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DOCUMENT 1-1154/83

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture,  
Education, Information and Sport

on the International Programme for the Development of  
Communications (IPDC)

Rapporteur : Mr Pol M.E.E. MARCK

PE 86.760/fin.



At its sitting of 5 July 1982, the European Parliament referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE and others on the International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC) (Doc. 1-390/82) to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Development and Cooperation for an opinion.

On 20 January 1983 the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport appointed Mr MARCK rapporteur.

The Committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 18/19 October 1983 and 1/2 December 1983, and adopted it at the latter meeting by a unanimous vote with two abstentions.

The following were present at the vote:

Mr Beumer, chairman; Mr Fajardie, vice-chairman; Mr Schwencke, vice-chairman; Mr Marck, rapporteur; Mr Alexiadis, Mr Brok, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mrs Pery, Mrs Pruvot (deputizing for Mr Beyer de Ryke), Mr Simmonds, Mr Vgenopoulos (deputizing for Mrs Buchan) and Mrs Viehoff.

The opinion of the Committee on Development and Cooperation is attached.

The report was tabled on 6 December 1983.

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The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the resolution of the Consultative Assembly on cultural cooperation between the ACP States and the European Economic Community (Doc. ACP/EEC 27/81)<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the resolution of the European Parliament on cultural cooperation between the ACP and the EEC (Doc. 1-453/83) adopted on 8 July 1983<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the resolution by Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE and others on the International Programme for Communications Development (Doc. 1-390/82),
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport (Doc. 1-1154/83),
- A. whereas the International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC) was instituted by the General Conference of UNESCO, held in Belgrade in 1980,
- B. whereas UNESCO set up an intergovernmental council responsible for implementing the programme,
- C. having regard to the steadfast commitment of the Community to its relations with the developing countries and its support for their autonomous development,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 15, 20.1.1982

<sup>2</sup> OJ No. C 242, 12.9.1983

1. Agrees with the idea underlying the IPDC, namely that permanent imbalances exist in the flow of information, and proposes promoting a completely new instrument to further and expand the developing countries' own capacity so that they can participate fully in the exchange of information;
2. Considers that a common and consistent approach by the countries of the Community could be very significant for the success of these international initiatives;
3. Considers it important that the International Programme for the Development of Communications should further the attainment of the principle of a 'free flow and a wider and better balanced exchange of information';
4. Calls on the Commission and Council to inform Parliament what joint action the Community might take under the various sections of the IPDC, for example:
  - a. assistance in identifying the communication needs of the developing countries and in determining priorities,
  - b. training staff who will be responsible for directing and managing information and communication systems and for the content of the appropriate programmes, for operating and maintaining modern equipment and helping to develop appropriate technologies,
  - c. donating and supplying at reasonable prices the technical resources needed for information and communication systems, in particular for rural areas,
  - d. technical and financial support for regional and sub-regional projects, including cooperation between the developing countries themselves;
5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Joint Committee of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTORIGINS

The International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC) originated in response to the UNESCO debates on the exchange and balanced flow of information and also to some extent as a practical alternative to what had been labelled a politicized discussion on 'The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)'.

In this discussion it was the objective of the countries of the Third World and Eastern Europe to bring about a fundamental reform of the management and control of information sources. Proposals were put forward for an international code for the mass media operating at world level (including 4 major Western press agencies) as well as proposals to establish a code of conduct setting out the duties and responsibilities of the mass media and their contributions to specific goals such as peace, human rights, the abolition of colonialism and racism, etc.

Instead of offering ready-made or standardized solutions to the problems facing the developing countries in the communications field, the countries of the West, meeting within UNESCO, insisted that the developing countries would derive more benefit from support or aid programmes which would enable them to expand their own communications capacity by building up their technical and material resources as well as their personnel infrastructure, while at the same time ensuring that their cultural integrity remained intact.

In April 1980 a conference was held in Paris on the activities, requirements and programmes for development in the communications field. This conference led to a recommendation to the twenty-first session of the General Conference of UNESCO in Belgrade that the IPDC should be set up.

