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DOCUMENT 1-961/82

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Development
and Cooperation

on the proposal from the Commission of the European
Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-756/82 - COM(82) 599 final)
for a regulation concerning the conclusion of ~~the~~ Agreement
between the Government of the Revolutionary People's Republic
of Guinea and the European Economic Community on fishing off
the Guinean coast. //

Rapporteur: Mr D.A. ENRIGHT

By letter of 15 October 1982, the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a Regulation concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the Government of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea and the European Economic Community on fishing off the Guinean coast.

On 15 November 1982 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Development and Cooperation as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for an opinion. The Committee on Agriculture is preparing its own report on the fisheries policy aspects as it did in connection with the Agreement with Senegal and Guinea Bissau.

On 24 November 1982 the Committee on Development and Cooperation appointed Mr ENRIGHT rapporteur.

At its meeting of 1 December 1982 the committee considered the motion for a resolution and adopted it unanimously.

With Mr PONIATOWSKI in the chair the following took part in the vote: Mr Bersani and Mr Kühn, vice-chairmen; Mr Enright, rapporteur; Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli, Mr Cohen, Mrs Dury, Mr Ferrero, Mrs Focke, Mr Irmer, Mr Jackson, Mr Lezzi, Mr Narducci, Mr Pearce, Mrs Pruvot (deputizing for Mr Sable), Mrs Rabbethge, Mr Sherlock and Mr Vankerkhoven (deputizing for Mr Wedekind).

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets will be published separately.

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

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

closing the procedure for consultation of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the Government of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea and the European Economic Community on fishing off the Guinean coast

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(82) 599 final)¹,
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 1-756/82),
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Development and Cooperation and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 1-961/82)
- having regard to the voting on the Commission's proposal,

A having regard to its resolutions of 16 November 1979² and 14 March 1980³,

1. Notes with satisfaction that the proposed agreement between the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea and the European Economic Community follows earlier recommendations of the European Parliament and therefore approves the Commission's proposal;

¹OJ No. C 269, 13.10.1982, p. 3

²OJ No. C 309, 10.12.1979, p. 63 ff

³OJ No. C 85, 8.4.1980, p. 103 ff

2. Takes the view that the Agreement has advantages for both sides and therefore calls on the Council to approve the outcome of the negotiations as soon as possible and to bring the agreement into force;
3. Considers it important that, in addition to making payments for the granting of fishing rights, the Community has undertaken to give citizens of the Republic of Guinea grants for training in the various sectors of the fisheries industry and to contribute to the financing of a scientific programme designed to improve knowledge of the Guinean fisheries resources;
4. Calls on the Commission to provide a sufficient number of advisory experts, including marine biologists, and the necessary technical support which is of vital importance for a cooperation policy with developing countries in the fisheries sector;
5. Is convinced that closer cooperation in the fisheries sector must help to improve the economic and social position and thus the food situation of the ACP countries, which frequently suffer from protein deficiencies;
6. Is therefore determined to ensure that the advantages which accrue to both sides do not unduly benefit the more wealthy partner and particularly that the interests and local needs of the country in question are given due consideration;
7. Calls for special consideration to be given to the employment problem in the framework of the expansion of the fishing industry, stresses the importance of marketing locally and considers that the construction of simple and cheap storage facilities is urgently necessary, to curtail the hitherto considerable losses connected with fisheries;
8. Points out that within the framework of this Agreement particular attention must be paid to the encouragement of traditional fish farming and fishing activities which are of particular benefit to the local population;

9. Takes the view that there is a certain link between the internal fisheries policy of the Community and fisheries agreements with the developing countries; is nonetheless of the opinion that the persistent difficulties in establishing a Community fisheries policy must not stand in the way of agreements with the developing countries, particularly in view of the precarious economic and food situations of these countries;
10. Therefore urges the Commission to press ahead with agreements with developing countries which are still at the stage of preparation or negotiation;
11. Stresses the political and economic importance of the negotiation of fisheries agreements between the Community and individual developing countries; nonetheless takes the view that a more effective fisheries policy would result from the conclusion of regional agreements with certain groups of developing countries, particularly for the purposes of a coordinated training policy and the financing of training centres; therefore requests the Commission to investigate the possibility of creating regional models for fisheries policy with the ACP States and to ascertain whether the ACP countries are interested in this;
12. Hopes that the report being prepared in the context of the ACP/EEC institutions will lead to more coherent regional agreements;
13. Finally calls on the Commission to report as soon as possible on the results of the new Agreement and of those with Guinea Bissau and Senegal which have been in force for some time;
14. Instructs its President to forward to the Council and Commission, as Parliament's opinion, the Commission's proposal as voted by Parliament and the corresponding resolution.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Following the Agreements with Senegal and Guinea Bissau this is the third fisheries agreement which the Community has negotiated with an ACP country. The Agreement governs the relations between the Community and the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea in the fisheries sector.

The committee approves the Commission proposal particularly as the Parliament expressed the wish, in connection with the negotiations of the agreements with Senegal and Guinea Bissau, to press ahead with similar agreements with other interested African countries. Furthermore Annex XIX of the Second Lomé Convention, concerning the Joint Declaration on Sea Fisheries, stresses that the development of the fisheries industry in the ACP States should be encouraged.

2. By a Council decision of 29 September 1981 the Commission was empowered to conduct negotiations on the conclusion of fisheries agreements with certain African States on the Atlantic, particularly Guinea.

The negotiations between Guinea and the Commission on the conclusion of a fisheries agreement were successfully completed on 10 August 1982. The Agreement was signed by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Mr Ibrahim Fotana, and the Director of the Directorate-General for Fisheries of the Commission, Mr Raymond Simonnet. The Agreement is valid for three years and contains a tacit renewal clause.

