

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

439th meeting of the Council
- Economic and Financial Affairs -
Brussels, 14 March 1977

President: Mr Denis HEALEY
Chancellor of the Exchequer
of the United Kingdom

14.III.77

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented by the following:

Belgium

Mr Willy DE CLERCQ Minister for Finance

Denmark

Mr Per HAEKKERUP Minister for Economic Affairs
Mr Kurt HANSEN State Secretary
 Ministry of Economic Affairs

Federal Republic of Germany

Mr Hans APEL Federal Minister of Finance
Mr Hans FRIDERICHS Federal Minister for Economic Affairs
Mr Karl Otto POEHL State Secretary
 Ministry for Finance
Mr Otto SCHLECHT State Secretary
 Ministry of Economic Affairs

France

Mr Michel DURAFOUR Minister responsible for
 Economic and Financial Affairs

Ireland

Mr Richie RYAN Minister for Finance

Italy

Mr Gaetano STAMMATI Minister for the Treasury

Luxembourg

Mr Jacques POOS Minister for Finance

Netherlands

Mr W.F. DUISENBERG

Minister for Finance

Mr R.F.M. LUBBERS

Minister for Economic Affairs

United Kingdom

Mr Denis HEALEY

Chancellor of the Exchequer

Commission

Mr François-Xavier ORTOLI

Vice-President

Mr Henk VREDELING

Vice-President

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FIRST QUARTERLY EXAMINATION OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

In accordance with Article 2 of the convergence Decision of 18 February 1974, the Council carried out the first quarterly examination of the economic situation in the Community.

Following this examination, the Council agreed to a Decision adjusting economic policy guidelines for 1977. This Decision commits the Member States to follow an economic policy in compliance with the guidelines laid down by the Council.

14.III.77

FOURTH MEDIUM-TERM ECONOMIC POLICY PROGRAMME

In accordance with Article 6 of the Decision on the attainment of a high degree of convergence of the economic policies of the Member States, the Council adopted the fourth medium-term economic policy programme.

This programme provides a framework for Community economic activities for the years 1976 to 1980. It lays down desirable medium-term economic development and states its implications for economic policy.

The Decision provides that this programme will be followed and reviewed during its period of validity and the Council has asked the Commission to implement the appropriate arrangements this end.

The Fourth Programme will be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities as soon as possible.

INCREASED INTERNAL COHESION IN ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

On the basis of reports by the Monetary Committee and the Committee of Governors of the Central Banks, the Council held a discussion on certain suggestions contained in Mr DUISENBERG'S communication on target zones for exchange rates in the Community.

The Council asked the two Committees to continue their work on the matter and to report back to it at regular intervals.

14.III.77

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE IMF INTERIM COMMITTEE

The Council reviewed preparations for the various subjects likely to appear on the agenda for the meeting of the IMF Interim Committee and noted that a good deal of progress had been made. It instructed the Monetary Committee to continue the preparations and submit a final report in time for the next Council meeting.

14.III.77

CIEC - FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Pending the resumption of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, the Council took note of a report from the Chairman of the Permanent Representatives Committee on progress in the Community discussions and the scheduled programme of work.

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The next meeting of the Council on Economic and Financial Questions will take place on 18 April 1977 (in Luxembourg).

EXPORT CREDITS

The Council adopted a Decision on the guidelines to be applied to medium and long-term export credits which enjoy official support.

By fixing the credit terms applicable particularly as regards the duration and interest rate, this Decision makes possible - over and above Community case-by-case consultations, which will in any case be maintained - substantial progress in the development of an export credits policy.

Furthermore, it gives practical expression to the Community's objective of rationalizing existing practices and of contributing to the development of convergent guidelines between countries which provide export credits.

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COMMUNITY LOANS

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision relating to the transformation of a tranche of a variable rate Community loan into a fixed rate loan.

The purpose of this operation is to transform into a fixed rate loan a second tranche of 100 million dollars of that part of the variable rate Community loan - 300 million dollars - granted to Italy and Ireland which was the object of a Council Decision on 15 March 1976.
