

Working Documents

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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr PANNELLA

on the elimination of hunger and malnutrition

THE ACP-EEC CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY,

- whereas hunger and malnutrition are not an ineradicable biblical scourge, but one of the consequences of the underdevelopment of the countries of the Third World and of the extreme poverty suffered above all by the rural populations of those countries,
 - whereas the moral duty to solve the problem of hunger in the world does not diminish the urgency of the problem; whereas, on the contrary, the continuing extermination through hunger and malnutrition of scores of millions of human beings constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security because of the dangerous concentration in vast areas of the world of suffering and misery that has not been slow and will not be slow to create an explosive situation,
 - convinced of the need to make it obligatory to intervene in cases where failure to do so would be tantamount to failure to come to the assistance of a person in danger and that the right of peoples to self-determination cannot and must not be construed as a right of governments arbitrarily to decide the fate of their peoples,
1. Reaffirms that the right to be free from hunger is an inalienable right of the human being; declares that it is the duty of the European Community to contribute to the effective exercise of this right by all mankind, as affirmed in the 'Pact on economic, social and cultural rights', adopted on 16 December 1966 and ratified by many of the governments of the international community;
 2. solemnly requests the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States of the Community:

- (a) to make the elimination of hunger and malnutrition the primary objective of the entire development cooperation policy,
 - (b) to adapt, at the very next meeting of the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers, the technical and financial cooperation machinery provided for by the Second Convention of Lomé to the objective specified in point (a) in conjunction with the ACP countries;
 - (c) to direct the entire Community effort, within the framework of the global North-South negotiations scheduled for January 1981 in New York, towards attaining the objective specified in point (a);
3. Considers the principal cause of the present extermination of populations through hunger and malnutrition to be the absence in the governments of the 'rich' countries and many of the developing countries of the political determination needed to tackle the problem by means of a package of practical and coordinated measures capable of increasing agricultural and food production in the developing countries and of securing a more balanced international market, greater price stability and an improvement in the purchasing power of the populations suffering extreme poverty;
4. Considers the elimination of hunger and malnutrition to be the central problem facing the international community; accordingly calls upon the Council, the Commission, the nine Community countries, all the other Eastern and Western industrialized countries and the oil-producing countries to step up their efforts to secure a doubling or a tripling of harvest yields in the tropical and sub-tropical regions, where death from starvation is a daily reality, in order to achieve the objective of self-sufficiency in food supplies for the individual and for the population as a whole;
5. Considers that military expenditure and exports of arms should be among the primary sources from which the 0.7% for development aid is found; therefore invites the Commission to study the practical possibilities of setting up at European level a 'VAT against hunger' on the territory of the nine Member States and to submit a report within six months of the adoption of this resolution;

6. Urges the Member States of the EEC to attain the objective of contributing at least 0.7% of the GNP in public development aid by 1981 and 1% by 1990 by means of a system of binding deadlines agreed at Community level;

also invites the Member States to allocate, this year, the difference between their present contribution to public development aid and the rate laid down in United Nations General Assembly resolution No. 2626 (0.7%) to special measures to combat hunger and malnutrition coordinated at Community level;

7. Urges the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States to accord priority in their public development aid to:

- the financing of projects to reduce poverty and hunger by increasing the production of foodstuffs for internal consumption, especially in the less-developed countries,
- the financing of energy sources and mineral resources;

8. Is concerned at the growing indebtedness of the ACP countries which are simultaneously hit by the crises in the food and energy sectors and the general economic crisis;

...; hopes therefore that the negotiations on the guidelines for the reorganization of the international public debt by the countries concerned will be concluded as quickly as possible and in keeping with the general principles adopted by the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board in resolution 165 (S-IX) of 11 March 1978;

the following special measures should be taken:

- the parties concerned will give consideration to writing off the debts, both public and private, of the 25 poorest and least-developed countries, and an international compensation organization will intervene to offset the more important losses suffered by the creditor countries;
- the automatic writing-off of debts will form part of lending agreements in order to protect the developing countries concerned from any unforeseen deterioration in external conditions outside their control;

