

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

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1073rd meeting of the Council
- Development Co-operation -
Luxembourg, 17 April 1986
President: Mrs E.M. SCHOO

Minister for
Development Co-operation
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

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

Belgium:

Mr André KEMPINAIRE
State Secretary,
Development Co-operation

Denmark:

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

Germany:

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

Greece:

Mr Constantinous LYBEROPOULOS
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

Spain:

Mr Luis YANEZ
State Secretary,
International Co-operation

France:

Mr Michel AURILLAC
Minister for Co-operation

Ireland:

Mr George BIRMINGHAM
Minister of State,
Department of Foreign Affairs

Italy:

Mr Mario FIORET
State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Robert GOEBBELS

State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
Co-operation

Netherlands:

Mrs E.M. SCHOO

Minister for Development
Co-operation

Portugal:

Mr Jorge COSTA OLIVEIRA

President of the Institute for
Economic Co-operation

United Kingdom:

Mr Timothy RAISON

Minister for Overseas Development

Commission:

Mr Lorenzo NATALI

Vice-President

QUEST FOR FOOD SECURITY IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Food aid policy and the conditions for applying it

In the context of the food security sought by the developing countries, the Council held a detailed discussion of the approach followed in recent years as regards Community policy on food aid and food aid management bearing in mind the necessary adjustment of such aid to development conditions and needs.

In the light of the discussion, the Commission stated that it would be submitting to the Council proposals for amending the framework Regulation on food aid and the Regulation on mobilization.

The aim of these proposals would be to make food aid an even more effective instrument of development aid and of support to the developing countries' quest for self-sufficiency in food and to better adapt such aid to the needs of recipient populations. Greater flexibility would be proposed as regards triangular operations. The proposals would also be directed towards more efficient management and would take into account the responsibilities of the various institutions under the Single Act.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine these proposals as soon as they were submitted, and to report back to it at its next meeting, on 11 November 1986.

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Food strategies

The Council took note of a Commission communication containing, in the field of the food strategies encouraged by the Community in the developing countries, an evaluation of the experiments carried out to date in some of their number, of the results achieved and the constraints and difficulties encountered, and outlining prospects for the future.

Following a general discussion, the Council adopted the following conclusions, which will serve as guidelines for further Community action both under the Lomé Convention and in the context of its actions in other developing countries:

"THE COUNCIL,

- recalling its conclusions of 6 November 1984 concerning the review of progress achieved in the support of the food strategies of four African countries;
- welcomes the communication by the Commission concerning an in-depth assessment of constraints and difficulties encountered and the analysis based on a comparison of the experience gained, particularly in Mali and Zambia;
- agrees to the broad outlines of this analysis and to the conclusions based thereon and stresses in particular the following considerations:
 1. Even though the environments, both political and material, in which the policy reforms were carried out were notably different, it has become evident that results were often very similar, in terms of both strengths and weaknesses.
 2. A notable strength of the food strategies experience is, so far, the progress achieved in the liberalization of food markets. A general weakness appeared in the lack of impact on smallholder productivity.

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Generally speaking, smallholder productivity should be improved to increase production, at prices which are at the same time profitable for the farmer without being prohibitive to consumers. In this context farmers' organizations have an important role to play.

3. A higher priority must be given to consumer and nutritional policies, which could result, inter alia, in:
 - increased demand for local products particularly in urban areas;
 - increased attention to the needs of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups;
 - nutritional programmes which are complementary to health and population needs.
4. Food strategies cannot be pursued successfully in isolation from broader policy reforms, e.g. exchange rate adjustment, improvements in land tenure and credit systems, more decentralized administration, marketing and processing, protection of natural resources.
5. The role of women in food production is to be more largely taken into consideration.
6. Food strategies have proven that in a number of cases they can lead to a better integration of food aid with other instruments for development co-operation such as technical and financial assistance, but this element should be further strengthened.
7. Food strategies can provide the framework for sectoral and even subsectoral policies. Within this systematic approach different priorities can be taken into account. Circumstances may differ across countries, for that reason the elements common to the concept of food strategies may be given different weight.
8. The elements stressed in the food strategy of Mali are:
 - longer-term mutual commitments such as multi-annual programming of food aid and restructuring of the cereals market;
 - multi-donor participation and co-ordination;
 - pooled food aid counterpart funds;
 - fight against drought and desertification.

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The question of the extension of some or all of the elements of this approach to other countries - adapted to their specific needs - should be examined.

