the Comoro islands and New Guinea. They wished to play their part in a revolution comparable to that which in the last century enkindled the national consciousness and gave birth to their nations.

The Convention of Lome, a model of its kind, should go beyond the letter of its provisions in opening up new horizons of vision, encouragement and determination. In all of this the Assembly will have a vital part to play. The first day of June 1976 will be a day of historic significance, opening the way for the achievement of the goals set last November by President Yace when he called for 'more social justice with a view to a more equitably shared development to be brought about by means of solidarity and mutual aid'.

(Loud Applause)

H.E. Mr G.A. KING, Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection of Guyana and President in Office of the ACP Council of Ministers, expressed the gratitude of the representatives of the ACP States for the warmth of the welcome extended to them by the people of Luxembourg and conveyed his good wishes to the Grand Duke.

(Applause)

He congratulated the Joint Presidents of the Assembly for their work in finalising the rules of procedure, and paid tribute to the Assembly's dedicated pursuit of its commitment to implement the provisions of the Lomé Convention. That Convention had been described as a landmark in relations between the developing and developed States and as a model to be emulated. But the Convention was not perfect; some expectations remained unfulfilled and the achievement of a more balanced international economic order was still a distant prospect. The Lomé Convention was a blueprint of economic cooperation which, if fully implemented, would significantly change the lives of millions of people in the ACP States. The Convention identified the instruments by means of which this change might be achieved. Through a frank exchange of views the Consultative Assembly could help to define the essential features of the new order.

A modest beginning had already been made in the ten months since the entry into force of the provisional arrangements under the Lomé Convention. The first steps had been taken in the field of industrial cooperation and in the transfer of resources and technological expertise from the Community to the ACP. Stabex was a vital instrument to remedy the instability of ACP export earnings, but there was a long way to go if it was to have its intended effects.

The entry into force of the Convention on 1 April 1976 should be followed by a substantial disbursement of aid to assist in financing vital ACP projects. The ACP countries hoped that there would be no attempt to question their own development priorities. Development aid from the Community was an important feature of the overall arrangements under the Convention but must not be used to 'influence enlightened and effective decisions on other matters'; above all aid could not be a substitute for fair and remunerative prices for commodity exports to the Community.

An effective start had been made in the area of trade cooperation but Community measures such as the generalised system of preferences and the offer in respect of tropical products under the GATT multilateral trade negotiations were a threat to this cooperation. The ACP countries were not opposed to the principle of the proposed system but were concerned at the implementing provisions. They were concerned too at the unsatisfactory licensing provisions for their beef exports to the Community which made forward planning impossible.

Referring to the admission of new members to the Lomé Convention, Mr King expressed the concern of the ACP countries at the Community's silence on the applications already submitted. A positive response was hoped for at an early date.

Negotiations were currently in progress on a number of commodities but the ACP countries regretted the Community's retreat from many of the agreed principles in respect of commodities such as sugar. The ACP expected the previously agreed arrangements for determining the price of sugar to be respected.

Turning to the outcome of the recent session of UNCTAD in Nairobi, Mr King stated that 'what has been described by the media as a breakthrough is, upon examination, no more than a postponement of the dialogue to a future date'. UNCTAD had not resulted in total deadlock but a great deal remained to be done. The Consultative Assembly could play a central role in defining perspectives for the future which should be those of 'cooperation in partnership'. The Assembly must help to consolidate the institutions of the Convention and to ensure that they served as instruments of economic development and expansion on both sides. It must inspire public involvement in the objectives of the Convention. Through the broadly based interests and qualifications of its members, the Assembly could have an innovative function and usefully complement the work of the other institutions.

The Assembly would be a forum for evaluation of the implementation of the Convention; compliance with the undertakings given in the Convention to the 46 ACP States would be 'a major test of the validity of the Community's commitment to its policies of cooperation and assistance to its partners in the Third World'. A climate could then be created in which suspicion gave way to trust and confrontation to cooperation.

(Loud applause)

Mr VAN DEN BULCKE, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, began by saying that he was speaking for his colleagues when he congratulated all those who had contributed to the success of a great work, the Convention of Lome, the importance of which will undoubtedly add a new dimension to world cooperation in the economic sphere.

The tasks awaiting the members of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly will certainly be enormously difficult, but their efforts should be crowned by success.

Luxembourg has always been in favour of close cooperation between the European Communities and the countries of the Third World. The Convention of Lome was undoubtedly a new departure in the matter of cooperation between the older continent and the developing countries.

The Grand Duchy was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention of Lome, the implementation of which has already borne fruit, both in the area of trade cooperation, where all its provisions have been applied in advance, and industrial cooperation as well as in the matter of stabilizing the ACP's export earnings on which agreement was readily reached.