9. Considers that writing off the debts of all the less-favoured developing countries could make good the shortfall in public financial aid for development until the donor countries comply in full with the obligation to contribute at least 0.7% of their GNP; in other words, a country which currently contributes only 0.3% in public development aid should each year cancel a proportion of its credit to the less-favoured countries equivalent to the difference between what it contributes and what it should contribute;

10. Considers that, in addition to the financial organizations for development cooperation which already exist, there should be an international institution solely to help the poorest peoples and countries and that it should not be dependent on contributions from individual states;
hopes therefore that a World Development Fund, as described in the Brandt report, should be set up with the power to take binding decisions, this power to be shared equally by industrialized countries and developing countries;
this Fund should be financed from an 'international development tax' on international trade, and particularly the trade in arms, on arms production, on the exploitation of the marine resources of the oceans and on the other riches held in common by mankind;
furthermore, all countries, and in particular those states having nuclear weapons and other countries with large-scale military forces, should gradually reduce their military spending by common agreement and reinvest the money at present spent on armaments in the campaign against extermination through hunger and malnutrition;

11. Feels that self-sufficiency in food for as many ACP countries as possible is the primary objective in eliminating mass hunger and malnutrition; the capacity of the ACP food-importing countries to cover their own requirements must therefore be strengthened by stimulating their agricultural development;

12. Calls on every industrialized country that has not already done so to undertake to provide a minimum of 0.15% of its GNP in public aid to the least-developed countries by 1985 and 0.20% by the end of the decade;

13. Wishes to see the creation of a programme of emergency action and medium and long-term measures in favour of the areas of absolute poverty in Africa and Asia; the programme should provide additional aid amounting to \$ 4,000 million per annum over the next two decades in the form of grants or other types of assistance to underwrite projects concerned with regional planning, eradicating the diseases most closely connected

with poverty, improving conditions of hygiene and the quality of drinking water, reforestation, the development of solar energy, prospecting for oil and minerals, and investment in industry, transport and infrastructures;

14. Regards with interest the adoption by the ACP countries of suitable food strategies at local, national and regional level; considers that the Community should support these strategies and, in particular, calls on the Council and Commission to:

- provide appropriate financial assistance based, inter alia, on multiannual financing measures and financing provided jointly with Member States or international organizations;
- guarantee the technical aid needed to enable the ACP countries concerned to define and implement their own food strategies;
- include rural development cooperation (above all in connection with the programming of aid) in the ACP countries' food strategies;

15. Considers

- that increased production or a greater volume of food aid will not be sufficient to overcome the problem of hunger; the principal cause is the poverty of the populations it afflicts, particularly those in the countryside: it therefore understands that, while the food may be there, the people may not have the money to buy it,

- that a system of direct grants to the starving in the form of the allocation and rationing of locally produced food is the road to be explored in the hope of finding a solution to the problem,
 - that one of the most important duties of the international community will be to support projects providing food aid to consumers and other schemes for direct distribution on a wide scale as a means of increasing food production by boosting consumption amongst the poorest and most hungry ;
16. Draws attention to the invaluable role played by training and education and calls on the Community to give priority to programmes and practical schemes concerned with vocational training in relation to economic development and the campaign against hunger and malnutrition in the developing countries; in particular finance should be made available for a system of intermediate and specialized technical schooling since this is the sector which is least adequate; the Community's delegations in the ACP would seem the most suitable centres for giving the necessary stimulus and finance to this end as well as any technical and logistic support which may be needed;
 17. Requests the Council and Commission to cooperate with the ACP countries within the institutions operating under the Second Lomé Convention with a view to attaining an acceptable level of health in the associated developing countries by the time the Convention has expired; asks in particular that an adequate first aid system should be set up as the nucleus of a more general system of health care including improvements in nutrition, living standards and the most essential infrastructures;
 18. Considers that the problems of population growth in many ACP countries exacerbate the pressures on food supplies and other resources and therefore calls for greater support by the European Community as such, and by the Member States, to countries requesting assistance in the field of health and family planning, such assistance to be given either through bilateral aid programmes or by increased contributions to multilateral aid agencies such as the World Health Organization and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities;
 19. Calls upon the Council and Commission to study, in consultation with the ACP countries, an early warning project for the prevention of famine capable of contributing in good time to the material relief of the populations concerned;