Thus in 1980 the IPDC was established primarily as an operational body with the aim of coordinating an international aid programme.

## STRUCTURE AND TASKS OF THE IPDC

The IPDC Charter is broad in scope and its terms of reference are contained in Statutes which include the objective 'to increase cooperation and assistance for the development of communications infrastructures and to reduce the gap between various countries in the communications field'.

The institutional provisions were adopted by the UNESCO General Conference and it was decided that the IPDC should be coordinated by an Intergovernmental Council of 35 members, elected by the General Conference. The Council has the general task of managing the planning and implementation of the IPDC's activities which means in practice that it has to consider proposals, identify needs, recommend priorities, assess results and be responsible for financial resources as well as mustering international support.

Despite the fact that where possible the Council's Rules of Procedure stipulate majority voting, they also provide that where possible decisions should be taken by a general consensus.

## FINANCING

Apart from the sum of \$1.75 million set aside for IPDC in the UNESCO regular budget, the IPDC is primarily financed by voluntary contributions, all types of contribution being acceptable.

As at 31 July 1983 the IPDC had the following funds at its disposal (contributions actually paid up (round figure): \$ 4 million):

Non-aligned countries	\$ 455,000
China	\$ 100,000
Eastern Bloc (USSR alone)	\$ 674,000 (including \$ 250,000 in non-convertible rubles)
Individual Western countries (excluding the Community)	
Canada	\$ 81,300
Finland	\$ 50,000
Norway	\$ 1,800,000
Japan	\$ 300,00
United States	\$ 850,000 (including \$ 350,000 in the form of funds in trust)



EEC France	\$ 298,000
Italy	\$ 169,000
Netherlands	\$ 400,000
West Germany	-
Greece	-
Luxembourg	-
United Kingdom	-
Denmark	-
Belgium	-
Ireland	-

A number of countries make contributions in kind (grants, expert services, equipment, etc.) and during the 4th session of the Intergovernmental Council in Tashkent (USSR) in September 1983 many countries announced their intention of making contributions (including France, FF 2,500,000 and the Netherlands, Fl 100,000).

#### LINK BETWEEN NEEDS AND AID PROMISED

The UNESCO Secretariat sent out a questionnaire to interested countries to elicit their needs and priorities in the communications field so that it could establish a coordinated policy.

The level of both technical and financial aid promised to date is far below that needed by the developing countries to improve their internal communications structures. It has been possible to finance all projects for 1983-1984 at the latest, for subsequent years there are still projects of the order of \$ 15 million whose financing is far from assured. Further requests for aid are coming in all the time. However the contributions received so far are too small to permit any great degree of diversification in the aid granted.

When the projects are assessed and ultimately approved, account is also taken of whether the communications policy of the countries or regions submitting the projects is consistent with and integrated into overall government policy and, more specifically, development, cultural and educational policy.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are as follows (but may be reviewed and revised in the light of experience):

(a) Projects should:

- be in conformity with the objectives, principles aims and purposes of the IPDC and take into account the cultural identity, educational needs and orientations of the countries and regions concerned;
- be relevant to development, especially as reflected in regional, subregional and national development policies and plans;
- increase the self-reliance, equality and independence and capacity for endogenous development of developing countries in the field of communication and information;
- have some spin-off effect in the communications sector and/or the development process as a whole within a given country/countries;
- increase domestic and regional exchanges of information and, in particular, increase the capacity of developing nations to participate effectively in the international exchange of information;
- increase the communications capacity to receive and transmit information of individuals and groups at both rural and urban community levels;
- respond to the needs of countries whose communication systems are least developed.

(b) Regional and inter-regional projects should have the support or sponsorship of two, and preferably more, countries of the regions concerned.

Thus, 25 May last saw the start of the PANA project, a Pan-African news agency with head office in Dakar and regional offices in Kinshasa, Lagos, Lusaka, Khartoum and Tripoli. Initially the agency will not produce its own press reports but will summarize and distribute national reports from the African agencies so that Africans no longer have to resort to Western agencies for their national news.