Even if this meeting of the Consultative Assembly takes place at a fateful time for relations between the developing countries and the industrialized countries - the end of the proceedings of the fourth UNCTAD, the suspension of the North - South dialogue, the continuation of the multi-lateral negotiations within the framework of GATT -, the speaker said that he was still convinced that the Convention of Lome would function in a perfectly satisfactory manner.

In conclusion, the speaker expressed the hope that the Assembly's proceedings would be fruitful and that its members would enjoy their stay in Luxembourg.

(Loud Applause)

After thanking Their Royal Highnesses for their interest in European unification and cooperation between the Third World and the industrialized countries, Miss FLESCH, Chairman of Committee on Development and Cooperation of the European Parliament, welcomed her colleagues in the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly to the city of which she was mayor.

The developments in recent years and more particularly the results of the recent UNCTAD Conference gave cause for concern. Obviously in the present economic crisis it was tempting for governments to restrict their development aid but it was both desirable and possible to increase this aid and the leaders of the richer countries would win public support for this policy provided that the public was properly informed.

It was also essential for wealth to be more fairly distributed between all sections of the population in the countries concerned.

Finally, if the development aid policy was to produce the maximum benefit, its effects on the other areas of Community policy, and vice versa, must be taken into account when working out such a policy.

The objectives should be consistency in political action and human solidarity.

In this connection, Miss Flesch expressed the hope that this constituent meeting would offer the Members of Parliament of the Member States the opportunity to consider, together with the representatives of the developing countries, the possibilities of a cooperation policy beneficial to all concerned. She hoped also that after this meeting observers all over the world would appreciate the 'extra dimension' introduced by the Lomé Convention.

(Loud applause)

Mr YACE, co-President, declared the formal opening sitting of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly closed.

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(The sitting was adjourned at 12.55 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR TANDENG MUNA

Vice-President

9. Agenda

On a proposal from the Joint Committee, the Assembly decided to adopt the following agenda:

Afternoon

Exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome

Wednesday, 2 June 1976 at 4 p.m.

- adoption of internal financial regulations
- further exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome

Thursday, 3 June 1976 at 10 a.m.

- continuation and conclusion of the exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome
- adoption of a resolution on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome
- any other business

10. Exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome.

Mr CHEYSSON, Member of the Commission of the European Communities, reported on behalf of the Commission on the implementation of the Lome Convention, which he considered to have been satisfactory.

Financial cooperation was well underway and related largely to projects in the rural sector, in accordance with the schemes worked out by the ACP countries themselves.

For the past 11 months practically all ACP exports had been granted free access to the Common Market and trade promotion activities were also in progress.

Referring to Mr King's speech that morning, he said that the Community intended to fulfil its obligations to the Group of 77; the Community's policy was to be regarded as a whole and an adjustment to the relative preference would not jeopardize the advantages conferred under the Convention. An important new factor was the STABEX system which had worked satisfactorily even in the first year of its introduction. Europe was proud to have brought about a fundamental change in relations between industrialized and developing countries by means of this right to compensation, which was very different from traditional forms of aid.

Another new factor introduced by the Convention was the 'revolutionary' protocol on sugar. Commitments had been fulfilled on both sides.

The Community was endeavouring to promote industrialization in the ACP by all the means at its disposal. It was now a question of fulfilling the commitments entered into. This industrial promotion would perhaps present problems in the future because the areas to be dealt with were completely new and a number of commercial operators would be involved, but the interest of the latter was extremely encouraging.

The large number of applicants for the posts of Commission delegates to the ACP governments indicated the considerable interest in this form of representation. The applicants were all people who were extremely enthusiastic about development cooperation.

Their great common enterprise had to be seen in a new international context. The developing countries no longer wanted to be mere purveyors of growth and prosperity but real partners.

However, disappointment and frustration often raised their heads on the occasion of major international discussions, because bringing about a profound change in world order is necessarily a slow process.

The Lome policy, like the agreements concluded with the three Maghreb countries and about to be concluded with five other countries in the Eastern Mediterranean, had some completely original features, such as:

- (1) the agreements combined all the means of action, financial, technical, commercial and structural;
- (2) the parties benefiting by the agreements decide for themselves on how these resources are to be used;
- (3) the Community offers this integrated form of cooperation to groups of countries, thus stressing its resolve not to involve itself in the internal affairs of its partners;
- (4) enshrined as they are in international treaties, harmonious relations are guaranteed no matter what may befall.

