

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

10286/84 (Presse 180)

LIBRARY

960th meeting of the Council

- Development Co-operation -

Brussels, 6 November 1984

President: Mr Jim O'KEEFFE,
Minister of State,
Department of Foreign Affairs
of Ireland

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

Belgium:

Mr François-Xavier DE DONEA
State Secretary,
Development Co-operation

Denmark:

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

Germany:

Mr Volkmar KOHLER
State Secretary,
Federal Ministry for
Development Co-operation

Greece:

Mr Antonios GEORGIADIS
State Secretary,
Ministry for National Economic
Affairs

France:

Mr Christian NUCCI
Minister attached to the
Minister for Foreign Relations,
responsible for Co-operation
and Development

Ireland:

Mr James O'KEEFFE
Minister of State,
Department of Foreign Affairs

Italy:

Mr Mario FIORET
State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Joseph WEYLAND
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Netherlands:

Mr M.H.J.Ch. RUTTEN
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

United Kingdom:

Mr Timothy RAISON
Minister for Overseas
Development

Commission:

Mr Edgard PISANI
Member

FAMINE IN AFRICA

The Council devoted a large part of its discussions to the tragic famine situation currently affecting millions of people in Ethiopia and in several of the Sahel countries, in Kenya, Sudan and certain countries of Southern Africa.

An emergency plan was implemented by the Community in April 1984. The Commission has just prepared a new emergency plan, to which the Council has lent its full support.

It particularly welcomed the fact that, thanks to co-operation between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, it has been possible to set up this emergency plan in a few days, operations having already commenced. It thanked the Commission for its initiative and action.

A first meeting will be held on 13 November 1984 in Brussels to co-ordinate the action taken by the Commission and the Member States for the implementation of the emergency measures.

The Council and the Commission also stressed the need actively to continue other long-term aid measures in the framework of co-operation with the countries in question with a view to developing self-sufficiency in food.

Following its discussions on this item, the Council adopted the following Resolution:

"THE COUNCIL,

Seriously concerned about the famine which is affecting millions of people in Ethiopia as well as in several of the Sahel countries, in Kenya, Sudan and certain countries of Southern Africa;

Takes note of the significant emergency food and financial aid measures already taken by the Community and the Member States as a contribution towards relieving the situation;

Notes that the Community has already undertaken, in April 1984, an emergency plan of almost 80 Mio ECU aimed at alleviating the dramatic consequences of the famine in several of these countries, having already at the end of 1983 initiated swift and sizeable aid to Mozambique;

Recalls that so far in 1984 the Community had been the major donor to Ethiopia with aid amounting to 43,8 MECU;

Conscious nevertheless that these measures are still most inadequate in view of the deterioration in the situation;

Notes with satisfaction that the Commission with commendable rapidity has set in motion a new Community emergency plan for certain African countries comprising:

- immediate aid measures amounting to 32 MECU, under which are envisaged the purchase locally of some food products and the transport internally by road and rail of up to 100 000 tonnes of cereals, the internal air lift of 4 000 tonnes of cereals, and medical, nutritional and other programmes;
- short-term food aid actions equivalent to 100 000 tonnes of cereals (estimated value: 25 MECU);

AGREES to give its full support to this initiative and requests Member States to ensure, in co-ordination with their bilateral aid, that the Community's emergency humanitarian food and financial assistance responds in a flexible way and to the maximum extent possible to the needs and expectations of the peoples concerned in the African countries in question;

REQUESTS the Commission to take straightaway, and in conformity with the usual procedures, the decisions necessary to implement its emergency plan;

Convinced of the importance of close co-ordination between donors and, in particular, between the Community and the Member States in order to assist the countries in question to confront in the most effective way possible the present tragedy;

Conscious of the need for more intensive contacts with NGOs, taking account of their important role in the distribution of aid in the countries concerned, and with organizations of the Red Cross family and the UN System,

DRAWS the attention of the Commission and the Member States to the necessity of maintaining appropriate contacts both on the spot and in Europe and takes note in this regard of the co-ordination meeting scheduled to take place in Brussels on 13 November next in the context in particular of the plan to combat the effects of an exceptional drought in the Sahel;

RESOLVES to pursue actively the Community's long term efforts aimed at ensuring food security in the recipient countries;

INSTRUCTS the Permanent Representatives Committee to follow the evolution of the situation in the disaster-hit countries and to seize the Council in the event of difficulties arising hindering the proper implementation of the plan."

