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COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

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PRESS RELEASE

5725/84 (Presse 50)

917th meeting of the Council

- Foreign Affairs -

Brussels, 12 and 13 March 1984

President: Mr Claude CHEYSSON

Minister for External Relations
of the French Republic

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Leo TINDEMANS Minister for External Relations

Denmark:

Mr Uffe ELLEMANN-JENSEN Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Knut-Erik TYGESEN State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Hans-Dietrich GENSCHER Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Hans-Werner LAUTENSCHLAGER State Secretary, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs

Mr Dieter von WÜRZEN State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs

Greece:

Mr Theodoros PANGALOS State Secretary for EEC Affairs

France:

Mr Claude CHEYSSON Minister for External Relations

Mr Roland DUMAS Minister for European Affairs

Ireland:

Mr P. BARRY Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Jim O'KEEFE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Italy:

Mr Giulio ANDREOTTI
Mr Mario FIORET

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Miss Colette FLESCH

Vice-President of the Government,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr H. van den BROEK
Mr W.F. van EEKELEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

United Kingdom:

Sir Geoffrey HOWE

Secretary of State for Foreign
and Commonwealth Affairs

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Commission:

Mr Gaston THORN
Mr Wilhelm HAFERKAMP
Mr Lorenzo NATALI
Vicomte Etienne DAVIGNON
Mr Christopher TUGENDHAT
Mr Richard BURKE

President
Vice-President
Vice-President
Vice-President
Vice-President
Member

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PREPARATION FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

The Council prepared the topics likely to be under discussion at the next European Council meeting in Brussels on 19 and 20 March 1984.

PORTUGUESE ACCESSION

The Council prepared for the 17th Ministerial meeting of the Conference for the accession of Portugal to the European Communities, held on Tuesday 13 March in the late morning. The Portuguese delegation was led by Mr Ernâni Rodrigues Lopes, Minister for Finance and Planning.

In this context, the Council also adopted the Decision authorizing the Commission to negotiate an agreement with Portugal in the form of an exchange of letters on a grant of 50 MECU from the budget of the Communities to be implemented between now and accession and intended to finance specific measures undertaken by the Portuguese Government for improving agricultural structures and so facilitate the application of Community rules to Portuguese agriculture.

NEW COMMERCIAL POLICY INSTRUMENT

Following a wide-ranging discussion, the Council worked out certain guidelines for a possible solution to the main problems occasioned by the new instrument.

It instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalize the solution on that basis before the European Council meeting on 19 and 20 March. It was recalled that agreement on the new instrument would open the way for progress in certain internal market dossiers.

GATT - OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS ON CHANGES IN THE TARIFF CONCESSIONS
CONCERNING CERTAIN MAIZE BY-PRODUCTS

Following a detailed discussion, the Council directed the Permanent Representatives Committee to complete preparation of this matter so that a decision could be taken as part of the decisions on the reform of the common agricultural policy.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL COCOA AGREEMENT

The Council adopted the common negotiating position for the 4th International Cocoa Agreement. On this basis, the Community and its Member States are prepared to signify their agreement to the convening of the negotiating conference for a 4th International Cocoa Agreement and to take an active part in such negotiations.

SPECIAL MEASURES OF COMMUNITY INTEREST FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM AND
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

The Council completed the finalization of the three Regulations introducing special measures of Community interest for the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany for 1983 in the fields of employment, transport and energy.

It took note of the Opinion delivered by the European Parliament on the evening of 12 March and concluded that there was no longer any divergence between the Council's position and the European Parliament's recommendations.

The Council agreed to meet on 20 March to adopt these three Regulations formally and to give its opinion on the transfer of the appropriations for financing these special measures from Chapter 100 to the operational part of the budget.

ENERGY PROBLEMS

The Council gave its assent to the new arrangements for coking coal and coke for the Community steel industry for the period 1984 to 1986.

These arrangements will relate to a maximum of 10 mio tonnes. The average rate of aid will be 3,6 ECU per tonne and the requisite financial contribution will be distributed as follows: ECSC budget - 6 MECU; steel industry - 6 MECU; the 6 Member States (signatories to the Paris Treaty) - 24 MECU.

Provision is made for a possible phased reduction for the third year, the extent of which will be decided on in conjunction with the re-appraisal of the general national aid scheme for the coal industry, which expires on 31 December 1985.

The Council also agreed to the appropriation deemed necessary for the 1983/1985 period for demonstration projects in the energy field.

The Council moreover confirmed the need for a social aspect for "coal", for which an amount of 60 MECU is entered in the general budget of the European Communities. It was agreed to examine this matter further as well as the subject of solid fuels at a meeting on energy questions which the Presidency intends convening shortly.

