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EUROPEAN COMMUNITY SIGNS AGREEMENT (LOME II) WITH DEVELOPING
NATIONS: EC COMMISSIONER CLAUDE CHEYSSON FOR AID AND DEVELOPMENT
REVIEWS EC RELATIONS WITH THE THIRD WORLD.

There follows extracts of Mr. Cheysson's speech at the signing of the new convention between the EC and the 57 African, Caribbean and Pacific nations which took place in Lome, 31 October, 1979.

Four and a half years have passed already, and here we are again in Lome - with the same countries, in some cases the same people, and the same wonderful Togolese welcome for the signing of a convention.

Is Lome II simply a rerun of Lome I ? By no means.

In February 1975 we decided to embark on a major experiment. Some of you had already been associated with the Community on a narrower basis, others had had dealings with us, not all equally satisfactory. And some of you had considerable misgivings as to the scope, the duration and the significance of the whole exercise.

Four years later the same players have gathered on the field and have decided, upon consideration, that the try should be converted - to borrow an expression from my Chef de Cabinet, a rugby enthusiast. Not one stayed away from the negotiating table. But this time everyone has the benefit of past experience and could judge the various elements of our cooperation from the practical results. In full knowledge of the facts, each side has decided to reaffirm the principles which made and make our Lome Convention a unique instrument, the first ever of its kind. In relations between developing and industrialized countries.

Our experiment has thus been converted into a policy, the Lome policy. And this weighty decision has been reached after mature reflection, in the course of long and hard negotiations - because the participants feel themselves to be on an equal footing, and because the decisions taken will have immediate, specific, practical consequences for hundreds and thousands of people around the world. None of us are untouched by the severe problems of the current crisis.

NEED FOR SECURITY

The experience of the past four years has shown us what was fundamental, while at the same time making us aware of inadequacies and omissions.

What is fundamental, I think, is the contract between the two groups of countries - the European Community, and Africa with its Caribbean and Pacific brothers. Both groups have a single voice, so that neither can the one side interfere in the issues uniting or opposing Europeans, nor the other in those linking or dividing the ACP. Thus all of us are bound to respect each other's individuality, the right to differ, to choose alliances, economic systems and cultural patterns freely.

What is important, I believe, is the striving for security in the workings of all the mechanisms of our association: the security of our convention itself, and then on a more specific level, the security offered by the Sugar Protocol, by STABEX and MINEX, the security of market access and investments.

What is also important is our working together. But before leaving this subject I should like, quite frankly, to mention also the inadequacies and omissions our experience has revealed.

Clearly, there was not enough money available under Lome I - think of the scale of the problems - there is not enough under Lome II either, but is it not a remarkable achievement that in such a period of crisis the sum has been increased in real terms? And then, are not many other sources of financing accessible to you by virtue of our cooperation, from foreign friends, particularly the Arabs, and on the capital markets in Europe and elsewhere?

EXPORT MARKETS

Obviously, it is to be regretted that some of your exports still bear duty in the Community, but might I point out that under Lome I this affected only 0.6% of your exports to Europe, and will affect even less in the future?

Naturally, we would have preferred it if a fall in export earnings from minerals could have automatically been compensated, as happens with agricultural products, but the structures of those markets made this impossible. And the guarantee which you now have of being able to maintain employment and productive capacity in the mining sector even when adverse economic conditions threaten export earnings, production or transport is a great step forward.

I have already said the Lome I had its shortcomings. While in the rural sector there are grounds for pride at what can be achieved thanks to your determination to give priority to the development of agriculture, I must admit

that the ambitious statements on industrialization which we made in 1975 have not been followed up by the desired results. Therefore, this time we shall go to the root of the problem, stepping up the enormous sums available for industrialization by calling for private sector investment in the sectors where you think fit, particularly mining and energy.

WORKING TOGETHER

As I said, the most important thing of all, is probably our determination that our two groups of countries should work together. In your capitals and in Brussels this will be expressed by ambassadors and ministers, and, most strikingly by the European Parliament: Where else as Madame Veil, President of the Parliament, said recently, can we find such an undertaking as this?

The cement that binds our relations is hardening. And this it must continue to do since although it is natural that we should be divided and in opposition in the course of the negotiations, we must join forces and pool our goodwill when it comes to implementing the convention.

The experience of working together - solidarity - emerges most strongly when we have to deal together with the problems of the poorest - who are rightly given priority in Lome - and when we have to provide immediate aid for those suddenly stricken by drought, floods, war or epidemics.

Every man is entitled to respect for his dignity and his person, he is entitled to life and to hope. This principle was put forcefully into words in July by the African Heads of State in Monrovia and again in August by the Commonwealth prime ministers in Lusaka, when they emphasized the importance that the peoples of Africa have always attached to respect for man's dignity and his fundamental rights, and stressed that human rights cannot be reduced to civil and political rights only, but also include economic rights.

This convention of solidarity which we are signing today can, therefore, take its place at the very core of our countries' policies. The development to which we hope to contribute in the ACP countries must be rooted in the reality of your societies, it must form an inseparable part of cooperation between neighbors - and I welcome the fact that regional projects will in the future be even better served by our partnership than in the past.

We in Europe are aware, more so than anywhere else, that our future depends in part on our relations with the third world, we are also aware that it would be hypocrisy or blindness on our part if we claimed to foster your industrial and agricultural development without making room for your exports on our markets. The Lome convention must be systematically related to your and our concerns and ambitions in other areas.

NEW WORLD ORDER

Lastly, we are aware that the experience we have already gained and what we are celebrating today will have no real meaning unless the world order changes. And I must confess my anxiety. For a constantly widening gap is opening up between

the style and content of the Lome policy - imperfect though they may be as yet - and the climate, the progress (if one may so put it) of negotiations at world level.

We hoped through our shared experience, to try out new methods together, to provide stimuli - in a word, to act as a leaven in the search for a new and fairer economic order. If a new order does not come into being, there is a serious danger that the leaven itself will perish. Let us therefore prove together the worth and effectiveness of the solidarity that binds the signatories of Lome II and is the outward sign of their interdependence.

(For further details of the Lome II Convention's terms, please apply to this office for a thirty page synopsis on the subject. Information note P-92).

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