FOOD STRATEGIES

On the basis of an interim Commission report, the Council thoroughly discussed the experience gained in connection with the support given by the Community to the food strategy implemented by four African countries (Mali, Kenya, Zambia, Rwanda), with a view to developing their self-sufficiency and food security).

The Council welcomed the generally positive results already obtained in the framework of this method of co-operation and evolved a number of guidelines with a view to continuing to implement it in practice.

The Commission will submit in 1985 a more systematic assessment of strategies and lay the basis for future methodological analysis, together with technical notes on the situation in other developing countries to which the methods of food-strategy support could be extended.

At the close of the discussions, the Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. At the request of the Development Council at its last meeting, the Commission has provided a report on the experience gained up to now in the four African countries ⁽¹⁾ whose food strategies have been supported by the Community in concert with the Member States and other donors.

⁽¹⁾ Mali, Kenya, Zambia, Rwanda.

This report, which has been welcomed with interest, shows clearly the progress which has been made on several aspects of the application of the strategies, in particular that of appropriate incentives to producers. The Commission will continue its efforts to evaluate, at an appropriate time and after a detailed analysis of the economic situation, whether overall agricultural production and the nutritional situation of the most needy part of the population in each of the four countries has improved compared to what it would have been had the approach not been applied. The assessment should also concern the constraints and difficulties encountered. It is already clear that the food strategy efforts have succeeded in bringing food issues to the centre of the governments' attention in the four countries.

2. The delegations confirm their opinion that the approach, as far as possible, should be generalized. In this respect they note with satisfaction that the draft future Lomé Convention allows for the support of strategies and policies in the field of agricultural co-operation and that action has already been taken to integrate food aid into agricultural and rural development projects and programmes. It is also encouraging that a number of developing countries other than the four already chosen have expressed their wish for Community support for their food strategies. The possibilities of extending the approach to other developing countries receiving Community aid should be further studied in the light of their needs and of the feasibility of the application of such an approach.
3. The general philosophy behind the new approach which, it is emphasized, is a method of co-operation rather than an instrument, has now been sufficiently studied. Concentration should therefore be on its concrete application.

4. Taking note with particular interest of the recommendations contained in the Commission's communication, the delegations agreed on the following points:
- food strategies, which are specific to individual countries, should be of a flexible nature, capable of being readily adapted to take account of changing economic or other circumstances (for example, drought, climatic changes, harvest levels);
 - although producer pricing policies are clearly of great importance, it is necessary to ensure an appropriate balance between the interests of the producer and those of the consumer, particularly as regards the most needy sections of the population;
 - it appears important, in this context, to put more emphasis on crops which correspond to local consumption habits such as sorghum, millet, cassava and pulses as well as on livestock, fisheries and rural non-agricultural income-generating activities;
 - it is also necessary to improve the position of women in their role as food producers and to encourage the involvement of farmers' organizations so as to help to obtain better balanced food strategies;
 - more detailed diagnosis is necessary especially at the level of particular population classes and regions; this diagnosis, as well as the analysis of the different policy options and the monitoring and assessment of the food strategies should preferably be carried out by the countries themselves; their capacity should therefore be reinforced in the framework of existing instruments by technical assistance and training, having recourse, should the need arise, to the services of NGOs.