9. The general experience in the four pilot countries has shown a significant increase in awareness of the urgency of reforms which has led to important policy shifts, notably in the fields of farmers' incentives, a better balance between private and public sectors, exchange rate adjustment and the preservation of natural resources. These trends need to be consolidated and intensified.
10. An essential aspect of food strategies is the reciprocal commitment to policy dialogue. This approach has already proven its use to all parties concerned in the ongoing Lomé III programming exercise and should be continued.

In this context the additional task of constant monitoring of progress achieved and difficulties encountered should be recognized alongside project identification and implementation.

The provision of adequate information of a statistical kind as well of a general nature - and its processing - need to be strengthened.

11. Efforts should also be made for better integration of food strategies in development programmes at a regional level.
12. Applied research in the agricultural field and extension services to farmers should normally be included in the food strategies process.
13. Assessment has shown that co-ordination among all donors and the governments of beneficiary countries, notably on the spot, has progressed.

However, further efforts remain desirable to increase intensity and effectiveness of this co-ordination both as regards the Community and its Member States as well as with other donors. Co-ordination should concern implementation as well as programming.

14. The assessment clearly indicates that the food strategy approach - which has been tested in four ACP countries - can now be considered suitable for a more general application.

The approach should be flexible so as to be adapted to the needs of these countries - ACP, Mediterranean and in Asia and Latin America - which desire to apply it, taking due account of the possibilities of both sides to support such a strategy in the specific circumstances."

Emergency food aid mechanism

The Council took note of a proposal from the Netherlands delegation that a suitable permanent mechanism be set up to ensure that emergency food aid could, where needed, be supplied without delay in addition to the normal programmes.

The Commission gave a reminder of the proposal which it had made at the European Council meeting in Milan that a permanent reserve be set up. Although this suggestion had been taken up for 1986 only, the Commission intended to submit the necessary proposals for 1987 under the budgetary procedure.

As a number of delegations felt that the issue should be looked at in greater detail before they could adopt substantive positions, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue examining the matter and to report back to it in time for its November meeting.

STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Rehabilitation and revival plan for the African countries most affected by the drought

The Milan European Council emphasized that it was vitally important that, in order to prevent a repetition of the famine situation, alongside emergency action there should be short and medium-term measures on the one hand and long-term measures on the other.

As regards short and medium-term measures, the Development Council of 4 November 1985 welcomed the rehabilitation and revival plan for the African countries most affected by the drought put forward by Mr NATALI, and approved the general guidelines for the plan, for which an amount of 108 MECU has been earmarked, in addition to aid from the Member States.

The Council heard a report from the Commission on progress in implementing the plan, which is already well under way and due to be completed by the end of 1986. It congratulated the Commission on the conditions under which the plan had been implemented, and, in particular, on the Commission's swift action.

Conservation of natural resources - countering desertification in Africa

The question of the conservation of natural resources and of countering desertification in Africa is a long-term issue, the importance of which was referred to by the Milan European Council, which placed particular emphasis on the need for European aid as a whole, whether Community or bilateral, to give priority to this

type of operation.

In the light of the above the Commission submitted a communication proposing a coherent overall policy, consisting of specific measures for the protection of natural resources and in the agricultural sphere and the implementation of suitable research policies and appropriate population policies and putting emphasis on the concentration of the means available at Community level (Lomé Convention, food aid, NGOs, southern Mediterranean countries) and on co-ordination between the Commission and the Member States as well as with other donors.

The Council expressed its appreciation of this significant communication, approving its analysis and general approach.

It decided to implement a long-term European Action Plan which would unite the resources of the Community and the Member States to counter desertification.

At the same time it emphasized, inter alia, the importance of close co-ordination of the actions of the Member States and of the Community, as well as of other providers of capital, and noted the Member States' favourable attitude on the matter.

At the end of the discussion the Council approved the following Resolution, which defines the broad lines to be followed in implementing the Plan:

"The Council:

- Bearing in mind the disastrous drought and famine which struck certain African countries in 1984/1985 and required a massive emergency effort by the international community to save millions of human lives,
- Recalling the plan to restore and revitalize the African countries most affected by drought, approved in broad outline at its meeting in November 1985, which is currently being implemented and is designed to bring about a resumption of rural economic activity in the countries concerned,
- Recalling that the Lomé III Convention pays special attention to drought and desertification control, for the first time devoting a special chapter to it, and that environmental concerns have also been recognized in the co-operation agreements between the Community and the southern Mediterranean countries,
- Considering that long-term measures must be taken to reduce the possibility of a repetition of catastrophes such as those which have occurred on several occasions since 1972 and to give some lasting effect to policies and programmes for rural development and food security,