GREEK MEMORANDUM

The Council took stock of the work carried out in the Community following the Greek Government's Memorandum of 19 March 1982.

In this context the Council noted that as regards the social affairs Regulation the problem of financing could be resolved in the ways indicated by the Commission and that consequently the Regulation could be formally adopted at a forthcoming Council meeting.

As for the Regulation on transport infrastructures, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to complete the technical preparation of the proposal so that the Transport Council on 22 March could formally adopt the Regulation.

Furthermore, it took note of the Commission's undertaking to submit as soon as possible additional proposals, which were to be prepared by the Permanent Representatives Committee upon receipt.

Finally, with an eye to the next meeting of the European Council, the Council took note of a general statement by the Greek delegation emphasizing the political and economic importance which the Greek Government attached to the measures taken and to be taken, of which the integrated Mediterranean programmes (IMPs) formed an essential element.

EIGHTH COMPANY LAW DIRECTIVE

The Council has approved in principle the Eighth Company Law Directive on the qualifications of auditors after just over three years discussion. The Directive remains subject to final legal and linguistic revision, after which the Directive can be formally adopted by the Council.

The Eighth Directive takes a step further forward in the body of accounting law in the Community based on the Fourth Directive on the annual accounts of limited companies, adopted in July 1978 (78/660/EEC) and the Seventh Directive on the consolidated accounts of groups of undertakings, adopted in June 1983 (83/349/EEC).

The Fourth and Seventh Directives provide, in the accounting field, a common legal framework for undertakings within the Community by providing, in particular, rules on the content of accounts and the principles of valuation.

Both these accounting Directives further provide for audits, i.e. that the accounts be the subject of an objective external review and that the annual report be checked to ensure that it and the accounts are consistent. The role of the auditor is therefore crucial to the production of reliable accounts, which must be disclosed to the public.

The Eighth Directive thus sets a high common standard of education and training for auditors. They must attain university entrance level, complete a minimum of three years practical training and pass an examination of professional competence at final university level before a Member State may approve them to carry out the audits required by Community Law. Persons who did not initially reach the level of university entrance may also be approved, at the option of the Member State, if they have 15 years relevant experience or combine 7 years experience with the course of practical training. In any event they must pass the same examination of professional competence. The rights acquired by professionals already approved by Member State, or those in training, are protected by appropriate provisions.

Firms of auditors may also be approved. Audits by them may only be done by auditors qualified under the Directive. The majority of management of such firms must also be qualified.

In any event, the Member States must ensure that all auditors are persons of good repute, and are independent, and that audits are carried out with professional care. As a further safeguard, the names and addresses of auditors, including members or shareholders of firms, must be available to the public.

The Directive must be implemented in the Member States' national laws within the same period allowed for the Seventh Directive, i.e. 1 January 1988.

The Directive does not regulate the mutual recognition of the qualifications of auditors nor their freedom to provide services. Such matters will be the subject of future Community initiative which should however greatly benefit from the adoption of the current Directive.

This Directive thus provides an important further step in the field of accounting within the Community. The guarantee of a common, high standard for auditors will ensure not only the form and content but also that the standard of the disclosed accounts of companies and groups of undertakings will be consistent throughout the Community, thus providing a further safeguard for the users of such information.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Food aid

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Regulation on the apportionment of the quantities of cereals provided for under the Food Aid Convention for the period 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1986.

The quantity of 1 650 000 tonnes of cereals representing the minimum annual contribution pledged by the Community and the Member States under the Food Aid Convention is apportioned as follows for the period 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1986:

- (a) Community measures: 927 663 tonnes (56%)
- (b) national measures : 722 337 tonnes (44%).

National measures are apportioned between the Member States as follows:

	(tonnes)
Belgium	41 540
Denmark	15 579
Germany	193 500
Greece	10 000
France	200 000
Ireland	4 024
Italy	95 400
Luxembourg	1 360
Netherlands	50 200
United Kingdom	110 734

Commercial policy

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulations concluding and implementing Agreements in the form of exchanges of letters between the European Economic Community and Morocco, Algeria and Turkey on the additional amount to be deducted from the levy on imports into the Community of untreated olive oil originating in those countries (1983/1984 marketing year: renewal of the previous arrangements).

ECSC

The Council gave its assent pursuant to Article 55(2)(c) of the ECSC Treaty with a view to obtaining financial aid for the implementation and execution of a steel pilot/demonstration project programme.

Bruxelles, le 9 mars 1984.

