

European Communities

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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on
Development and Cooperation

on the proposal from the Commission of the
European Communities to the Council (Doc. 484/74)
for a regulation laying down general rules for
the/supply of skimmed milk powder as food aid to
Somalia

Rapporteur: Mr H. SEEFELD

PE 39.755/fin.

By letter of 6 February 1975 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council laying down general rules for the supply of skimmed milk powder as food aid to Somalia.

On 6 February 1975 the Bureau referred this proposal to the Committee on Development and Cooperation as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion.

The Committee on Development and Cooperation appointed Mr SEEFELD rapporteur on 5 February 1975.

At its meeting of 12 February 1975 the committee discussed the draft report. After detailed consideration it unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement.

Present: Mr Deschamps, Mr Knud Nielsen, Mr Sandri, vice-chairmen; Mr Seefeld, rapporteur; Mr Corona, Mr Dondelinger, Mr Durieux, Mrs Fenner, Mr Kavanagh (deputizing for Mr Flämig), Mr Glinne, Mr Ligios, Mr Romualdi and Mr Schuijt.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets is attached.

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The Committee on Development and Cooperation hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation laying down general rules for the supply of skimmed milk powder as food aid to Somalia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(75) 29 fin/B);
 - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 484/74);
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Development and Cooperation and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 495/74);
 - in view of reports that the food situation in Somalia has recently become even worse;
 - having regard to earlier resolutions and reports;
1. Approves the proposal from the Commission to form a reserve stock of 2,000 metric tons of skimmed milk powder as food aid for Somalia, which is threatened with famine, and agrees with the Commission that the skimmed milk powder should be supplied to that country according to its needs;
 2. Agrees that if the amounts of skimmed milk powder in stocks held by the intervention agencies are insufficient, the necessary quantities shall be obtained by purchase on the Community market;
 3. Requests the Commission, however, to ensure that if such purchases become necessary they will not disturb the Community market;
 4. Agrees in general that a tendering procedure should be provided for, so that the skimmed milk powder can be supplied at the lowest possible price; if this is not practicable, Parliament also agrees, however, that on humanitarian grounds and in view of the enormous food deficit, supplies may be procured by adopting a different procedure;
 5. Urges the Commission to do all in its power to ensure that the skimmed milk powder is delivered not just to Somalia but to its actual destinations in that country, so that the aid reaches those in need, particularly in view of the fact that in certain African ports substantial food stocks are held up by transport and financing difficulties;

6. Takes this opportunity to point out again that, in addition to deliveries of skimmed milk powder and greater efforts to provide food aid, other measures must also be taken to restore the ecological balance in this country stricken by drought;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the report of its committee to the Council and Commission of the European Communities and to the Somalian Government.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The famine created in Somalia by the drought poses a serious and major problem since it threatens the survival of a large section of the population. Like the Sahel countries, Somalia is suffering acutely from the persistent drought. Stock-breeding, Somalia's main source of export, has been particularly hard hit. Meanwhile the drought has struck eight regions in Somalia - that is, about half the country.
2. The current food crisis in Somalia has already reached famine proportions. This developing country has but little chance of coping with the crisis with its own resources, and finds it impossible to increase food production in the short term, particularly for climatic reasons. It is therefore necessary to provide wide-ranging aid through emergency measures, so as to prevent further aggravation of the disastrous situation.
3. The European Parliament has devoted its attention to the famine in Somalia and the Sahel countries in several reports and resolutions, and has constantly urged the Community to grant the necessary aid to this hard-pressed country. After the meeting of the Joint Committee in Mauritius on 23-25 October 1974, a small delegation from the European Parliament studied the difficult economic and food situation on the spot. On 6 November 1974 the Somali Ambassador reported to the Committee on Development and Cooperation on the economic crisis in his country, pointing out at the same time that Somalia had largely exhausted its own public funds in alleviating the worst cases of need. At the recent November part-session our committee submitted a motion for a resolution with request for urgent procedure to the European Parliament, stressing the urgent need for aid to this sorely tried country.
4. Meanwhile all those responsible must be aware that the situation in Somalia, far from improving, is becoming worse. That is why Parliament supports the Commission's proposal to form a reserve stock of 2,000 metric tons of skimmed milk powder as food aid to be supplied to Somalia according to its needs. In view of the situation on the Community skimmed milk powder market and the difficult food situation in Somalia, the committee agrees that the skimmed milk powder supplied as food aid should be obtained either from stocks held by the intervention agencies or by purchase on the Community market. However, if it is purchased on the Community market, Parliament urges the Commission to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Community market is not seriously disturbed.

5. Nevertheless Parliament also urges that the tendering procedure be applied, so that supplies may be delivered at the lowest prices. Since emergency measures are in some cases required for Somalia, and the survival of thousands of people is at stake, non-bureaucratic methods could also be applied on humanitarian grounds to ensure that deliveries are made rapidly and in a flexible way.
6. Parliament considers that the Community ought to finance the delivery of the quantities of skimmed milk powder earmarked for Somalia to the points of destination, to ensure that aid really reaches those most in need. It is known that in some African emergency areas food supplies are being held up and even becoming spoiled because of financing and transport problems. It is important, therefore, for the Commission to find a practical and satisfactory way of solving the distribution problem in the interior of the country too, in cooperation with EDF controllers.
7. The Commission should also consider whether stocks could be built up in known critical areas, so that if the famine worsens certain food can be delivered rapidly to the appropriate places while avoiding the cost of air lifts.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Letter from Mr Georges Spénale, chairman, to Miss Colette Flesch, chairman of the Committee on Development and Cooperation.

Dear Miss Flesch,

At its meeting of 17 February, the Committee on Budgets considered the proposal for a regulation laying down general rules for the supply of skimmed milk powder as food aid to Somalia (Doc.COM(75)29 final B) for which yours is the Committee responsible.

The formation of a reserve stock of skimmed milk powder for Somalia will have the following financial effects:

raw materials:	1.67 million u.a.
transport:	0.32 million u.a. -----
total:	1.99 million u.a.

This will be charged in the 1975 Budget against items 9211 (food aid - skimmed milk powder sector) and 6201 (Community refunds for gifts to associated countries).

This proposal is one of a series of regulations on food aid for Somalia. However, Parliament has been consulted only on the formation of this reserve stock.

In view of the urgent nature of this matter and the fact that your Committee's report will be presented at the February part-session, the Committee on Budgets has decided to give a favourable opinion and has instructed me to write to inform you of this.

Yours sincerely,

Georges Spénale

