

European Community



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PRESIDENT JENKINS: "DIALOGUE MUST GO ON"

EC Commission President Roy Jenkins made the following statement at the May 30 plenary session of the Conference on International Economic Cooperation in Paris:

"As President of the Commission of the European Communities I would like to express my pleasure in participating in this conference and stress the great importance I attach to it. This meeting marks the end of an important stage in our dialogue. But the process of dialogue must go on elsewhere and will go on in the interest of both sides. We are all involved in a process of moving towards a more just and more equitable economic order. We can no longer tolerate the enormous gap between the rich and poor in the world community. The economic developments of recent years have underlined this.

"Dr. Owen (UK Foreign Secretary) has covered on behalf of the European Community a number of specific issues over which I shall not go again. He has also spoken of the interdependence of the countries represented here today. I much agree with what he has said and indeed would reinforce his remarks by adding that the well-being of all developed and developing nations is bound together. Economic growth and prosperity in developing countries is of course essential if their peoples are to enjoy a better life. But there is a growing realization that on the one hand growth in non-industrial countries is also necessary for the economic health of industrial countries and thus for the world economy as a whole, and that equally the economic stability of industrial countries is vital if improvement in the economies of developing countries is to be maintained. It follows that we now have the strongest common interest in working together. If we are to do so successfully, this will require an effort by everyone round this table.

"To my mind the work which has been taking place in Paris over many months and which has culminated in this conference has contributed a great deal to the general perception of these truths. Moreover, the CIEC has in fact already produced a significant result in that problems of development and cooperation have become an item on the agenda of virtually every major international meeting. I would only add that in its role as the most important economic partner of the developing world the Community is particularly aware of the meaning of inter-

dependence. The Community is the largest customer for the exports of the developing countries and the largest supplier of their imports. It is therefore natural for us to appreciate the need for solidarity between developing and developed and between producer and consumer countries.

"I should like to emphasize that we as a Community have attached the highest possible importance to our policy towards the developing world. Two clear examples of this have been the Lomé Convention between the Community and its partners in Africa, in the Caribbean and in the Pacific, and the regional and bilateral arrangements which the Community has made in the other continents of the world. I would also remind you of the pioneering role adopted by the Community in introducing as early as 1971 the generalized system of tariff preferences which has been constantly improved since then. We intend to continue our efforts in this field, and we have already declared that we shall continue the operation of the system into the 1980s.

"In the framework of this conference the institution of which I am President has, I believe, made major contributions. We shall continue with the great commitment to play our part as a Community institution in the work which lies ahead of us.

"I believe that the discussions which have so far taken place have now led us to the point where a number of important decisions can be taken as a prelude to the further discussions in numerous fields which we will subsequently have to continue elsewhere. If we can imbue our work with a combination of sincerity and determination, our achievements should be commensurate with the task - crucial to the whole future of the world - which confronts us and the efforts which have already been made".

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