The Consultative Assembly is the guarantor of this new type of relationship, unique in the world, between the peoples of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific and the people of Europe.

The Convention of Lome must be a convention of progress and dynamic onward movement.

The most striking confirmation of the value of the Lome policy has been provided recently by the accession of the three Maghreb countries to this form of cooperation, this 'contract between civilizations', as the Prime Minister of Tunisia called it. What satisfaction it must give the Lome countries to see other countries following in their footsteps!

The speaker went on to stress that the policy of Lome can never be a marginal policy. Since it has a bearing on numerous sectors in Europe it will inevitably call for complementarity and the operation of the basic law of economic interdependence with all the consequences arising therefrom. This will have to be thoroughly understood by all the economic forces and by the workers who must make the struggle of the poorer nations their own struggle.

As far as the Consultative Assembly is concerned, it will have an important role to play in voicing the concerns of the peoples associated with the Convention of Lome and upholding its principles.

It was its grand design that distinguished the Community from its customary industrial allies, concluded Mr Cheysson; they differed in their pasts and in their present needs. Be that as it may, the challenge thrown down by the partners in the Convention of Lome had been well and truly accepted.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: Mr KRALL

Vice-president

Lord REAY, vice-president, referred in particular to the specific problems of beef and sugar. The principal advantage of the Lomé Convention was that it enabled most ACP countries to export without restriction to the Community. In the case of Botswana the majority of these exports consisted of beef but access to the Community market was restricted. There was a need for continuing derogations in favour of Botswana and the other beef-exporting ACP countries. The quantities of beef concerned were not large in relation to total Community production. The central problem was that the present arrangements were only made for six months at a time. The Commission should take immediate steps to ensure access to Community markets at remunerative prices for reasonable quantities on a longer term basis.

In the case of sugar, there were two problems: the price to be paid for the 1.3 million tons guaranteed under the Protocol, and the question of whether cane sugar producers should be included in the Commission's proposal for a sugar-storage scheme. The difference between the two sides on the matter of price was only 1.5 u.a. per 100 kg. Even if producers were paid the price they were asking, the increase over last year would not be larger than that which would be paid this year to Community producers.

With regard to storage, it was wrong for the Commission to treat cane sugar in the same way as beet sugar. Storage was the standard practice in the case of beet sugar and there were facilities for it, whereas supplies of cane sugar were delivered as and when they were required. The purpose of the storage facility was to provide an insurance of supply. The Convention contained a built-in penalty for non-delivery and the storage arrangements would provide no additional advantage.

At a more general level there was the danger of the negotiators being influenced by painful memories of the past. The sugar problem should not be used as an occasion for trying to retrieve lost prestige. The sugar protocol was important in that it was the first commodity agreement under the Convention. The differences between the two sides were not such as to warrant excessive resistance from the Commission.

There was the further danger of the benefits of the Lomé Convention being eroded by action taken by the Community in favour of other countries. If the Community concluded a succession of agreements with other countries this might undermine the effect of similar agreements reached previously. The Community should not try to extend identical benefits too widely and too soon. It could not resist demands from other developing countries, within GATT, but it was essential to strike a balance and agree on an acceptable pace of change.

The Community and the ACP countries could be confident of reconciling their respective interests and achieving their objectives, provided the discussion of problems was approached in future in the same open spirit as it had been in the past.

(Applause)

11. Agenda for the next sitting

The President reminded the meeting that the agenda for the sitting of Wednesday, 2 June 1976 at 4 p.m. had been fixed as follows:

- Adoption of internal financial regulations
- Further exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome.

The President declared the sitting closed.

(The sitting was closed at 6.15 p.m.)

SITTING OF WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 1976

IN THE CHAIR: MR SPENALE

President

The sitting was opened at 6.05 p.m.

After thanking the Joint Committee for its work during the meeting the President announced that Mr Thorn, President-in-Office of the Council of the European Communities, was unable to attend the sitting because of the alteration in the arrangements.

I. Documents received

The President announced that he had received the following documents:

- from Mr A.F. Lock, on behalf of the Bureau, a motion for a resolution on the adoption of the internal financial regulation of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly, pursuant to Article 23 of the internal Rules of Procedure (Doc. 2/76)
- from the Joint Committee, a motion for a resolution on activities relating to the Lome Convention during the interim period and since its entry into force (Doc. 3/76)

2. Internal financial regulation of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly

Introducing his resolution, Mr Lock, Speaker of the National Assembly of Botswana, Vice-President of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly and Rapporteur for the Bureau of the Assembly, pointed out that the Members of the Assembly had before them the relevant documents containing the substance of the Bureau's recommendations, which complied entirely with Article 2 of Protocol No. 4. He then formally moved the adoption of the financial regulation contained in Doc. 2/76.

