

PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

TENTH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

SUMMARY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Friday, 1 February, 1974

ROME

IN THE CHAIR: Mr BERKHOUWER

President

The sitting was opened at 9.40 a.m.

Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the previous sitting were approved.

Statement by Mr Kasongo, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Conference of the Association

Mr KASONGO MUKUNDJI, vice-chairman of the Joint Committee, said that he did not wish to 'freeze' the discussion, or replace the rapporteur, particularly as the latter had, on the previous day, replied perfectly adequately to the criticisms, remarks and suggestions of all kinds made in the general discussion.

On behalf of the Bureau of the Joint Committee, and in agreement with the chairman, Mr ACHENBACH, he simply wished to make a rapid examination of the text submitted to the Conference for a vote.

The framework of the debates had been provided by the explanatory statement in the Ninth Annual Report on the Activities of the Association Council, which indicates that:

'During the period covered by this report, the Association, which has entered into its third year of operation since the entry into force of the second Yaoundé conference, has yet again showed itself to be both active and capable of coping with new situations on the basis of established principles which remain entirely valid.'

Though the report actually covered the period from 30 September 1972 to 20 June 1973, the rapporteur and speakers who had taken part in the discussion had all brought it up to date.

The Conference had examined the current situation without taking sides. The discussion had proved that both sides were prepared to work together to improve the wellbeing of their peoples.

The debates had also shown the importance of Parliamentary meetings such as this in Rome.

Without the members of Parliament and the regular contacts between them the Association would run the risk of suffocating in technocracy.

It was in the interest of the EEC, the associated and associable States to work to renew and enlarge the Association.

(Applause)

The text submitted to the Conference for a vote had been adopted almost unanimously by the Joint Committee. It did not claim to deal with all questions, particularly those which were the responsibility of other bodies.

The motion as it stood, with the amendments tabled, represented a good stand for the Conference to take and was in everyone's interest.

In concluding, the vice-chairman of the Joint Committee, on behalf of the Bureau, requested all his colleagues to vote in favour of the motion.

(Applause)

Ninth annual report on the activities of the Association Council to the Parliamentary Conference of the Association (vote)

Mr SANDRI, speaking as representative of the Communist and Allies Group, explained why he had abstained in the vote on the motion for a resolution in the Joint Committee.

1. The Communists considered that the Community had a raison d'être as a response to the challenges of our time. That is why they were attending the Conference and would not vote against the motion for a resolution.
2. The negotiations for the renewal and enlargement of the Association should not aim simply to increase aid to the associated States by however much, but should also establish the basis for a new type of growth which would reduce the power of the multi-national companies and establish a fair international division of labour.

He felt that the European markets should be made more accessible to the agricultural and manufactured products of the associated States, the Community should adopt a European regional policy which would first eliminate underdevelopment within itself, intermediary technologies should be transferred to the associated countries, autonomous centres of capital accumulation set up and the economies of these countries diversified.

3. The Communists considered it their duty to emphasize the omissions of the Association Council, because they wished to contribute to the creation of a wide Euro-African area founded on the principle of the equality of peoples and respecting the labour of men.

Mr BONYUMUTWA expressed his appreciation of the rapporteur's work. The resolution presented closely reflected the opinions that had been expressed. Nevertheless, he drew attention to one point which he felt to be of major importance to the less-advanced countries. If the Association was to avoid harmful distortions, these countries should be given particularly favourable treatment, especially as regards technical and financial aid. Mr CHEYSSON had previously stressed the need to adapt aid to the specific requirements of each country.

The speaker then orally tabled an amendment to paragraph 28 of the resolution. He pointed out that Rwanda's attempts to develop had been handicapped by historic events, such as the recent colonial war in the Middle East.

After saying that the change of régime on 5 July 1973, had encouraged rather than hindered his country's policy of cooperation, Mr BONYUMUTWA conveyed the greetings of the Rwandan Chief of State and people of the Conference.

(Applause)

The Conference then voted on the motion for a resolution contained in Mr BERSANI's supplementary report on the Ninth Report on the activities of the Association Council (Doc. 51) and adopted the preamble and paragraphs 1 to 10.

The Conference adopted Mr BERSANI's amendment No. 2 to paragraph 11, developed and orally modified by the rapporteur.

The Conference adopted paragraph 11 so amended, and went on to adopt paragraphs 12 to 27.

Mr BERSANI's amendment No. 1 and Mr BONYUMUTWA's oral amendment to paragraph 28 were referred to the Conference.

Mr BERSANI spoke on the two amendments, particularly stressing the importance of the problem raised in Mr BONYUMUTWA's amendment. It was not a new issue, but had never been precisely formulated. The speaker suggested adopting it as a special recommendation, distinct from the resolution under consideration.

The Conference adopted the two amendments to paragraph 28, and paragraph 28 so amended.

The Conference adopted paragraphs 29 to 32.

The Conference adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole.

Declaration on behalf of the Associable Countries

Mr FRANCIS, representing Jamaica, stated that he was also speaking on behalf of the East African Community. He realized that, as an observer, he had to be impartial. He thanked the Conference for its invitation to the associable countries to attend the debates. These countries attached great importance to the current negotiations with the EEC. The international significance of these negotiations was reflected in the fact that he, as a representative of a Caribbean country, was today able to speak in the Chamber of Deputies in Rome, before an assembly which united members of Parliament of the Nine and the associated African States, in the presence of observers from the Pacific countries.

Appointment of members of the Joint Committee

The President announced that he had received a number of nominations from the European Parliament and the African, Mauritian and Madagascan members of the Conference.

He read the list of candidates. This list would be attached to the minutes of the sitting.

The Conference ratified the appointment of the candidates on the list.

Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee

The President announced that Mr Kasongo had been nominated for the post of chairman and Mr Dewulf for that of vice-chairman of the Joint Committee.

The Conference ratified the appointment of the two candidates by acclamation.

The President announced that Mr Kasongo and Mr Dewulf had been appointed Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Joint Committee.

He paid tribute to the work of Mr Achenbach, who, had chaired the proceedings of the Joint Committee with great authority for five years.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the sitting, drawn up during the proceedings, were approved.

Date and place of next meeting

The President announced that the date and place of the Conference's next annual meeting would be proposed by the Joint Committee.

Closure of the tenth annual meeting

The President declared the tenth annual meeting of the Parliamentary Conference of the Association closed.

The sitting was closed at 10.30 a.m.