Note BIO (84) 109 aux Bureaux Nationaux
cc. aux Membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

PREPARATION CONSEIL AFFAIRES ETRANGERES DES 12/13 MARS 1984.
(O. von Schwerin)

1. Preparation du Conseil europeen des 19/20 mars 1984.

2. Produits de substitution des cereales

Le Conseil aura un echange de vues sur la proposition de la Commission de notifier au GATT son intention de suspendre partiellement et pour une periode limitee, le droit zero applique a certains produits de substitution de cereales (cad corn gluten feed et tourteaux de maïs).

Le Conseil du 20 fevrier a charge le Coreper et le Comite 113 de poursuivre l'examen de cette proposition. Lors de cet examen, les instances du Conseil ont reussi a se mettre d'accord sur les modalites techniques de cette operation (au moins pour le corn gluten feed), tout en evitant de prendre position sur la question essentielle, a savoir l'opportunité d'une eventuelle deconsolidation et son calendrier.

Le Conseil fera le point de la situation.

3. Nouvel instrument de politique commerciale commune

Suite a la discussion au Conseil Marche Interieur d'hier (voir BIO 105 (suite 2), M. Davignon soumettra au Conseil un document afin d'arriver a un compromis sur ce probleme qui est a l'ordre du jour du Conseil depuis plus d'un an.

4. Groenland :

Signature de l'accord cadre de peche (Acte formel)

5. Declaration solennelle sur l'Union Europeenne

(suite de l'Acte Genscher/Colombo)

6. Adhesion Portugal

En marge du Conseil, la 17e Conference ministerielle CEE/Portugal se tiendra a partir de 12H le mardi 13. Au centre des debats se trouveront les problemes agricoles : une declaration agricole par produit ainsi que sur l'aide agricole pre-adhesion.

8. Cacao

Le Conseil essaiera de se mettre d'accord sur une position commune pour la negociation du 4eme Accord International sur le cacao qui se tiendra a Geneve au mois de mai. Quelques divergences subsistent toujours entre les delegations et il n'est pas sur que le Conseil les surmontera.

Amities,
Manuel Santarelli. Comeur 13h ///

Bruxelles, le 13 mars 1984.

Note BIO (84) 109 (suite 1) aux Bureaux Nationaux
cc. aux Membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

CONSEIL AFFAIRES ETRANGERES (Klaus van der Pas)

Importation de substituts de cereales (Corn gluten feed)

Les Ministres ont adopte ce matin le principe de la stabilisation des importations des substituts de cereales, et notamment du "corn gluten feed" en provenance des Etats-Unis. D'apres la conclusion de M Cheysson, President en exercice du Conseil, le Coreper preparera maintenant la notification au GATT de l'intention de la Communaute de deconsolider le regime actuel qui prevoit la liberte totale des importations a droit zero. Cette notification sera faite apres que les decisions sur la reforme de la PAC seront prises, a precise M. Cheysson, confirmant ainsi le lien ferme que la plupart des delegations ont etabli entre ces deux dossiers. Pour la delegation britannique, ce lien concerne plus precisement la reforme dans le secteur des cereales.

Les questions qui doivent encore etre tranchees par le Coreper avant que la Commission puisse disposer d'un mandat de negociation concernant

- :
- les quantites qui pourront continuer a etre importees au regime liberal actuel (toute limitation ne concernera en effet que la croissance future des importations) : faut-il prendre la moyenne des importations au cours des trois dernieres annees ou seulement le niveau plus favorable de 1983 ?
 - la stabilisation concernera-t-elle uniquement le "Corn gluten feed" ou egalement des produits semblables tels que les "dreches de brasserie" et les "tourteaux de mais" ?
 - quelle compensation la Communaute offrira-t-elle et dans quels secteurs se situera-t-elle ? (pour la plupart des delegations et pour la Commission, il semble clair que la compensation sera limitee au secteur des cereales).

Amities,
Klaus van der Pas. Comeur 13h////



Bruxelles, le 13 mars 1984.
Note BIO 109(suite 2) aux Bureaux Nationaux
cc. aux membres du Groupe du porte-parole

Conseil Affaires Etrangeres Negociations CEE-Portugal

(S. Parone)

La XVIIe session CEE-Portugal au niveau ministeriel a ete qualifiee de pas en avant significatif par le negociateur portugais, M. Rodrigues Lopes, ainsi que par M. Cheysson. Pour ce dernier, il est desormais possible d'envisager pour le mois de mai la negociation sur le fond du chapitre agriculture.

Le vice-president de la Commission M. Natali a ajoute pour sa part que la session du mois de mai devra egalement faire enregistrer des progres substantiels dans d'autres grands chapitres de la negociation. A ce sujet M. Rodrigues Lopes a souligne l'importance des dossiers Peche et Affaires sociales.