- Considering the major efforts undertaken in recent years, particularly in providing aid for food strategies, which are now beginning to bear fruit,
- Recalling that the European Council in Milan in June 1985 considered it vital, in the light of the importance of present requirements in the field of environmental protection, in particular the battle against desertification in the developing countries, for all European aid, Community and bilateral, to give priority to that type of action and for donors to make long-term commitments and to organize their contributions coherently by setting up the appropriate co-ordination structure,
- Considering that such long-term measures can achieve their objectives only if they are integrated into the priorities of, and receive full support from, the countries and regions in which they are implemented,
- Aware of the scale and complexity of the problem of the deterioration of natural resources throughout the African continent,
- Aware, too, of the importance of taking the environmental dimension into account in all development measures and policies,

- Having taken note of the Commission communication entitled "Conservation of natural resources - Countering desertification in Africa" and approved the analysis it contains and the proposed general approach which involves mainly attempting to secure a better equilibrium between man and the environment,

AGREES to a long-term European Action Plan to counter desertification which will unite the resources of the Community and the Member States and the main points of which are as follows:

1. The Community and its Member States will give priority, in their respective co-operation programmes, to action to combat the deterioration of natural resources.
2. The campaign will involve both direct action (re-afforestation, measures to combat erosion, etc.) and indirect action (appropriate training and research, improvement of farming methods which will maintain soil fertility, promotion of a better equilibrium between populations and resources, rational use of energy resources, including firewood, etc.).
3. In this context, it is necessary to seek a strategy which draws largely on people: without their active participation, no measure has any chance of success. Men and women are largely responsible for creating the desert in their daily struggle to feed their families, but, by the same token, they are the most important agents in halting the process.

4. In the light of past experience, and in order to avoid measures being inadequate, piecemeal or too short, the Council emphasizes the importance of attaining a minimum intervention threshold. The effectiveness of this minimum threshold or "critical mass" depends on three considerations:

- the approach must be global and comprise a series of interdependent measures;
- a degree of geographical concentration is desirable, so that measures will have a lasting impact on the environment;
- the long-lasting nature of desertification requires that there be some continuity in the measures, so that the necessary long-term results can be attained.

To this end, it would be desirable in the initial phase for the various donors to set quantitative objectives within their present funding for financing projects directly related to nature conservation.

Obviously the use of such resources will be effective only if, as part of global, national and regional plans, it underpins the efforts of the partner countries to achieve the same objective.

It will probably prove necessary in due course, as implementation of the plan progresses, for donors to intensify their efforts.

5. The two sides will also have to introduce a series of administrative and procedural measures to ensure that environmental protection becomes an automatic response in development activity.

This response should mean that those responsible will bear in mind both the negative impact which various projects, particularly production projects, could have on the environment and other positive measures which should be undertaken to protect the natural heritage.

The Council therefore considers that efforts should be made by government authorities in the countries in question to involve local authorities more closely in the action being taken. These authorities should be encouraged to maintain and improve the dialogue with their people, so that they can act together to preserve natural resources and make rational use of them. This also requires greater administrative decentralization. Particular importance should attach to the participation of local and international non-governmental organizations and to action at regional level.

6. In view of the required scale of action the Community stresses the importance of intensive co-ordination between the recipient country, the donors and regional organizations active in the field in order to ensure maximum consistency and complementarity in existing and future programmes.

Such co-ordination involves increasing the consistency of the aid programmes of the Community and the Member States and prevailing upon them to give preference to that proportion of their aid which goes to the rural sector and particularly to environmental protection, alongside a similar effort by the recipient countries.

In this connection, the Council welcomes the Commission's intention of organizing regular meetings of members of the special units dealing with the problem in Member States' administrations and the Commission with a view to suggesting and organizing action in this sphere. It also considered that the Community, the Member States, the other donors and the international organizations should, whenever the need arises, take part in co-ordination operations - especially in the field - relating to measures to combat desertification."

PREPARATION FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY ON THE CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AFRICA

The Council reaffirmed the major importance which the Community attached to a successful outcome to this special session, which will have the task of examining every aspect of the critical economic situation in Africa.