(Applause)

The Assembly adopted the resolution contained in Doc. 2/76.

3. Agenda for next sitting

The President reminded members that the agenda for the next days sitting on Thursday 3 June 1976 was as follows:

10 a.m.

- continuation and conclusion of the exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome;
- motion for a resolution on activities relating to the Lome Convention during the interim period and since its entry into force;
- any other business.

The President declared the sitting closed.

(The sitting was closed at 6.15 p.m.)

SITTING ON THURSDAY 3 JUNE 1976

IN THE CHAIR: MR BERSANI

Vice-President

The sitting was opened at 10.30 a.m.

1. Change in agenda

On a proposal from the President, the Assembly decided first to consider the motion for a resolution on activities relating to the Convention (Doc. 3/76) and then to continue the debate on current problems connected with the Convention.

2. Activities relating to the Lomé Convention during the interim period and since its entry into force (Doc. 3/76)

Mr BOOLELL introduced the resolution previously adopted by the Joint Committee after extensive discussion. The final text now before the Assembly was the outcome of that discussion and incorporated a number of amendments. Mr Boolell read out the resolution, inviting delegates to comment if they so wished. He indicated that, in accordance with a suggestion by the Guyanan representative, the consultation referred to in paragraph 11 should be of a prior nature. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the resolution would be adopted unanimously.

(Applause)

After expressing his thanks for the invitation extended to his country to send an observer to the meeting, Mr WIJNTUIN, President of the Parliament of Surinam, said that his country had - peacefully - gained its independence in November 1975 and had applied to become a Member State of the Convention of Lomé on 12 March 1976. As Mr Cheysson had confirmed the previous day, the application had been favourably received and Surinam should be represented as a full member at the Assembly's next meeting.

(Applause)

Mr ADOUKI, speaking on behalf of the People's Republic of the Congo, made some comments on certain points in the resolution. He stressed the reservations voiced by the People's Republic of the Congo with regard to these points at the meeting of the Joint Committee, reservations which explained why they would be abstaining when the vote was taken.

The President put the motion for a resolution to the vote.

The Assembly adopted the resolution contained in Document 3/76.

(Loud applause)

5. Exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lomé (continued)

Mr RAZAFIMBAHINY made a statement on behalf of the Republic of Madagascar. He pointed out that his country's representatives in the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly had taken their seats on a provisional basis. The Republic of Madagascar was at present involved in political reorganization, which should lead to the establishment of a new National Assembly.

The elections for the new Assembly were to be held before June 1977. After this, it would send to the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly full members of Parliament who would participate fully in the work undertaken in the context of the Convention of Lomé.

(Applause)

Mr LABAN found it surprising that a problem of great topical importance which particularly affected relations between Europe and Africa had not yet been raised: namely, the fact that France had supplied nuclear power stations to South Africa.

The majority of countries and (on 23 February) the Council of Ministers of the EEC had condemned South Africa's apartheid policy. The fact that France had supplied nuclear power stations was tantamount to expressing support for a racist minority regime and providing political ammunition against the EEC. He proposed that, in order to avoid jeopardizing the goodwill between the EEC and the ACP countries and to endorse the validity of their principles the Consultative Assembly should condemn the supply of nuclear power stations to South Africa.

(Prolonged applause from various benches)

Mr ENDESHAW, representative of Ethiopia, expressed his delegation's appreciation of the constructive discussions that had taken place in the Consultative Assembly. The present political situation in Ethiopia was such that there was no Parliamentary Assembly. His country's parliamentary delegates to the Conference could not therefore be officially appointed until a later date. He wished a statement to this effect to be recorded in the Summary Report of the Proceedings.

(Applause)

Mrs GOUTMANN felt that the Assembly should take a more restrained view of the merits of the Convention. It was not its content that made it such a historic and revolutionary document, but the fact that the peoples of these countries were struggling for their independence and for their right to dispose freely of their own resources, as well as the fact that the industrialized countries were being severely buffeted by the present structural crisis.

The advantages being conferred on the ACP countries by the Convention should be credited not so much to the goodwill of the capitalist countries as to the new balance of powers and the upsurge of anti-imperialist movements,

all of which necessitated a new international economic order. The capitalist countries were only making a virtue of necessity.

The Convention of Lome had obvious limitations which were inimical to international economic cooperation. STABEX in particular aimed only at stabilizing earnings in monetary terms and not in real terms and took no account of the effects of inflation and of the increase in the prices of imported manufactured products. Furthermore, this system tended to confine the developing countries to the role of suppliers of raw materials, to pin them down to a situation in which they were dependent on a single product and to put a brake on the diversification of their trade.