5. Co-ordination on the spot, avoiding as far as possible administrative rigidities which sometimes hinder this sort of operation, is of crucial importance to the successful implementation and monitoring of the strategies and must be actively pursued. In this regard, a detailed assessment should be prepared of the results of co-ordination efforts between donors - including third countries and organizations - in support of the food strategies in the four countries. It would also be desirable that the Representatives of the Member States on the spot in the four countries make known their views on the effectiveness of the approach.

6. In the medium and long term, it would also be desirable to take account of the links which exist between food strategies and other considerations such as the environment, population and regional co-ordination."

PLAN TO COMBAT AN EXCEPTIONAL DROUGHT IN THE SAHEL

Further to a suggestion made by the French delegation at the last Council meeting concerning a plan to combat the effects of an exceptional drought in the Sahel, the Council adopted the conclusions set out below.

These conclusions are designed to ensure closer co-ordination between the Community and its Member States and the Governments of the Sahel countries, the relevant bodies and other donors in order to make the measures to be taken more effective and make better use of the available resources.

This co-ordination will cover the anticipation of critical situations, evaluation of aid requirements and implementation of aid. The Commission will lend its assistance to this co-ordination which will take place on the spot and in Brussels. The first co-ordination meeting will take place on 13 November 1984 in Brussels.

In the light of experience this method may be extended to cover other regions regularly hit by drought.

CONCLUSIONS:

- " I. At the Council meeting on development on 5 June 1984 the French delegation submitted a memorandum on a plan to combat the effects of an exceptional drought in the Sahel. The Council received this communication with great interest and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to report to it at its next meeting.
- II. On 12 June 1984 the Permanent Representatives Committee set up an ad hoc Working party to examine the French communication.
- III. In the light of the discussions which have taken place in its subsidiary bodies, the Council has agreed on the following guidelines:

The Council notes that the calculation of the aid, including food aid, required for the Sahel region has more often than not been carried out belatedly and inaccurately. As a result the arrival of aid has been delayed, sometimes until as late as the next harvest, to the detriment of local agricultural production. In addition, non-existent or inadequate co-ordination between donors has too often meant overloading of the transport network and a build-up of supplies at ports and railway terminals.

In order to improve this situation the Council agrees to promote better co-ordination between donors at the following stages:

- anticipation of critical situations and evaluation of aid requirements in emergencies;
- "pre-programming" and co-ordinated planning by donors on the basis of known needs for the following year;
- co-ordinated mobilization and, in particular, delivery of aid in adequate time.

This improvement of procedures should assist the triggering and implementation of a plan to combat the effects of exceptional drought in the Sahel in case of necessity.

Some parts of this plan, which is intended to achieve the most efficient possible use of resources in an exceptional situation, might also prove positive in the handling of "normal" situations.

The Council considers that its Resolution of 5 June 1984 on the co-ordination of aid should be the basis for the measures described below.

The Council considers that the arrangements suggested could be applied mutatis mutandis in regions other than the Sahel which are regularly stricken by drought.

o

(i) Anticipation of critical situations and evaluation of aid requirements

Each year the Commission will gather and collate all the advance information available on the harvests expected in the Sahel.

Relevant information will be made available to the Member States and, where exceptional situations are expected to arise, to the various other donors.

In advance of the co-ordination meeting in late October or early November (see below under (ii)), the Commission will distribute to the Member States an introductory note giving an overall picture of the harvest situation in the Sahel.

The above information will be culled, inter alia, from the following sources:

- the forward indications afforded by the satellite weather-watch programme, which are derived inter alia from monitoring the surface temperature of the sea and cold currents in the Gulf of Guinea;
- the Sahel States;
- the AGRHYMET project (collecting meteorological and hydrological data) set up by the Sahel States under the ICDCS;
- the representatives of the Member States and the Commission in post in the Sahel States;

- the data transmitted by the various United States meteorological satellites;
- FAO worldwide information and early-warning system.