20. Draws attention to the vast quantities of food which are lost after the harvests, 10% of cereals and 30% of fruit and vegetables according to the figures of the World Food Council, and requests the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers:
- (a) in the context of rural development cooperation policy, to provide for practical measures designed to improve harvesting techniques and the arrangements for storage and conservation, particularly with regard to cereals,
 - (b) to introduce ad hoc training programmes to help ensure that use is made of these measures on a large scale, and
 - (c) to study an overall plan to combat trypanosomiasis;
21. Asks the Commission to consider the possibility of inverting the existing ratio between the quantities set aside for food aid and those for emergency food aid with the aim not so much of contributing to the equilibrium of the balance of payments of the countries receiving 'normal' food aid, but of being able to intervene effectively to help the peoples directly concerned when an emergency arises;
22. Deplores the fact that security of food supplies in the developing countries is seriously threatened by the problems existing in the storage of food, transport and infrastructure and calls upon the Council and the Commission to act in close contact with the governments of the ACP countries to ensure that food aid is used to regulate the market and is stored in the countries concerned;
23. Notes the disparity between the 'supply' of Community products which are often mere market surpluses, and the needs of the countries receiving food aid and stresses the need for Community aid to be better adapted to the food requirements of the peoples concerned; calls upon the Council and Commission to make more regular use of 'triangular operations' and to cooperate with the ACP countries, with the logistic support of the FAO, in the creation of regional or sub-regional food reserves, so as to facilitate the purchase of food stocks in countries closest to the countries receiving aid;
24. Requests the Commission to draw up plans for an efficient distribution network by arrangement with the authorities of the developing countries and examine the possibility of converting, in response to local needs, the military vehicles (ground, sea and air) of the armed forces of the nine Member States into a

logistic force for transporting food and other types of aid. This 'task force against hunger' would transport aid rapidly free of international freight charges and see to its distribution in the recipient country in cases of extreme urgency or particular gravity. The personnel should be trained by (unarmed) troops from the engineers, the medical corps and the catering corps and should be put at the disposal of an ad hoc Commission division.

25. Requests the Commission to study the possibility of considerably strengthening the Community's delegations in the ACP and other developing countries with volunteer workers; particular thought should be given to setting up a 'civilian service against hunger' as an alternative to military service open to conscientious objectors in the nine Member States and coordinated at Community level; asks the Commission to present a report within six months of the adoption of the present resolution;

26. Requests the Commission to mobilize sufficient additional resources without delay to save the millions of men, women and children condemned to death through starvation; asks for the appropriations under the food aid and emergency food aid chapter of the EEC budget for the 1981 financial year to be brought up to a level equivalent to a contribution by the Community and the Member States of 2.5 million tonnes;
27. Asks further that the Community contribute immediately to raising the appropriation laid down in the World Food Programme (WFP) by one thousand million dollars;
28. Requests the Council, the Commission and the Member States to speed up the negotiations on the creation of a new International Convention on Food Aid so as to raise the appropriation to a minimum of 10 million tonnes immediately, 18 million in 1985 and a minimum of 20 million in 1990;
29. Requests that, at the forthcoming global North-South negotiations, for which agenda the Community has proposed the inclusion of an item 'Food', the Community should make a number of positive offers, in particular:
 - additional technical aid for the preparation of food strategies;
 - propose the figure of 500,000 tonnes of cereals as an immediate objective for the emergency food reserve and also proposes that an international conference be called as soon as possible to guarantee a minimum reserve of 500,000 tonnes of cereals each year and at the same time plan a progressive increase in the reserve which will be legally binding;
 - a financial facility for food aid;
 - an emergency plan for food crises;
30. Reminds the Commission and the Council of the obligation on all the industrialized countries to respect the undertakings given within UNCTAD and other international organizations and particularly the ban on new trade restrictions or the strengthening of existing measures to discourage imports from developing countries;
31. Asks the Commission to make an analysis of the cost of the common agricultural policy and its economic and commercial repercussions on the ACP countries and their export potential; requests it to submit a report within six months of the adoption of the present resolution;
32. Asks the Community to redirect the common agricultural policy to take account of the urgent need to eliminate hunger and malnutrition;
33. Considers that the Generalized System of Preferences must be improved and reviewed with the aim of extending its period of validity, making

it legally binding, simplifying its procedures and making it universally applicable both as regards products and as regards countries;

