



CONFÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DES SYNDICATS
EUROPÄISCHER GEWERKSCHAFTSBUND
EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION
DEN EUROPEISKE FAGLIGE SAMORGANISASJON

 RUE MONTAGNE AUX HERBES POTAGERES 37 — 1000 BRUXELLES
 (02) 217 91 41/42 - 219 28 76/77 — ADRESSE TELEGR. EUROSINDIC

441.2(62)

n° 30

PRESS RELEASE

PORTUGAL AND EUROPE - A JOINT EFFORT FOR DEMOCRACY

The European Trade Union Confederation has addressed a letter to the Institutions of the European Communities and to the Secretaries General of EFTA and the Council of Europe. This letter reads as follows :

The results of the elections of 25th April prove irrefutably that a tremendous majority of the people of Portugal have opted for democratic socialism. The European Trade Union Confederation ardently welcomes the deliberate and lucid choice of a people which for the past 50 years has been deprived of the fundamental right to express its political will.

It has been demonstrated once again that any people, regardless of the level of its economic and social development, is capable of expressing beyond doubt its aspiration for freedom and democracy, as soon as it has been liberated from the yoke of dictatorship.

It is now up to the Armed Forces Movement and the political parties in Portugal to draw all the consequences as regards the exercise of power and the composition of the Government. It is the duty of the Constituent Assembly to translate the will of the people into the constitutional laws. It is the task of the workers of Portugal to vest themselves with a trade union organisation which can translate their aspirations into action and defend their interests.

However, if the new democracy in Portugal is to become established and consolidated successfully, it must be able to surmount the serious economic difficulties with which it is struggling at present. These difficulties are of course in part the result of the general economic activity in Europe and throughout the world. But they are also the heritage of the former regime, which was tolerated and in some cases supported by Western democracies. And lastly,

they are the result of the apparently deliberate and coordinated reaction of international financial and industrial circles which have ceased to invest in Portugal, and which are stopping production, refusing loans, discouraging the transfer of funds etc... It is in this latter field in particular that we consider that European democracies have a responsibility towards the new democracy in Portugal.

The Commission of the European Communities has stated that it intends to implement a programme for economic cooperation with Portugal.

The European Trade Union Confederation warmly supports this initiative. It considers, however, that if this programme is to have real impact, it must be sufficiently extensive and implemented without delay. It is thus essential that in addition to the European Community, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the Council of Europe also take similar initiatives in the fields which fall under their competence, and that they take such action without delay, so that the democracies of Europe can efficiently organise their economic support for Portugal.

The European Trade Union Confederation for its part appeals to all its member organisations to raise this problem with their Governments.

-o-o-o-o-

Brussels, 26th May, 1975
TR/AS/MV
orig.Fr.
trans. CL