#### ATTITUDE OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES

Whereas a number of Western countries have made direct contributions to the IPDC special account, others have preferred to offer aid for specific projects. Thus the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany have already provided substantial bilateral aid.

One of the main fears of the Western countries - apart from misgivings regarding the setting up of yet another UN fund - is that there are not adequate safeguards that the financial resources distributed through the IPDC will benefit information organizations set up on the principles of private enterprise and may well serve primarily to strengthen government systems and their influence over the media. In view of their strength on the IPDC Council and the rules on majority voting, a number of Western countries prefer to offer help in a bilateral form or through funds in trust with the IPDC, all the more so as they are concerned about the problems involved in administering multilateral aid.

The Western countries - who have assumed the role of sponsors of technical aid - are nonetheless making contributions, albeit often in limited amounts.

If the IPDC is unable to operate effectively owing to lack of resources, the Third World countries will point to the West as the chief culprit since its wait-and-see attitude has not given the IPDC any chance of getting off the ground.

#### CONCLUSION

The IPDC can rightly be regarded as one of the few practical achievements to have emerged so far from the overall information debate and it is an initiative that is supported by the West.

However, in view of the limited contributions made so far, it is highly likely that in the long term the West will once again be regarded as the main culprit if the Third World countries are not able to take part in the international exchange of information.

Moreover, the hopes cherished by the developing countries of obtaining technological and other aid will be dashed. If this in fact happens, various pressure groups can be expected to renew their agitation for the problem to be taken up at political level, an approach that the West and the media concerned could prevent if they provided the necessary support.

It is with this prospect in mind that the Member States of the Community need to support the IPDC and increase their contributions to it.

tabled by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Hahn, Mr Estgen, Mr Costanzo, Mr Beumer, Mr Gerokostopoulos and Mr Travaglini  
pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure  
on the International Programme for Communications Development (IPCD)

- A - noting the adoption by the General Conference of UNESCO (Belgrade 1980) of the International Programme for Communications Development (IPCD),
- B - noting the setting up by UNESCO of an intergovernmental council responsible for implementing the programme,
- C - recalling the steadfast commitment of the Community to its relations with the developing countries and its support for their autonomous development,
- D - having regard to the Chasle Report,
  - 1. Agrees with the idea underlying the IPCD, namely that in the light of existing imbalances in the flow of information, it is proposed to create a new basic instrument to promote and develop the developing countries' own capacity so that they can participate fully in the exchange of information;
  - 2. Considers that a common and consistent approach by the countries of the Community could be a decisive factor in successfully launching this international initiative;
  - 3. Considers it essential that the International Programme for Communications Development should further the attainment of the principle of a free flow of information;
  - 4. Calls on the Commission and Council to consult Parliament on the joint action which the Community can take under the various chapters of the IPCD, namely:
    - (a) assistance in identifying the communication needs of the developing countries and in determining priorities;
    - (b) training staff who will be able to operate and maintain modern equipment and help to develop appropriate technologies;
    - (c) supplying radio and television transmitters and receivers for rural areas at reasonable prices;
    - (d) technical support for regional and sub-regional projects including cooperation between developing countries themselves;
  - 5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and Council of the European Communities.

OPINION

of the Committee on Development and Cooperation

Draftsman: Mr A. Narducci

On 24 November 1982 the Committee on Development and Cooperation appointed Mr Narducci draftsman.

On 25 March 1983 and 23 November 1983 the Committee considered the draft opinion, and adopted it unanimously on 23 November 1983.

The following were present at the time of the vote: Mr Poniatowski, chairman; Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti (acting on behalf of the draftsman); Mr Cohen; Mr de Courcy Ling; Mr Deschamps (deputising for Mr Wawrzik); Mr Fellermaier; Mr Ferrero; Mrs Pruvot (deputising for Mr Irmer); Mr Sablé; Dr Sherlock; Mr Vergès.