Au cours de la session qui a ete ouverte peu apres 12h, la Communaute a annonce sa disponibilite a poursuivre l'aide pre-adhesion mettant a disposition la somme de 50 MECU d'aides non remboursables jusqu'au moment de l'entree du Portugal dans la CEE.

La Communaute a en outre complete sa position sur le dossier agricole en presentant ses propositions sur la periode transitoire en matiere de vin, produits transformes, fruits et legumes frais. Les deux points sensibles etant representes par le regime du vin de Porto (transition de trois ans) et du concentrate de tomates (six ans), la delegation portugaise a anticipe en partie sa reponse annoncant de fortes reserves sur les regimes proposes pour ces produits. M. Rodrigues Lopes a par ailleurs tenu a remarquer l'interet du fait que la Communaute ait put completer sa position sur l'agriculture, et a indique que son gouvernement fera tout ce qui est en son pouvoir afin de maintenir le rythme des negociations.

Amities

M. SANTARELLI COMEUR 13h.50////



Bruxelles, le 13 mars 1984

NOTE BIO (84) 109 suite 3 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

CONSEIL AFFAIRES ETRANGERES

ENERGIE: ACCORD DES DIX (W. HELIN)

Les Dix ont marqué leur accord mardi sur deux programmes dans le secteur énergétique:

1) les projets de démonstration (1983-1985) qui doivent contribuer à mettre au point des techniques permettant d'économiser l'énergie d'une part et de recourir aux énergies alternatives d'autre part.

Au total, la Communauté disposera de 295 Mio ECUS pour financer ces projets.

2) La prorogation du régime d'aide à la production et à l'écoulement de charbons à coke (1984-86).

Au total, l'enveloppe financière comportera 36 Mio ECUS par an qui sera financée comme suit:

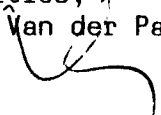
- 24 Mio ECUS par les 6 pays fondateurs
- 6 " " par la CECA
- 6 " " par les entreprises sidérurgiques.

L'intention est de subsidier la production et l'écoulement de 10 millions de tonnes de cette qualité de charbon par an.

POLITIQUE COMMERCIALE: NOUVEL INSTRUMENT (VAN DER PAS)

Les ministres ont, une fois de plus, renvoyé ce dossier au COREPER. Plusieurs délégations continuent en effet à s'opposer à ce que la Commission ait le mot final dans le déclenchement de procédures devant le GATT contre des pratiques commerciales illicites de pays tiers. A leur avis, la décision finale devrait dans tous les cas rester entre les mains du Conseil.

Amitiés,
K. Van der Pas



Bruxelles, le 14 mars 1984
Note Bio 109 (suite 4) aux bureaux nationaux
cc/ aux membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

Conseil Affaires Etrangères (N. Keery)

Greenland

The Council signed the framework agreement and Protocol on fishing between the Community, the Danish government and the local government of Greenland. Mr Burke was the Commission's signatory.

Meeting as representatives of the governments of the Member States in conference the delegations also signed the treaty modifying in relation to Greenland the Community treaties. This text now goes for ratification in each Member State, the objective being that Greenland should become an OCT on 1 January 1985 (see IP(84) 108 of 13 March).

Greek Memorandum

All budgetary reserves regarding the two social measures proposed by the Commission were lifted when Commissioner Burke indicated that the Commission would find the necessary funds within existing financial limits. Expenditure in 1984 is estimated at around 9 MEUC and in 1985 at around 30 MEUC. These measures (see COM(83) 477 and IP(83) 268) will now pass as an "A" point at a forthcoming Council.

The transport infrastructure measures of particular interest to Greece (see COM(83) 474 and Memo 92/83) will be on the agenda of the next transport Council (22 March).

Mr Burke indicated that two further Greek Memorandum proposals relating to quality control and certain transport costs in the agricultural sector would be sent to the Council very shortly.

Greek Delegation declaration giving a critical appraisal of progress with the Memorandum and the financing of major projects, including an environmental plan for Athens, was noted by the Council. The Presidency said the Council was determined to move as fast as possible on the Memorandum.

Fourth International Cocoa Agreement

The Council agreed by qualified majority vote the negotiating directives proposed by the Commission for the International Cocoa Council meeting which opens in London today (14-23 March). The present (third) agreement expires on 30 September 1984.

DRUG/ABUSE

In a declaration under "other business" the Italian delegation, supported by the Greek and Irish delegations, called for action at Community level to deal with the increasing international problems of drug abuse. On behalf of the Commission, Mr Burke told the Council that the greatest scope for effective Community action seemed to lie in attacking the problem from the demand side. The Commission would shortly be sending to the Council a proposal for a new action programme in this area. It was agreed that such a communication might be considered by the Council later this year.

Amities,

M. Santarelli, comeur////