Relating the implementation of the Convention of Lome to its international political and economic context, Mrs GOUTMANN recalled the outcome of the Nairobi Conference as well as France's delivery of nuclear power stations to South Africa.

It was regrettable that in Nairobi certain Community countries had been seen to align themselves with the intransigent positions of the United States. Furthermore, one wondered whether the Community might not be prepared to adopt at Community level, through the establishment of a European Export Bank, the idea floated by Mr Kissinger of setting up an international bank for the multinational redeployment of major capital.

As far as the delivery of nuclear power stations to South Africa was concerned, the speaker condemned the attitude of President Giscard d'Estaing's government which had not hesitated to give its political, economic and military support to a racist country that had been denounced by the United Nations Organization.

Having criticized the attempts made by European countries to break up the united front of the developing countries, the speaker concluded by saying that she looked forward to the establishment of a new international economic order which would permit cooperation without discrimination and would enable the mutual interests of the developing and the industrialized countries to be taken into account.

(Applause from various benches)

IN THE CHAIR: MR SPENALE

President

Mr NYBORG, on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, described the Convention of Lomé as an exemplary model of cooperation between developed and developing countries and as a step towards a more equitable world economic order. All the partners on both sides must now recognize the need for balanced relations between them. In that sense the Lomé Convention was important since it provided for cooperation on a completely equal footing.

But there were problems: 'Spring is over and some of its flowers are withering'. The time had now come for the promises held out in the Convention to be implemented. Mr Nyborg noted with satisfaction that a start had been made in the areas of financial aid, STABEX and industrial cooperation. But all was not perfect. Earlier in the proceedings, Mr King had rightly referred to the possible erosion of the trade advantages held out by the Lomé Convention: admittedly the Community had wide responsibilities to the Third World but it must tread warily as the EEC was a relatively small grouping which could do no more than its resources allowed.

The Lomé Convention should therefore be the central feature of all the EEC's efforts to assist the developing countries. The disappointment created by the recent UNCTAD session in Nairobi confirmed this need. The Community must demonstrate to the world how cooperation on a basis of complete equality could point the way to a more equitable and humane international order.

Finally, Mr Nyborg expressed his Group's satisfaction with the institutional arrangements under the Convention. The Assembly provided an opportunity for open and frank discussion and could play a constructive part by exerting its influence on the Association Council. Mr Cheysson had described the Lomé Convention as a 'contract of civilization'. We must now live up to the hopes placed in the Convention.

(Applause)

Mr GLINNE thought he was speaking for the large majority of members when he said that the Convention of Lomé was a step in the right direction. Admittedly, improvements were necessary but there was no doubt that they would gradually be made. However, the speaker deplored the negativist tendencies that might arise from the legitimate frustration caused by the fact that the establishment of a new economic order was a lengthy process.

Mr Glinne then drew attention to two matters which he thought should be tackled in connection with the Convention, namely Namibia and Angola. As regards Namibia, he thought stress should be placed on the desirability of exploratory talks between the United Nations Council for Namibia and the authorities responsible for administering the Convention of Lomé with a view to the possible subsequent accession of Namibia to that Convention. As for Angola, he said that the victims of the long-standing crisis deserved active support from the Member States of the Convention, in cooperation with the United Nations and the Angolan Government.

(Loud applause)

The President pointed out that the Assembly was not able to adopt a position on these proposals as prior consideration by the Joint Committee was required under the provisions of Article 15 of the Rules of Procedure.

Mr Glinne could, if he so wished, make his opinion on these questions known during the press conference to be held that afternoon; he could then point out that, by their applause, a large majority of the Members of the Assembly had endorsed his observations.

Mr BERSANI stated that in making a first assessment of the implementation of the Lomé Convention it was necessary to consider the underlying significance of the Convention as a whole and the new prospects it had created for developing countries. Beyond the purely quantitative aspect of the enlargement from the previous membership of 18 countries, there had also been a qualitative breakthrough in the shape of a dynamic new approach to development cooperation.

However, some developing countries were facing grave, indeed tragic, problems and both parties must work together constructively to create more equitable conditions in these countries. The Convention was perhaps not an appropriate framework for the consideration of basic and controversial political issues: it might be dangerous to embark upon such discussion here. Many of the delegates present had reservations about certain situations and events in Africa, but the Convention aimed at peaceful cooperation between the partners in a spirit of justice and nothing must be done to jeopardize that spirit.