The bulk of the work on anticipating critical situations and evaluating needs should take place in preparatory meetings in the Sahel countries themselves, with the back-up of the information supplied from Brussels and the participation of the other donors. Both the potential recipient countries themselves and organizations with a particular interest in the region (particularly and immediately the ICDCS and the Sahel Club) should be closely involved with these proceedings.

At the end of this phase it should be possible to have a proper picture of the harvest situation in the Sahel and thus to decide whether or not to implement the plan.

(ii) "pre-programming" and joint planning by donors on the basis of known needs for the following year

- (a) Each year in late October or early November the Commission will hold a co-ordination meeting between the Commission and the Member States ⁽¹⁾ to take general stock, on the basis of all the available data, of the food situation in the Sahel region and the measures to be taken, particularly if an exceptional situation were to arise, by the implementation of a co-ordinated plan of action according to the following timetable.

⁽¹⁾ In 1984 this meeting will be held on 13 November in Brussels.

Each Member State and the Commission will, as far as possible, indicate what aid it will be able to offer in the coming year. The participants in the meeting will bear in mind the impact on the food strategies of the Sahel countries of the intended food aid, particularly as regards its effect on the local food markets.

Other donors will be informed of the results of that meeting if it is deemed useful to do so.

- (d) During November and until mid-December the evaluation of requirements should be continuously updated, particularly in the light of the results of multi-donor missions.

(iii) Decision and mobilization of aid

- (a) As from mid-December the donors concerned will be able to take decisions to grant aid on the basis of the outcome of the joint donor missions.

The Member States will also inform the Commission forthwith of the periods within which they intend to deliver aid. These indications, which will not represent a detailed scheduling of aid deliveries, will enable each donor to allow for the intentions of the others and to time delivery in such a way as to avoid bottlenecks.

In this connection, account must be taken of the crucial role played by the WFP. Donors should rely on the information which can be supplied by that body regarding ports and railways, storage capacities and internal transport and distribution facilities.

Co-ordination should also take account of commercial deliveries of food products.

- (b) Aid deliveries should take place as from mid-January until June. Problems connected therewith may be the subject of on-the-spot multi-donor consultation with the support of the WFP and local co-ordination groups where they exist."

NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF FOOD AID

Commissioner PISANI submitted to the Council the study which had been requested by several delegations at a previous meeting on the nutritional value (cost/effectiveness ratio) of the various products which the Community supplies as food aid.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to carry out a thorough examination of this study and to report to it at a subsequent meeting.

AID TO NON-ASSOCIATED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Council held a brief exchange of views on the general guidelines for 1985 on financial and technical aid for non-associated developing countries.

The Council will give its final decision on these guidelines once it has received the Opinion of the European Parliament.

THE NEW APPROACH OF LOME III IN TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT

The Council heard a statement by Mr PISANI on the new aspects of the future Lomé Convention that concerned development.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION IN THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Council, which had before it a communication from the Commission on environmental considerations in Community development policy, adopted the Resolution set out below, which among other things, instructs the Permanent Representatives Committee to prepare for the discussions of the Council on this subject at its next meeting.

"THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

Whereas the Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 7 February 1983, on the continuation and implementation of a European Community policy and action programme on the environment (1982-1986), provides inter alia for co-operation with developing countries on environmental matters and consideration for environmental problems in the Community's development aid policy;

Whereas the Commission and the European Investment Bank are signatories to the Declaration on Environmental Policies and Procedures relating to Economic Development, signed in New York on 1 February 1980;

Whereas the European Parliament has adopted Resolutions concerning the environment and in particular that of 20 May 1980 concerning compliance by the Community with the aims of the World Conservation Strategy by giving effect to them within all its policies;

Whereas the accelerating deterioration of the environment and the depletion of natural resources in large areas of the developing world require that particular attention be devoted to environmental problems and to action to conserve the environment and its resources;

Whereas the protection of the environment and the restoration of natural balances are now provided for in the context of ACP-EEC co-operation which will contribute to them in particular by measures to combat drought and desertification or by other thematic measures;