With a view to this session the Council, following a substantive discussion, adopted the outline of a common position which will act as a guide for the attitude of the representatives of the Community and its Member States in New York. It instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalize certain specific points of this outline.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT: IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES - EXPERIENCE
OF MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION: CONCLUSIONS

THE COUNCIL

- Recalling its conclusions of 8 November 1982 and of November 1985
- Takes note of the papers presented by the Commission and several Member States, on the basis of which a useful exchange of views has taken place and decides to adopt the following conclusions with reference to important elements thereof:
 1. The importance of the United Nations forward-looking strategies must be underlined. These strategies contain specific suggestions relating to development co-operation, and in particular the recommendation that development institutions adopt explicit policies relating to women and development and put in place the management systems necessary to ensure the effective implementation and evaluation of these policies in the full range of their programmes and activities.
 2. In this context the Council notes the measures that the Commission has undertaken relating to project appraisal and the achievement of increased awareness and expertise amongst staff members and welcomes the further measures the Commission envisages relating to increasing the number of female experts, new seminars on women and development and closer contact with national authorities and other international development agencies.
 3. The Council notes also the measures taken by several Member States to implement policies which enable women better to participate in development actions which they support, in particular
 - the establishment of specialized administrative units which deal with project appraisal and try to raise general awareness and expertise concerning the participation of women in the development process.

Some Member States on the other hand have stressed that it is essential to consider the role of women as an integral part of the standard procedures for the preparation and appraisal of all projects and programmes.

- Measures concerning staffing both in the capital and in the field which strengthen the way the point of view of women can be taken into account.
 - Studies and evaluations concerning the impact of development actions on the status and the role of women as well as the establishment of guidelines to implement the lessons learned.
4. These specific measures, such as seminars and increased contacts with women's bureaus and organizations, should not be seen as isolated interventions, but are part and parcel of a long term strategy to integrate women into the development activities supported by the European Community and its Member States.
 5. Priority attention should be given to women's participation in sectors where their role has often been neglected in the past, such as agriculture and food production, processing, marketing and distribution, particularly in Africa where women have a vital contribution to make to master the critical food situation.
 6. The productive and useful exchange of views on policies relating to women and development should be continued. In this context the Council invites the Commission to convene, on a regular basis, a group of experts of the Member States and of the Commission. This group could particularly assist in the monitoring of the implementation of the policies and guidelines defined by the Council. The Council invites the Commission to report back at a later date on this implementation with a view to a renewed debate by the Council in due course.

PROMOTION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' TRADE

The Council, which had emphasized the importance of the promotion of developing countries' trade in its previous conclusions, examined the matter in greater depth, on the basis in particular of detailed assessments. At the end of its examination it adopted the conclusions set out below, which include, within the framework of a coherent overall approach, guidelines for the action to be taken by the Community in its relations with the developing countries:

1. "Trade promotion" should be defined as the "development of trade in goods and services", including the possibility of taking action at various stages, from before the production stage and up to final distribution, in order to increase trade in products and certain services, such as tourism, and to study, with a view to possible support, systems of export financing.
2. To improve the developing countries' trade performance, donors should help these countries to draw up an overall trade promotion policy; it is of prime importance in trade to establish a link between the development of human skills, the development of products and the development of markets.
3. The developing countries should be strongly urged - through a dialogue if possible - to pursue an integrated policy in keeping with production potential and the export capacity of agriculture, industry, craft trades and services.

For each country or region which so requests the Community should support the efforts made by recipients of Community aid to draw up action programmes setting out objectives, control and evaluation criteria and procedures. Such programmes must take account of the recipient's specific needs and circumstances.

4. An approach based on specific objectives should be followed when adopting Community aid measures for trade promotion.

In the particular case of trade promotion aid granted to the least-developed countries, a set of co-ordinated measures should be applied making use of the various instruments at the Community's disposal.

5. When production projects financed by the Community are prepared and appraised, particular attention should always be given to those aspects relating to the marketing and distribution of goods and services.

From its conception, every programme or project for promoting trade in developing countries should allow for the possibility of practical evaluation at every stage in terms of quality and quantity.

6. The conception, preparation, appraisal, implementation and evaluation of the Community programmes must be improved and there should be co-ordination to ensure some degree of consistency in Community action and compatibility between programmes and measures adopted in the field of trade.

The Council recommends here that in an initial stage the Commission should inform Member States of the projects envisaged and that the Member States should do the same.

7. The Council recommends that the Commission should create a suitable forum, composed mainly of relevant organizations in the Member States, to facilitate the exchange of information, co-ordinate programmes, monitor action regularly (every six months, for example) and give general guidelines for trade promotion programmes.

Existing co-operation should be stepped up with the ITC (UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre in Geneva). Close co-operation is also desirable with organizations such as the WTO (World Tourism Organization in Madrid), the CFTC (Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation) and other public or private institutions operating internationally in this area.