The opinion was forwarded on 24 November 1983.

OPINION  
of the Committee on Development and Cooperation

The Committee on Development and Cooperation,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and others (Doc. 1-390/82), pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure on the International Programme for Communications Development (IPCD),
  - having regard to the resolution<sup>(1)</sup> adopted by the European Parliament on cultural cooperation between the ACP States and the EEC,
  - having regard to the resolutions adopted by the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly meeting in Luxembourg from 28 to 30 September 1981<sup>(2)</sup>, in Rome from 3 to 5 November 1982<sup>(3)</sup>, in Berlin from 21-23 September 1983<sup>(4)</sup>, and the report on Cultural Cooperation, rapporteur Ambassador CHASLE<sup>(5)</sup>,
1. Recognises the current imbalance in the flow of communications between North and South and the need for action in this regard;
  2. Supports the principle of the International Programme for the Development of Communications;
  3. Stresses the importance of attaining the principle of a free flow of information;
  4. Notes that the Community has already provided useful assistance to developing countries in the communications field but recognises the need for further action, the possibility for which is limited under existing arrangements;
  5. Calls on the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport to examine the possibility of a Community financial contribution to IPDC funds;
  6. Agrees in principle with the motion for a resolution on the International Programme for Communications Development (IPCD).

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(1) Report of Mr NARDUCCI, OJ No. C242 of 12.9.1983, p.118

(2) OJ No. C15 of 20.1.1982, p.22

(3) OJ No. C39 of 10.2.1983, p.40

(4) OJ No. C300 of 7.11.1983, p.25

(5) Document CA/CP/186

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The International Programme for the Development of Communications was set up under the aegis of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in response to calls from developing countries for a "New World Information and Communications Order".
2. The New World Information and Communications Order called for by the Third World countries would involve the restructuring and control of communications resources. Of particular importance would be the International Regulation of the media operating at world level, notably the four major "Western" news agencies. This would also involve the codification of the responsibilities of journalists and their contribution to the achievement of certain objectives such as, inter alia, the promotion of a New International Economic Order.
3. Most industrialised countries, including the Community Member States, generally feel that attempts to achieve a New World Information and Communications Order such as proposed by the developing countries in fora such as the United Nations specialist agencies, would be unlikely to achieve concrete results, would further politicise the flow of information and would lead to undue control of the media by the authorities. Most industrialised countries favour a less rigid and normative solution to what was generally recognised as a real problem, preferring an approach based on enhanced assistance to developing countries with the development of their communications facilities. Thus the IPDC was set up in 1980 by UNESCO on the initiative of certain industrialised countries. Its basic function is to coordinate an international aid programme "to increase cooperation and assistance for the development of communication infrastructures and to reduce the gap between various countries in the communications field<sup>1</sup>".
4. Under the institutional arrangements approved by the General Conference of UNESCO, the IPDC is coordinated by an Intergovernmental Council, composed of 35 members elected by the General Conference on the basis of rotation and broadly reflecting the political balance of UNESCO membership. The rules of

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<sup>1</sup>Statutes and Rules of Procedure of IPDC, UNESCO CC-81/WS/34



Procedure of the Council allow for majority voting though decisions should, as far as possible, be reached by consensus.

5. As well as an initial funding of 1.75 million US\$ under UNESCO's regular budget, the IPDC is financed essentially by voluntary contributions by its member states. By December 1982 financial contributions pledged or received amounted to just over 5 million US\$. Offers of assistance in kind in the form of expert services, training grants and equipment, have also been made. With regard to the European Community, only France and Italy have agreed to contribute funds, while France and the Netherlands have promised assistance in kind. Other Community countries, including the United Kingdom, have indicated their intention of not contributing to the IPDC but of granting aid on a bilateral basis to developing countries wishing to improve communications and the media.

6. According to UNESCO's secretariat it appears that the sums pledged so far are inadequate for the programmes to be financed.