Whereas the Council Resolution of 5 June 1984 on the co-ordination of co-operation policies and action within the Community vis-à-vis developing countries must also apply to areas of development involving the environment;

Having regard to the Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 3 October 1984, on the link between the environment and development ⁽¹⁾,

CONFIRM the principles and objectives of Community policy, as defined in the aforementioned texts; with regard to the need to integrate the environmental dimension into Community development aid policy,

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 272, 12.10.1984

NOTE with interest the proposals contained in the new Commission communication on the environmental dimension of the Community's development aid policy and agree actively to continue the examination of that document with a view to laying down guidelines for future action by the Community and its Member States in this area,

INSTRUCT the Permanent Representatives Committee to submit, in preparation for their discussions at the next meeting of the Council (Development), a report on all the measures designed to assure the effective implementation of the principles and objectives concerning the environment in the Community's development aid policy."

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Relations with the ACP States

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, Regulation (EEC) concerning the conclusion of the agreements in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Economic Community and on the one hand Barbados, Belize, the People's Republic of the Congo, Fiji, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, the Republic of the Ivory Coast, Jamaica, the Republic of Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, the Republic of Malawi, Mauritius, the Republic of Uganda, St Christopher and Nevis, the Republic of Suriname, the Kingdom of Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Republic of Zimbabwe and on the other hand the Republic of India, on guaranteed prices for cane sugar for the 1984-1985 delivery period.

On 26 September 1984, the Community concluded the negotiations with the ACP States concerning the guaranteed prices for preference sugar for the 1984-1985 delivery period. The negotiations, which were conducted in accordance with the negotiating brief issued by the Council, resulted in the following prices:

- for raw sugar : 44,34 ECU/100 kg
- for white sugar: 54,68 ECU/100 kg.

These prices also apply to sugar originating in the Republic of India.

Relations with Mediterranean countries

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, a first series of Regulations concerning Community tariff quotas and ceiling on the importation of certain products originating in various Mediterranean countries (1985), viz.:

- Yugoslavia (slivovica, Prilep tobacco, wines of designated origin)
- Cyprus (wine of fresh grapes, liqueur wines, dried grapes, salad beetroot, sweet peppers)
- Tunisia (sardines)
- Morocco, Tunisia, Israel (apricot pulp)
- Malta, Cyprus (certain textile products)
- Yugoslavia (certain industrial products, ECSC products).

ECSC

The Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community, meeting within the Council, adopted in the official languages of the Communities the decision concerning the opening of a zero-duty tariff quota for chromium-coated sheets and plates.

EEC-ASEAN relations

The Council recorded its agreement to the text of the Protocol on the extension of the Co-operation Agreement between the European Economic Community and Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, member countries of the Association of the South-East Asian Nations, to Brunei Darussalam. It also decided on the signing of this Protocol by the Council, subject to subsequent conclusion. The signing would take place at the 5th EEC-ASEAN Ministerial meeting in Dublin on 15 and 16 November 1984.

Fisheries

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Regulation on the conclusion of an arrangement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Economic Community and the Government of Canada on the establishment of a scientific observation programme in the regulatory area of the NAFO Convention.

Institutional question

The Council decided that it was not necessary to replace Mr François-Xavier ORTOLI, who resigned with effect from 26 October 1984, for the remainder of his period of office.

Bruxelles, le 6 novembre 1984

Note Bio (84) 406 aux bureaux nationaux
cc/ aux membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

433

Conseil Developpement du 6.11.1984 (A. te Pass)

Le Conseil s'est principalement penche sur les problemes de la famine en Afrique et la lutte contre les effets d'une secheresse au Sahel.

