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CO-ORDINATION OF CO-OPERATION POLICIES AND OPERATIONS WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY

The Council adopted the following Resolution which, while acknowledging the considerable progress already made as regards co-ordination, is designed to supplement previous Council Resolutions by stressing the operational aspect of co-ordination with a view to ensuring that the aid from the Community and its Member States is as effective as possible:

"The Council, having examined the Commission communication on the co-ordination of development co-operation policies and operations within the Community and the memorandum submitted on the same subject by the German government, stresses the importance of such co-ordination for the most effective possible use of aid resources in order to ensure that co-operational activities are consistent with one another and complement each other better.

The Council would point out that it has commented on this subject on several occasions during the last few years, and notes with satisfaction, as emerges clearly from the Commission communication, that Community co-ordination has developed significantly since the first Council Resolution of July 1974, both as regards the general aspects of co-operation policy, including that in international bodies, and on the level of operational co-ordination in certain aspects. In this respect it notes with particular satisfaction the development of co-financing.

The recent state of the various European economies and the present situation in which the Community and the developing countries find themselves lead the Council to attach particular importance to its previous resolutions being supplemented by the considerations below, giving greater priority to operational co-ordination.

1. The Council considers that the following principles for action should be adopted in order to strengthen operational co-ordination; these apply to all beneficiaries of Community co-operation, viz. the ACP countries, the Mediterranean countries and the non-associated developing countries.

The Council considers that the strengthening of operational co-ordination must be conceived pragmatically through the introduction of "à la carte" co-ordination on a voluntary basis, taking account of the approaches adopted by each Member State towards specific regions, countries or sectors and of local conditions.

If such an approach were adopted, the beneficiary country must be at the centre of the co-ordination process.

The Council considers that the most appropriate area for co-ordination is the sectoral policies for which the support of the Community is sought. Co-ordination must also be open to other donors, pragmatically and case by case.

It also considers that, without any necessity for making procedures more cumbersome, it is useful to strengthen active co-ordination in the operations envisaged in order to promote their consistency and complementarity.

Finally, greater recourse will be had to co-financing between Member States and the Community.

2. The Council has adopted the following operational measures aimed at improving co-ordination between the Member States and the Community under the abovementioned conditions.

(a) As regards mutual information:

- identification sheets for projects prepared by the Commission departments will be improved, employed for aid projects concerning non-associated developing countries and circulated to the Member States earlier. In the same way, the Commission will send information to Member States more frequently;
- Member States will ensure that the Commission departments are kept better informed concerning their aid activities for example by supplying them with a summary of the development aid they intend to grant, regularly brought up to date for the ACP countries;
- informal contacts between desk officers in the Commission and their counterparts in national administrations will be intensified.

(b) As regards co-ordination on the spot:

- contacts between the Representations of the Member States in each country and Commission delegations, where they exist, will be intensified;
- a periodical report on the development of the country and on the external aid, particularly of EEC origin, received by the beneficiary country will be drawn up jointly by the Representations of the Member States on the spot which are in a position to take part and the Commission delegation (following the pattern of, and possibly supplementing, the reports produced by the economic and trade departments of those Representations);

- a more systematic exchange of information will be ensured concerning visits or mission carried out by Representatives of the Member States and of the Community in the context of their aid policies: the initiative will rest with the local representation of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council, on information provided by the bodies responsible for these visits or missions.

(c) As regards support for sectoral policies:

- following the model of the co-ordination effected in the context of support for food strategies in those countries where such strategies are being tried out, active co-ordination can be organized, whenever possible, to support sectoral policies."

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The Council requests the Commission to report to it at one of its future meetings (Development) on the implementation of this Resolution.