## II. THE RESOLUTION UNDER CONSIDERATION

7. The present opinion is being drawn up in response to a motion for a resolution<sup>1</sup> tabled by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and others, pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure, which was forwarded to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport as the Committee responsible and to the Committee on Development and Cooperation for its opinion.

8. This resolution agrees with the idea underlying the IPDC, considers that a common approach by Community Member States would be important for launching this initiative successfully, stresses the importance of the principle of a free flow of information which should be furthered by the IPDC, and calls on the Commission and Council to consult Parliament on joint action which the Community can take, particularly with regard to :

- assistance in identifying the communication needs of the developing countries and in determining priorities;
- training staff who will be able to operate and maintain modern equipment and help to develop appropriate technologies;

<sup>1</sup>Doc. 1-390/82

- supplying radio and television transmitters and receivers for rural areas at reasonable prices;
- technical support for regional and sub-regional projects including cooperation between developing countries themselves.

### III. COMMUNITY ACTION IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

9. At the meeting of the Committee on Development and Cooperation on 25 March 1983, in reply to questions raised by your draftsman, a representative of the Commission stated that the Community was already assisting developing countries in the field of communications, both under the Lomé Convention and through the press and information budget of the Commission which provided training 'stages' for journalists from developing countries. Under the Lomé Convention specific communications projects have been assisted, including the development of telecommunications. This includes rural telecommunications and distance teaching (in the Caribbean, for example). Furthermore there is almost always a training component in projects, including those in the communications area.

10. In addition the Community has assisted NGOs with projects aimed at making the people of Europe more aware of the problems of developing countries, this being one of the aims of the IPDC. The Commission representative added that, while the Community does not participate formally in the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC, it does have representatives and observers at most of the meetings organised by the IPDC.

11. The Commission representative concluded by stating that the Community was involved in a satellite telecommunications project for Africa which involved some 20 African States. The Community has taken part in tele-detection projects by satellite for crop forecasting, geological surveys and weather forecasting.

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

12. The Committee on Development and Cooperation (see the Report by Mr NARDUCCI on cultural cooperation<sup>(1)</sup>) and the ACP-EEC Joint Committee (see various resolutions by the Working Group on Cultural Cooperation and the Report<sup>(2)</sup> drawn up by Ambassador

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(1) Doc. 1-453/83, OJ No. C242 of 12.9.1983, p.118

(2) Doc. CA/CP/186

CHASLE ), have considered the question of exchanges of information and recognised that a real problem exists in that international news is to a very great extent controlled by major news agencies from the industrialised countries, leading to an obvious imbalance. On the other hand, for a series of understandable reasons, the media in many developing countries are almost entirely under the control of the authorities and cannot be said to report developments objectively.

13. Under these circumstances your rapporteur agrees very strongly with the draft resolution (Doc. 390/82), stressing in particular paragraph 3 which emphasises the importance of the principle of a free flow of information. With regard to the specific actions called for in paragraph 4 of the resolution, your draftsman has noted the statements made by the representative of the Commission during the meeting of 25 March 1983 but feels that at present, not enough is being done in this field.

14. Under the Lomé Convention there are obvious difficulties in that requests for assistance for projects have to come from the ACP States or regions concerned and, given the current scarcity of funds, while many countries consider telecommunications a priority, few are willing to use part of their national allocations for assisting the development of journalism. Furthermore individual ACP countries can do little to affect the North/South flow of information.

15. With regard to non-associated developing countries, the situation is even worse in that funds are more limited and communications is not regarded as one of the priority areas for assistance under the guidelines for this programme.

16. While NGOs have been helped to fund programmes to make European citizens more aware of Third World realities, this is only a small part of their activity.

17. It consequently appears to your draftsman that the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport and the European Parliament should consider the possibility of direct Community involvement in the funding of the IPCD which seems to be a way in which the Community can give practical assistance to this work. While at this time of budgetary stringency new expenditure should not be undertaken lightly, nevertheless your draftsman feels that this possibility should be given consideration by the Committee responsible.