8. Encouragement should be given to operations to promote contact between economic operators whether in the private or public sector.
9. In consultation with the recipients, efforts should be concentrated on marketing in priority sectors such as agriculture, rural development and food production to ensure the viability of programmes based on production.
10. Regional meetings should be organized to promote action by the countries concerned and in particular the ACP States to bring about an increase in trade, including South-South trade. The Member States could make a major contribution to this effort by involving their trade experts and their representatives in the regions concerned.

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11. The Council hopes that, in agreement with the recipient countries, trade promotion will be an important factor in co-operation with the Maghreb and Mashrek countries.

12. The Community will endeavour to step up - in particular by a suitable appropriation, without prejudice to the budget procedure - its co-operation in the promotion of trade and services in the developing countries of Latin America and Asia and with their regional organizations. In view of the importance which it attaches to trade with those countries.

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Programming of Community aid in the ACP States under Lomé III

In Lomé III a new approach has been adopted to the programming of Community aid, with emphasis being placed on the following three aspects:

- concentration of aid on a small number of sectors, or even a single sector, so that Community aid is not too thinly spread;
- discussions between the Commission and each ACP State to identify the sector in which aid should be concentrated and to seek measures to be taken by each party to attain the objectives set;
- co-ordination between the Commission and the main providers of capital so that, with the active participation of the country concerned, the ideas and experience of the main providers of capital can be used to ensure that any action taken is coherent and complementary.

The Council heard a statement by Mr NATALI on the current survey of programming with the ACP States, which was nearing completion and had already enabled indicative programmes to be signed with a large number of ACP States.

It went on to adopt the following conclusions:

"Having taken note of the Commission's report on the provisional survey of the programming of Community aid in the ACP States,

THE COUNCIL:

- congratulates the Commission on the results already obtained with regard to programming and notes that the new approach adopted for it has generally yielded extremely satisfactory results;
- notes the coherence of the sectoral strategies which each State has asked the Community to support and the importance of the economic and administrative commitments given by those States to adopt or continue a process of reforms and adjustment;

- welcomes the fact that in accordance with the actual guidelines in the Convention most of the States concerned have chosen to concentrate Community aid on a sectoral strategy for rural development aimed at ensuring greater self-sufficiency or food security.

- also notes the demanding nature of the practical implementation, country-by-country, of such an approach, the success of which requires that the conditions set out in the following conclusions should be met;

- in this connection calls on the Commission to introduce arrangements to implement and monitor indicative programmes of Community aid that will ensure the consistent interlinking of the measures to which each ACP State has committed itself and the support which the Community can provide;

- emphasizes the need to make Community aid sufficiently flexible
 - = by making maximum use of the possibilities offered by the third Lomé Convention whereby the range of instruments available to the Community can be extended to measures of the "programme" or "sectoral import programme" type;

 - = by ensuring at all levels that, over and above its own particular merits, each measure is assessed more from the point of view of its contribution to the success of the sectoral policy being supported;

- recalls the important place which is given to regional co-operation in the programming of Community aid to the ACP States; in this connection it notes the fact that the process of regional programming has begun and welcomes the initial results of that process, especially as regards the application of the concepts of concentration and of dialogue on major topics of a truly regional nature;
- notes that the programming process undertaken in a large number of ACP States will very shortly be extended to all of them;
- stresses the great need to strengthen co-ordination within the Community (Commission and Member States) and with the other main donors in order to ensure that with due regard for the methods, powers, interests and duties of each party concerned there is a coherent link between the reforms undertaken by each State and support from donors;
- calls on the Commission to submit for its next meeting a final report on the programming of Community aid in the ACP States."

OTHER BUSINESS

The Community's relations with the countries of Latin America in the field of development co-operation

At the request of the Spanish delegation, which made a number of suggestions, including procedural ones, the Commission took stock of measures already taken and measures which it was considering for the future to implement the joint declaration of intent annexed to the Accession Treaty on the development and intensification of relations with the countries of Latin America. The Commission emphasized the importance which it attached to the development of relations with Latin America.

The Council noted the information given and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the Spanish delegation's suggestions and the proposals promised by the Commission.

Problems of cotton in Africa

The Council noted a statement by the French delegation drawing its attention to the seriousness of the situation facing a number of African States following the sudden drop in cotton prices, and welcomed the meeting convened by the Commission to examine the situation and seek ways of dealing with it.

The Council shared the French delegation's concern.