En ce qui concerne le probleme de la famine en Afrique, le Conseil a entendu un rapport de M. Pisani sur la mise en oeuvre du plan d'aide immediate de 32 millions d'Ecus en faveur des populations africaines victimes de la famine. La declaration etant assez longue et en meme temps extremement importante et complete, celle-ci vous sera transmise sous forme de note de dossier par courrier separe. Il est a ajouter que M. Pisani a demande au Conseil de parler un langage coherant. En effet, il ne s'agit pas aujourd'hui de faire face a une situation tres grave avec des credits transferees des chapitres auxquels ils n'etaient pas destines pour se donner bonne conscience et en meme temps de refuser de mettre a disposition des actions structurelles des moyens adequats auxquels de telles situations catastrophiques peuvent etre prises en compte dans une politique a moyen et a long terme. En d'autres mots, il ne s'agit pas de sauver aujourd'hui une centaine de milliers de personnes et de se cacher la verite pour en sauver 500.000, voire 1 million demain.

A la suite de ce debat, le Conseil a adopte une resolution se declarant resolu a poursuivre activement les efforts a long terme de la Communaute en vue d'assurer la securite alimentaire dans les pays beneficiaires.

Dans le meme cadre, le Conseil a delibere sur le plan de lutte contre les effets d'une secheresse exceptionnelle au Sahel y compris l'Ethiopie. Ce plan qui a ete propose par la delegation francaise sous la denomination "Plan Orsec", a abouti a une resolution du Conseil ou il faut retenir principalement trois points :

- la detection a l'avance et systematique de situations critiques et l'evaluation des besoins en aide en cas de crise;
- la "preprogrammation" et reflexion coordonnee par des donateurs sur les besoins constatés pour l'annee suivante;
- la mise en oeuvre de l'aide et notamment sa livraison dans des delais adequats de facon coordonnee.

A ce sujet, une premiere reunion de concertation se tiendra le mardi 13 novembre prochain afin de determiner sur la base des informations mises a la disposition par tous les participants un plan d'action coordonne.

Le Conseil a examine les resultats des strategies alimentaires menees par la Commission et les quatre pays concernes (Mali, Kenia, Zambie et Rwanda). Il ressort de cette experience que celle-ci a ete globalement positive, mais qu'une strategie alimentaire differe de pays a pays. Partant de cette approche selon laquelle la strategie alimentaire devrait etre generalisee autant que faire se peut, il est convenu de poursuivre de telles strategies notamment dans le cadre de Lome III.

Le Conseil avait demande a la Commission de proceder a une etude comparative du rapport "efficacite/cout" des differents produits mis a la disposition par la CEE au titre des actions d'aides alimentaires et notamment en ce qui concerne les produits laitiers. Il ressort d'une premiere evaluation que non seulement les produits laitiers ont une place certaine dans notre aide alimentaire, mais que le rapport pour ces produits quant a l'efficacite "cout" est positif. Le Conseil, en prenant note du document de travail de la Commission, a charge le Coreper d'en faire effectuer un examen approfondi par le groupe aide alimentaire.

Ensuite le Conseil a examine les orientations generales pour 1985 en matiere d'aide financiere et technique en faveur des pays en voie de developpement non associes. Il est a noter que l'extension de l'aide communautaire a l'Asie et a l'Amerique latine est maintenant bien etablie dans le systeme de la cooperation au developpement communautaire et que l'aspect special qu'il convient d'entreprendre en Amerique Centrale suite a la conference de San Jose.

Le Conseil a adopte une resolution sur la prise en compte de la dimension environnement dans la politique communautaire de developpement. Il s'agit, par une reflexion approfondie sur les relations environnement/developpement d'appuyer d'une part les nouvelles dispositions de Lome III en matiere de defense de l'environnement et d'autre part, de donner une assise plus large aux actions dites thematiques de depense des facteurs naturels de la production limitees.

Le Conseil a entendu deux exposes de M. Pisani :
premierement en ce qui concerne l'aspect developpement dans Lome III et, deuxiemement, en ce qui concerne une declaration adoptee par l'assemblee parlementaire du Conseil d'Europe concernant le role de l'Europe dans le Dialogue Nord/Sud.

Amities,

M. Santarelli - comeur////