Placed in its historical context, he was convinced that the Association had helped to facilitate unification of the participating peoples, and he was sure that it would continue to do so in its enlarged form. He could think of no single negative aspect, and it had contributed much that was basic to the extension of political autonomy and freedom. The respect of national independence that had always been shown in the Association was a precious political asset. Progress might be slow but it was certain that progress had been rendered possible by the Convention of Lome. A number of radically new mechanisms and structures had been created. Against the background of the recent UNCTAD meeting in Nairobi, it should not be forgotten that the Lome Convention had introduced new arrangements in respect of primary commodities - a new departure whose importance was widely recognized.

The basis for understanding between the partners created by this and other provisions must be exploited to the full and developed further. The present approach was too limited: a great deal more remained to be done. This Conference had shown that the necessary goodwill and resolve existed and it could play a central role in encouraging further action. The concern of all the delegates to introduce a greater degree of innovation than ever before, and their keen awareness of the problems had been made abundantly clear; the general need for wider participation by the economic and social forces had been recognized in many quarters.

There were profound reasons for supporting the Convention, not merely as an established structure but as a foundation for more broadly-based and dynamic progress in development cooperation. The achievements were real and the prospects for the future extremely promising.

(Applause)

Mr KASANGA MULWA said that he would be able to report to his parliament that he had seen a great deal of goodwill at the Consultative Assembly and that this institution of the Lome Convention was proving highly satisfactory. Previously the Commonwealth countries had viewed the Association essentially as a body for the French-speaking African countries, but they now looked forward to taking part in its development. Referring to Mr Laban's observations on the proposed delivery by France of nuclear power stations to South Africa, Mr Mulwa said how gratified he had been to hear his European colleagues raise this matter. It was all the more meaningful when Europeans drew attention to points such as this, reflecting their genuine understanding of Africa.

Mr Mulwa said that the effects of the Lome Convention fell short of Kenyan aspirations on primary commodities; the Convention was nevertheless a stepping stone towards the goals of the Third World. The group of 77 countries would continue to press for more equitable arrangements in respect of primary commodities, the transfer of technology and greater efforts to aid the least developed countries. Mr Mulwa favoured the Convention but saw it only as a beginning. In conclusion, he said how impressed he had been by the proceedings of the Consultative Assembly, and hoped that account would duly be taken of the points made by the ACP delegates - particularly as regards the shortcomings of the STABEX scheme which was a step in the right direction but fell short of the needs; the ultimate aim must be an integrated programme for stabilization of the prices for all primary commodities.

(Applause)

Mr LABAN, referring again to the supply of nuclear power stations to South Africa, noted that the Rules of Procedure were such that it was impossible to table a resolution on this matter at this stage. However, to ensure that the Consultative Assembly made its opinion quite clear, he proposed to make a statement drawing attention to the general condemnation of the apartheid policy pursued by South Africa and deploring the supply of nuclear power stations to South Africa, which, in effect, was tantamount to declaring support for the regime.

(Prolonged applause from various benches)

The President declared the exchange of views on current problems connected with the Convention of Lome closed.

#### 4. Other Business

In view of the fact that a delegation from the Transkei was likely to visit the Commission of the European Communities in Brussels in the near future, Mrs GOUTMANN felt that there was a urgent need to protest against this implicit recognition of a racially discriminatory regime.

(Applause)

#### 5. Closure of the constituent meeting

The President said that he was happy to be able to affirm that this meeting of the Consultative Assembly had not only been a constituent meeting but also an active working meeting.

Article 80 of the Convention had provided it with a legal basis, but nothing more. Barely two months after its entry into force, the Assembly came into being. He thanked all those, and President Yace in particular, who had helped to achieve such a happy outcome in such a short space of time, notwithstanding the large number of members on the Joint Committee.

At Nairobi, whatever their differences had been, hope had been kept alive. It was an opportune time to express the wish that, by means of the hopes it had aroused, the Convention of Lome, the spirit of which it was the Assembly's task to safeguard, would set a valuable example for UNCTAD and the North-South dialogue that would eventually see them crowned with success.

In conclusion the speaker stressed the freedom enjoyed by all parties alongside the relations of interdependence by which they were so closely linked. Both sides had much to give and much to receive. It was essential that the model relations that had been established should survive and flourish.

(Loud applause)

The President declared the constituent meeting of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly closed.

The sitting was closed at 11.55 a.m.

ANNEX

SPEECHES MADE ON 3 JUNE 1976

during a ceremony to mark the award of decorations

Speech by Mr Philippe YACE, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of the Ivory Coast and President of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly

Presidents,  
Ministers,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen.