Centre for Development Policy Management

The Council noted a statement by the Netherlands delegation on the setting up of a Centre for Development Policy Management in Maastricht to provide training in the field of the formulation and administration of development policy.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Commercial policy and customs union

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulations:

- repealing the definitive countervailing duty on imports of certain seamless tubes of non-alloy steels originating in Spain;
- repealing the definitive countervailing duty on imports of tube and pipe fittings of malleable cast iron originating in Spain;
- amending Regulation (EEC) No 3673/85 in respect of the Community tariff quota for newsprint;
- temporarily suspending at 2% the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duty on 2-Methylpropan-2-ol (tert-butyl alcohol) with a purity of not less than 90% but not more than 96% by weight, falling within subheading ex 29.04 A III a) of the Common Customs Tariff;
- amending Regulation (EEC) No 754/76 on the customs treatment applicable to goods returned to the customs territory of the Community.

Fisheries

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision authorizing the extension, for the period from 2 May to 2 November 1986, of the sea fisheries Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Spain and the Government of the People's Republic of Angola.

Credit institutions

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Directive authorizing certain Member States to defer further application of Directive 77/780/EEC as regards certain credit institutions.

Transport

The Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the ECSC, meeting within the Council, approved the texts of the Supplementary Protocols to the ECSC/Switzerland Agreement of 28 July 1956 and the ECSC/Austria Agreement of 26 July 1957 on the introduction of through international railway tariffs for the carriage of coal and steel.

Steel: external aspects (1986)

The Council gave its assent pursuant to Article 95 of the ECSC Treaty to the draft Commission Decision prohibiting the matching of Community prices with those granted to third countries.

Bruxelles, le 16 avril 1986

Note BIO (86) 102 aux bureaux nationaux
cc. aux membres du Service du Porte-Parole

Preparation Conseil Developpement du 17 avril 1986
(C. Stathopoulos)

La recherche de la securite alimentaire dans les pays en voie de developpement et les aspects structurels du developpement en Afrique seront examines par les ministres de developpement lors de leur reunion a Luxembourg le 17 avril 1986. Les propositions de la Commission y afferentes fourniront la base des discussions.

1. A court terme : Programme d'aide alimentaire 1986

On note une acceleration dans la mise en oeuvre de l'aide alimentaire par l'adoption de plus en plus rapide du reglement d'application qui fixe chaque annee les quantites des differents produits que la Communaute met a la disposition des pays beneficiaires. En 1986, ce reglement a ete adopte le 27 janvier et l'on peut constater que le programme en faveur des pays les plus affectes par la secheresse s'eleve a environ 150 MECU.

335.000 t ont ete decidees pour l'Ethiopie (210.000 t), le Mali, la Mauritanie, l'Angola, le Mozambique, le Cap Vert, la Somalie; avec livraisons entre fevrier et juin.

170.000 t encore seront prochainement decidees en faveur de l'Angola, le Mozambique, le Senegal, la Somalie; l'execution sera effectuee dans la deuxieme partie de l'annee.

Pour la plus grande partie des quantites, les decisions comprennent les frais de transport interieur.

Certaines operations sont triangulaires, c.a.d. par achat dans un pays d'Afrique en faveur d'un autre pays africain (p.ex. achat de mais blanc du Simbabwe et du Malawi pour l'Angola - 18.000 t).

Operation de substitution, c.a.d. remplacement par la contrevalleur financiere d'une aide alimentaire dont le pays en question pourrait beneficier. Cette ressource financiere peut etre consacree a des actions de nature diverse (constitution de stock, construction d'infrastructures de stockage etc.).

Dans le cadre des mesures a court terme il faudrait egalement evoker que le budget de la Communaute prevoit une reserve pour des actions d'urgence d'environ 114 MECU ce qui correspond a 386.000 t (dont 100.000 t sont deja decidees pour l'Ethiopie.)

Enfin, la Commission a octroye jusqu'ici en 1986 une aide d'urgence a l'Ethiopie sous forme d'aliments et de medicaments (6 MECU) et au Soudan (13,5 MECU). Cette aide au Soudan comporte un volet humanitaire et des interventions sur le marche des cereales.

2. Le moyen terme : rehabilitation

Il concerne l'apres-urgence, l'apres-secheresse. Ce Plan europeen de rehabilitation et de relance, demande par les chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements europeens lors du Conseil de Milan de juin 1985, a ete adopte le 4 novembre 1985 dans son principe, par les ministres du developpement de la Communaute. L'ensemble des programmes operationnels a ete decide le 16 janvier 1986 par la Commission et la mise en oeuvre a ete immediate. Le Vice-President Natali fera rapport sur l'etat d'execution du Plan (les principales caracteristiques du Plan vous les trouverez dans la note P-6 de janvier 1986.