3. This Agreement, like the previous Agreements with Senegal and Guinea Bissau, is what is known as a compensation agreement because it makes provision for financial aid in return for the granting of fishing rights. As the Community is not in a position to offer the African countries in question fishing rights it is only proper that provision is made for compensatory payments in return for fishing rights, which come out of the budget of the European Communities. This Agreement is in the interests both of the development of Guinea's fisheries industry and of the various Community countries whose fishermen have been fishing off Africa's coasts intensively for years.

The Protocol makes provision for the payment of financial compensation by the Community which is fixed at 2,100,000 ECU for the lifetime of the Agreement (3 years). This compensation, which is not repayable, is intended for the financing of projects and services which are carried out or provided independently by Guinea in the sea-fisheries sector. This compensation supplements the financial aid which Guinea receives in the framework of the ACP-EEC Agreement.

4. The number of Community boats and the conditions under which these boats may fish within the 200-mile Guinean fishery zone are also laid down in the Protocol to the Agreement. The Guinean authorities issue licences for this purpose on payment of the annual fee of 100 ECU/GRT by the ship-owner. Alternatively the ship-owners can pay this fee in kind by landing a proportion of their catch in Conakry. Ship-owners must employ Guinean seamen on board their boats under the conditions laid down in the exchange of letters annexed to the Agreement

5. It was also agreed that the Community would contribute to the financing of a scientific training programme designed to improve knowledge of Guinean fishery resources for citizens of Guinea. Both parties to the Agreement agree that the improvement of the knowledge and skill of persons employed in the deep sea fisheries sector is an essential condition for the success of their cooperation. These measures are enhanced by the Community's agreement to award citizens of Guinea grants for study and training in the various sectors of the fisheries industry.

6. Pursuant to Article 10 of this agreement a Joint Committee is set up to ensure that the Agreement is applied correctly. The Committee is to meet once a year alternating between Guinea and the Community and is to hold special meetings at the request of either contracting party.

Both sides must take great care to ensure that the joint agreements are put into practice in a spirit of partnership.

7. When the fisheries Agreements were concluded with Senegal and Guinea Bissau critics were already maintaining that agreements of this sort should not be made until the EEC had agreed on an internal Community fisheries policy. As there are still great difficulties in the way of an internal EEC

fisheries policy, the Committee on Development and Cooperation takes the view that fishery questions concerning certain ACP countries in the Community cannot remain unsettled in the meantime, particularly as such agreements offer advantages for both sides and the Community has undertaken in the ACP-EEC Agreement to promote the economy of the ACP States as far as possible.

8. During the negotiation of the fisheries agreements with Senegal and Guinea Bissau, the Committee on Development and Cooperation raised the question of whether policy in the fisheries sector could not be more efficiently conducted through regional agreements with particular groups of ACP countries. The committee therefore requests the Commission to investigate the possibilities of creating regional models for fisheries policy with the ACP States and to find out whether the ACP countries are interested. This question is important because investigations have revealed that the rational management of fishery resources is too complex and above all too expensive a task for an individual developing country. The Commission should also take energetic steps to conclude similar fisheries agreements with other countries on the model of previous agreements.

9. The careful economic management and exploitation of fish stocks is one of the main problems in the ACP countries as in the other developing countries. A prudent economic fisheries policy is more and more necessary in most developing countries because of increasing food problems. While at present there are 4,300 million people in the world the population in the year 2000 is expected to be 6,000 million. According to the World Food Council 97 million tonnes of fish will be required each year to feed these people in the year 2000. If one also takes into account the fish meal requirement of 20 million tonnes in 20 years a catch quota of 117 million tonnes is required.

10. The exploitation of fishery resources foundered in the past mainly on lack of capital, specialist staff, the absence of infrastructures and adequate technology. The losses connected with fisheries are also considerable. In most ACP countries a large proportion of the fish do not reach the consumer because they perish or are attacked by insects. It is estimated that 5 to 6 million tonnes of fish are lost every year in the tropics; in many cases the losses of dried, salted and smoked fish amount to 40%. In view of the precarious food situation and the severe protein deficiencies in most developing countries these are very alarming figures.

11. The Committee on Development and Cooperation stresses that fishery agreements of this sort between the Community and various ACP countries have advantages for both sides. While the EEC is seeking new fishing grounds and new negotiating possibilities for its fishing fleets the ACP States are very interested in expanding and developing their own fisheries industry as an addition to the financial and technical aid they receive in the framework of Lome II.

12. In view of the deficiencies described above, the Community's role is primarily to train experts in the developing countries and to help with the expansion of the necessary technological facilities, which must meet the particular requirements of the developing countries. Special attention should be paid to simple and above all cheap methods of storage in order to drastically reduce the losses connected with fisheries. Consideration of the employment problem connected with the fisheries industry and marketing of fish locally are also important. It is, however, not simply a question of promoting industrially organized sea-fishing but also of promoting traditional fisheries, i.e. of expanding fish farms in the inland waters of developing countries. This aspect is of particular importance as the local population frequently suffers from considerable protein deficiencies. For this reason development programmes in the fisheries sector must be adapted to the interests and above all to the local needs of the developing countries in question.

13. Ecological considerations are also of fundamental importance. Thus great attention must be paid to the maintenance of fish stocks when such fisheries agreements are implemented. The committee thus calls on the partners to the Agreement to make provision jointly for appropriate measures to protect fish stocks in the waters in question. The demand for the appointment of a marine biologist to take particular responsibility for the implementation of fisheries agreements should be remembered in this connection.