From the time in Abidjan, barely 25 years ago when the first uncertain hopes of future independence began to take shape, to my first meeting with Mr Gaston THORN at the first EEC-AASM Parliamentary Conference in Rome in 1961, and now, at this historic meeting in Luxembourg, currents of world thought have changed so radically that it sometimes seems that the **whole** process must have been just a dream.

I myself, although deploring the obscurantist attitudes of earlier days and imbued since childhood with a strong sense of my identity as a citizen of the Ivory Coast and an African, little dreamed that one day I should have the chance to join in a fraternal struggle for world peace, in which Africa has an essential role to play, with men in that far-off continent of Europe, who, it was said, were shaping world history.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have come together today to pay sincere tribute to one of the leading figures in these historical events and I hope that this speech will adequately express the depth of our feelings.

In this troubled world, we know that we can still find a small island of sanity in Europe which I hope you will preserve at all costs. I refer to the new dialogue that we have established, the new awareness of universal values and the deepening conviction that remedies to the great problems facing the world today will come from the union of our cultures and civilizations.

Thus, this ceremony to which you have been invited by the Ivory Coast has a symbolic value for us. In honouring Mr THORN, we are saluting the evolution of a particular philosophy, even, one might say, a Civilization. Mr Thorn has taken his inspiration from the most liberal and progressive ideas to have come forward since the emergence of the Third World.

In carrying out his numerous responsibilities in the Developing Countries Committee, as chairman of the Joint Committee of the EEC-AASM Association and President of the thirtieth session of the UN General Assembly, he has always combined competence with a sense of the brotherhood of man; he never allowed the importance of the individual to be overshadowed by theoretical considerations. For example, he said, in the United Nations: 'Development policy must be seen as a whole. It must not simply be reduced to a redefinition of the economic relations between States, however important these may be'.

I cannot, on this occasion, quote all his statements, speeches and opinions in detail, but I can say that they have undoubtedly enhanced his reputation all over the world, and above all in Africa.

Mr THORN, your awareness of the interests of the developing countries and their progress towards industrialization, your dynamic and humane approach, have earned you the nickname 'Gaston the African'.

We Africans attach a great deal of importance to nicknames; they are given to you as you go through life by your fellow men who, by their recognition of a particular quality in you integrate you into their society. I can think of no better proof of the confidence my fellow-Africans have in you than this familiar approach and the fact that they call you an 'African'.

In view of my experience in the educational field I cannot resist the temptation to say that it is fortunate that you do not use the same weapons as the victor in the second Punic War also called by this name; we know that with you Carthage is in no danger, although you are a greater leader!

The Ivory Coast is not seeking simply to add another decoration to all the honours that have been conferred upon you after your various peaceful victories by many great countries including some in our own continent of Africa - Senegal, Morocco, Tunisia.

This gesture by His Excellency Mr Felix HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY reflects the wishes of all our fellow African countries represented here today and I am sure that I am expressing their feelings also.

For the fight we have fought side by side, for your many achievements, for the beliefs that you so unfailingly defend and for the spirit of cooperation of which you are a living embodiment in short, for your untiring services to the whole African continent, Mr THORN, on behalf of the President of the Ivory Coast and in accordance with the powers vested in us, I award you the ' GRAND CROSS OF THE NATIONAL ORDER OF THE IVORY COAST. '

SPEECH BY MR GASTON THORN

President of the Government Council  
of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg  
and President-in-Office of the Council of the  
European Communities

President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply moved at being awarded the Grand Cross of the National Order of the Ivory Coast. This honour has been conferred on me by one of the most eminent politicians and able leaders of our time, by a country that has shown an exemplary rate of economic development. The compliment thus paid to me is a compliment also to my country and to the Community as a whole.

I am touched also by your expression of personal friendship, in terms that reflect your wide culture and the qualities instilled by your African background: an enlightened attitude, warmth, and the power of abstract thought.

I was particularly touched by your description of me as an 'African' for, as you say, you and your fellow-Africans attach a great deal of importance to these names earned as we go through life.

It is because of my attachment to my own country that I am aware of the need to understand others, and that is why, since the very beginning, I have devoted myself to the long-term cause of European integration. But the ties between our two continents were too close for me not to be fascinated also by development cooperation and the friendship between Europe and Africa given practical expression in the Treaty of Rome and the Yaoundé Conventions, and leading to the new horizons of the Convention of Lomé.

My duties as President of the Council of the European Communities prevented me from attending the inaugural sitting of the Assembly in person. I am grateful that you have given me the opportunity to speak today and convey the Council's sincere good wishes for the success of your work.

However, my role as President of the Council does not altogether overshadow the pride I feel, as Head of the Luxembourg Government and Foreign Minister, that this important meeting is being held in the capital of my own country.