34. Calls on the Community also to discontinue any measures likely adversely to affect the developing countries' efforts to strengthen economic cooperation and diversify their production structures; the EEC should also support the ACP countries' marketing companies and foster the preferential agreements concluded by these countries among themselves;

35. Stresses that the Tokyo Round agreement on non-tariff barriers must be immediately implemented by the states that signed it and, in particular, by the nine Community Member States.

Calls upon the Council and the Commission to propose other measures aimed at eliminating by 1990 all the other non-tariff barriers to imports from the developing countries;

36. Decides that it will draw up an economic charter of human rights under the terms of which any Community or non-Community multinational company that flouts the conditions set out below in any of the ACP countries in which it operates would be deprived by the Community of the right to import into the Community as such the products it manufactures in the ACP or, in the case of particularly serious infringements, would be denied the right of establishment in Europe:

(a) purchase of raw materials and basic products at a high price, the minimum price to be fixed by the EEC in such a way as to reduce the chances of a deterioration in the terms of trade,

(b) reinvestment of profits in the countries in which they were made,

(c) respect for trade union and political freedoms, no matter where,

(d) acceptance of international standards established by the International Labour Office as regards working conditions,

(e) a ban on salaries lower than the average world salaries paid by the multinationals themselves;

37. Calls upon the Council and Commission to draw up a joint position of the member countries in the energy sector

- granting top priority to the maximum use of conventional energy sources, renewable or otherwise (animal and vegetable waste, charcoal, wood, wind and solar energy), which currently cover most of the energy needs of the ACP;

- contributing to the creation of a world research fund in the energy sector, within the framework of the UN, to finance projects for prospecting for new oil fields and mineral deposits and projects for the use of renewable energy sources;
- laying down an energy assistance plan for the less-developed countries studying in particular the possibility of setting up a double market for oil prices for these countries: the shortfall in income for the producer countries could be reimbursed in part by an international compensation office set up using a proportion of the funds for public development aid;
- providing for a general moratorium on the use and production of nuclear energy in the ACP countries;

38. Urges the Council, the Commission and the Governments of the Nine to comply with the commitments aimed at the practical implementation of the Strategy for the Third Development Decade and to make the results of global North-South negotiations legally binding.

- to take the initiative of calling an international conference on the abolition of hunger and malnutrition if the global negotiations do not reach a positive outcome by the first half of 1981;
- to call immediately for a meeting of the Security Council of the United Nations on the question of world hunger which, as it constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, is fully within the competence of the Council under Article 24 of the UN Charter;

Pursuant to that Article and Article 25 the Security Council, on the basis of the theory of 'residual powers' granted to the Council by the International Court of Justice, should:

- ensure that international resolutions on the problem of hunger in the world adopted unanimously or by a consensus of all the members of the international community be given legally binding force and made effective immediately;
- instruct the Secretary-General of the UN to take steps to ensure the drafting and swift implementation of a plan, in concert with the specialized international bodies and the member states to transfer by 1981 the sums allocated to arms expenditure by the individual member states to the financing of the world fund for the abolition of hunger and malnutrition which the Council could set up if other bodies failed to do so;

- ensure that the results of the global North-South negotiations, the Conference on the abolition of hunger and the Conference on the less-favoured countries, to be held in 1981, are given legally binding force and rendered immediately operative;
 - instruct the Secretary-General of the UN to set up and bring into operation immediately, under the responsibility of the Council itself, an international army to combat hunger, with the aim of guaranteeing the immediate physical survival of those who are or will be in danger of death from hunger and malnutrition; this 'UN hunger force', unarmed, would operate under the orders of the UN, but would be set up by decrees mobilizing military or other organizations, national or international;
39. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers, the ACP-EEC Committee of Ambassadors, the Council and Commission of the European Communities and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.