3. Le long terme : Programmation de Lome III - lutte contre la desertification

Face aux problemes ecologiques et structurels de l'Afrique la Communaute europeenne s'efforce, de concert avec les autres bailleurs de fonds, de fournir des appui appropries aux reformes des politiques internes de ces partenaires.

Dans ce cadre la recente convention de Lome III constitue pour l'Europe un instrument d'intervention essentielle, en particulier parce que elle est mise en oeuvre en etroite cooperation avec les aides bilaterales des Etats membres de la Communaute. Celle-ci accorde une large priorite au developpement rural et en particulier aux strategies alimentaires. A mi-avril 1986 50 pays sur 66 ont deja programme la cooperation financiere et technique qui va s'instaurer pour 5 ans entre l'Europe et eux-memes, dans le cadre de cette Convention. Il en ressort qu'environ 65 a 90 o/o des ressources programmees sont concentrees sur le developpement rural.

Mais le developpement de l'Afrique s'inscrit dans un contexte de degradation croissante de ses ressources naturelles, qui trouve son expression extreme dans le processus de desertification, ce qui rend urgent d'entreprendre une politique systematique de protection de restauration de l'environnement. Une proposition de Plan europeen de lutte contre la desertification que la Commission a elabore (note P-3 de janvier 1986) sera examinee par le Conseil.

4. Session speciale de l'Assemblee generale de l'ONU concernant l'Afrique

Le Vice-President Natali presentera au Conseil la recente proposition de la Commission dont les principales caracteristiques vous ont ete communiquees dans la note P-27 d'avril 1986.

A part le commentaire sur la preparation du Conseil Developpement, a ete distribuee :

IP-175, M. Ripa di Meana rencontre l'Orchestre des Jeunes de la CE.

Amities,
G. Anouil -  - coteur////

luxembourg, 17 avril 1986

le bio (86) 102, suite 1 aux bureaux nationaux
et aux membres du service du porte-parole

conseil developpement

accord sur le programme de lutte contre la desertification

les ministres du developpement ont marque leur accord sur un plan
d'action europeen a long terme, rassemblant les moyens de la
communaute et des etats membres, de lutte contre la desertification

en afrique.

ils ont aussi felicite la commission de sa proposition a ce sujet et
souligne, etant donne l'echelle de l'action necessaire, l'importance
d'une coordination suivie entre les pays beneficiaires, les donateurs
et les organisations regionales actives dans le domaine. cette
coordination implique un renforcement de la coherence des plans
d'aide de la communaute et des etats membres, comme le vice-president
natali a souligne dans son intervention. m. natali a egalement
annonce que le plan d'action europeen a long terme pourra demarrer
suivant les orientations et procedures convenues.

ensuite le vice-president natali a informe le conseil sur l'etat
d'execution du plan de rehabilitation et de relance en faveur des

pays africains les plus touches par la secheresse.

le 14 decembre 1985, une aide d'urgence de 8 mecu est decidee en
faveur de l'angola et le mozambique. le 16 janvier 1986, la
commission decide d'un ensemble de programmes operationnels en
faveur des six autres pays concernes (ethiopie, mali, mauritanie,
niger, soudan et tchad), les conventions de financements sont
signees le 20 janvier qui suit, un peu plus tard de 5 mois apres
l'accord du conseil, la commission peut confirmer que les objectifs
operationnels de mise en oeuvre, qui etaient un defi en raison des
delais tres courts, ont ete jusqu'a present atteints.

en effet, l'aide d'urgence en faveur de l'angola et le mozambique
engagee jusqu'a present a 94 o/o, le sera completement vers fin
avril. en ce qui concerne les autres 6 pays, la commission a lance,
a la date du 11 avril 1986, 60 actions et engage 78 o/o des credits.

si l'on ajoute les 84,5 mecu engages au titre de l'aide alimentaire
et d'urgence, les reponses a court et moyen terme que la communaute
aura apporte depuis 5 mois aux problemes alimentaires des huit
pays, se monteraient a 162 mecu.

enfin, lors de la derniere reunion de coordination communautaire a
bruxelles, l'apport bilatéral des etats membres au plan de rehabili-
tation a pu etre estime a environ 160 mecu.

le conseil s'est felicite de l'etat d'execution du plan de
rehabilitation par la commission.

les ministres reprendront leurs travaux en debut de l'apres-midi
sur la preparation de la session speciale de l'assemblee generale
de l'onu sur la situation economique critique en afrique.

amities

c. stathopoulos

Bruxelles, le 18 avril 1986

NOTE BIO(86) 102 (suite 2 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
C.C. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

CONSEIL DEVELOPPEMENT (C. Stathopoulos)

Les Ministres de Developpement se sont separees tard dans l'apres-midi du 17 avril sur un accord concernant la necessite de faire de l'AIDE ALIMENTAIRE un instrument encore plus efficace de l'aide au developpement.