I shall take this opportunity to make a few observations on the possibilities opened to us by the Convention of Lomé.

We now have to move beyond the written agreements and tackle the practical aspects; to prove that a spirit of Lomé really exists and that we have a common approach to our problems.

Since the formal signature of these agreements, and during the period required to complete the parliamentary ratification procedures, we have already put a number of measures into effect.

For instance, since 1 July the products of the ACP countries have had free access to the Community. Similarly, since the Convention entered into force on 1 April, the financial mechanisms, in particular the STABEX system, have been in operation. As for the institutions and industrial cooperation, the first EEC-ACP Council of Ministers will be able to adopt the necessary measures, I hope in the near future. Certain sectoral problems such as sugar and beef and veal - whose importance for certain of the ACP countries must not be underestimated - have been mentioned frequently in the Consultative Assembly's discussions. Without wishing to go into technical details - since this is an informal rather than an official meeting - I must assure you that the Council of the Communities will certainly take the comments made during these last three days in Luxembourg into account.

Dealing with these problems will involve a considerable amount of work for those responsible for translating the provisions of our Convention into action. For people coming from such varied backgrounds, often with completely different working methods and approaches, this type of cooperation in itself can be valuable and as it develops and expands, it may one day become one of the major characteristics of a system in which frank and objective discussion replaces the atmosphere of confrontation that results when partners assert their wishes without taking the trouble to consult those directly concerned.

We should discuss, calmly and frankly, the matters which at this stage are still giving cause for concern on both sides.

One of your main preoccupations is, of course, the protection of exports from your countries to Europe. This was particularly apparent in regard to the beef and veal exports from certain ACP States to the Community.

Although market conditions are extremely unfavourable in Europe, we have managed to maintain duty-free entry as we undertook to do in the Convention. However, when the Community has been obliged to take specific protection measures, in the form of a levy, we have managed to persuade the Council of the Communities, not without difficulty, to replace this levy on imports to the Community market by a national levy benefiting the exporting country, thereby protecting the basic interests of the ACP producer countries. In one case, the Council even decided to apply a quota of 1,500 metric tons of meat in advance of the date originally planned to ensure continuity of the trade in a product of particular importance to one ACP State.

Another major problem is sugar. Here too, the Community considers that it is complying fully with the letter and spirit of the Lomé Convention. It is true that the agreed procedure now has to be applied for the first time, since the guaranteed sugar prices for the first marketing year were laid down in the Convention itself. On the other hand, the economic situation last year was so favourable that the sugar-producing ACP countries had no problems and were in a relatively easy position. Perhaps even too easy; when the time came this year to revert to a normal market situation they felt that their profits from sugar production would be drastically reduced. The Council of the Communities has given its attention to this matter. As you know, the negotiations will be resumed very shortly. We must rely on the negotiators on both sides to find a solution that is in keeping with our commitments, takes all interests into account and above all eliminates the differences of opinion that still exist between the parties concerned.

It is undoubtedly this spirit that has made it possible to overcome the fundamental disagreements that marred the Nairobi Conference. As Mr Spénale has said, this partial failure - or partial success - was an important stage in the process of discussion between the industrialised and the developing countries as they progress towards a new world economic order.

At the end of these protracted and difficult negotiations, we finally established sufficient common ground to agree on a number of important points as regards arrangements and procedures for continuing the discussions initiated in Nairobi and following them up with practical measures. On Tuesday, the Council of Ministers of the Community agreed to turn its attention to these questions in order to be able to take an active part in future meetings, in the context both of UNCTAD and of the North-South dialogue. Even in such areas as the improvement of market conditions for primary commodities or the national debt of the least developed countries, satisfactory results will be achieved only after a dialogue has been pursued actively over a period of time. Who could possibly protest at this, in view of the complexity of the matters involved and the exceptional diversity of the problems?

Your Assembly is the first of the institutions set up under the Convention of Lomé to become operational. The Council of Ministers of the Convention has not yet had the opportunity of meeting. I was recently able to put proposals, on behalf of my colleagues, to Mr King, so that - having overcome the few practical and temporary problems that still remain - we ministers can apply ourselves to our task without delay.

Thus we have today a striking example of the rapprochement between Europe and the African countries, an important group among the ACP States, first in the signal honour conferred on the President of the Luxembourg Government by the President of the Ivory Coast, and second in the evidence of a fundamental agreement between the representatives of the Community and the ACP countries.

Mr President, please convey to President Houphouet Boigny this message: as I have done in the past, I shall strive to the best of my ability to sustain and encourage this rapprochement between Europe and Africa.