Le Vice-President Natali a fait part de l'intention de la Commission de soumettre prochainement au Conseil des propositions de modification du reglement-cadre Aide Alimentaire. Ces propositions auront pour objectif d'utiliser l'aide comme un instrument d'appui des pays en voie de developpement a la recherche de l'autosuffisance alimentaire ainsi que d'adapter mieux cette aide aux besoins des populations beneficiaires. Des assouplissements seront proposes en ce qui concerne les operations triangulaires. Elles viseront aussi a rendre la gestion de l'aide plus efficace et coordineront les responsabilites des diverses institutions en reservant a la Commission un role decisif.

En ce qui concerne la creation d'un mecanisme pour l'AIDE ALIMENTAIRE D'URGENCE, la Commission a rappele sa proposition faite lors du Conseil Europeen de Milan pour la creation d'une reserve permanente qui n'avait ete retenue que pour l'annee 1986 et a fait part de son intention de soumettre dans le cadre de la procedure budgetaire des credits substantiels dans le budget 1987. (N.B. : La Commission a initialement propose la creation d'une reserve de 500.000 tonnes pour 1986. Cette proposition soutenue par le Conseil Europeen de Milan a pourtant ete modifiee dans le cadre de la procedure budgetaire de sorte qu'une telle reserve existe poun un montant de 385.000 tonnes. Sur ce montant 100.000 tonnes ont ete deja allouees a l'Ethiopie des le mois de fevrier 1986).

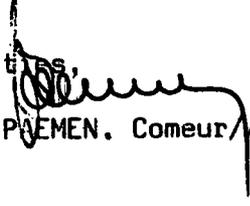
Le Conseil a entendu un expose du Vice-President Natali sur le bilan actuel de la PROGRAMMATION avec les Etats ACP qui est en voie d'achevment et qui a deja permis de signer des programmes indicatifs avec 50 (sur 66) des Etats ACP. M. Natali a constate que dans l'ensemble des pays programmes la nouvelle approche ("policy dialogue") a ete mise en oeuvre sans reelle difficulte politique et que la plupart des Etats concernes ont choisi de concentrer l'aide communautaire sur un appui a une strategie sectorielle de developpement rural visant a assurer une plus grande securite alimentaire. Le Conseil a exprime son appreciation a la Commission pour les resultats deja obtenus et l'a invitee a mettre en place des mecanismes de mise en oeuvre et des suivis de programmes indicatifs d'aide communautaire propres a assurer l'enchainement coherent des mesures sur lesquels chaque Etat ACP s'est engage.

Au sujet de la session speciale de l'ASSEMBLE GENERALE DE L'ONU sur la situation economique critique en AFRIQUE. Le Conseil a adopte les grandes lignes des propositions de la Commission et charge le Coreper de proceder a la mise au point definitive de la position commune qui guidera l'attitude des representants de la Communaute et de ses Etats membres a New York. Certaines delegations (UK, RFA) ne semblent pas etre en mesure de s'engager d'une maniere contraignante pour atteindre l'objectif d'augmenter leur aide aux pays en voie de developpement a 0,7% de PNB d'ici 1990.

En ce qui concerne enfin les relations de la Communauté avec les pays d'AMÉRIQUE LATINE dans le domaine de la coopération au développement, la Commission a fait, à la demande de la délégation espagnole, le point des actions déjà entreprises et des actions futures qu'elle envisage pour mettre en oeuvre la déclaration commune d'intention, annexée au Traité d'Adhésion.

Représentant M. Cheysson, le Vice-Président Natali a souligné l'importance que la Communauté attache au développement des relations avec l'Amérique Latine et annonce des mesures appropriées du point de vue budgétaire visant la mise en oeuvre des actions de coopération économique et au développement dans le but de renforcer les relations entre la Communauté et l'Amérique Latine.

Amitiés,


H. PIEMEN, Comeur ///