



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT



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1164th meeting of the Council

- Development Co-operation -

Brussels, 21 May 1987

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Ministry of Foreign Trade  
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Commission:

Mr Lorenzo NATALI

Vice-President

INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS IN THE COMMUNITY OF DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- Council conclusions

The Council examined with interest a Commission paper on this subject presented by Vice-President NATALI. As a result of this examination, it adopted the following conclusions:

The importance of increasing public awareness

1. The Council recognizes that increasing public awareness of co-operation and development issues is an essential basis for the efforts made by the industrialized countries to support economic and social progress in the developing countries; that official aid programmes and other specific action to help these countries require the public's support; that the Community and the Member States must take responsibility for fostering such support by improving understanding of the programmes and of the international co-operation framework within which they are implemented.

The Council has also noted that certain international organizations are concerned to inform the public and increase its awareness, an important instance of this being the European publicity campaign to be organized in the Spring of 1988 by the Council of Europe.

2. While public support can be counted on for emergency or short-term humanitarian actions, the same does not always apply, because of their complexity, to longer-term development issues and efforts based on the relationship of inter-dependence between North and South.

Moreover, public opinion in the European Community countries has difficulty in grasping the overall magnitude of the European effort as a whole in the area of development co-operation as well as of the individual action taken by the other Member States or by the Community. The same is true of the achievements of the developing countries themselves.

Although the problem is not equally acute in all the Member States, the Council feels that efforts should be made in future to remedy the situation.

#### Priority aims and topics

3. The Council feels that efforts to inform the public and increase its awareness should focus mainly on the following aims and topics.

- (a) to explain to the public what is at stake in North/South co-operation;
- (b) to present and bring home to the public the realities of the situation in Third World countries, the diversity of their situations, the difficulties which impede their development, the efforts they have made to overcome their difficulties and the progress achieved. Cultural exchanges can play a useful role here;
- (c) to provide details of action and initiatives undertaken as part of bilateral or Community co-operation policies, with regard both to aims and results;
- (d) to explain the broader implications of European co-operation in the Third World.

The need for increased collaboration at European level

4. Although they often have limited financial backing, the means which must be brought into play for this purpose are many and varied. They exist at government and official level in all the Member States and in the Community institutions, particularly the Commission. They also exist at the more decentralized level of education systems, the NGOs, regional or local authority bodies and of certain professional groups. Finally, they exist in the media themselves, which can have a considerable day-to-day impact on opinion.

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5. While taking note of the action to date at these various levels and underlining the importance of continued and improved action concentrating on the priority aims and topics set out above, the Council considers that there are also many areas in which a multiplier effect might be obtained at European level by encouraging the various agents concerned to collaborate more closely by introducing a simple and non-compulsory process of exchanging experience and information which would enable existing potential to be tapped to the fullest extent.

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6. In this connection, the Council notes with interest the possible areas mentioned in the Commission communication by way of illustration for national action and for collaboration between equivalent national and Community departments, namely exchanges of views, of experience and of material, the joint production of material, activities co-ordinated with other European or international organizations, efforts to inform and increase awareness of development issues (for example, action in schools, action with the possible involvement of NGOs, local authorities, professional groups and youth associations).

7. The Council considers that these possibilities and, where appropriate, others not yet identified at this stage are worthy of closer and more systematic examination by national and Community experts, and therefore asks the Commission to convene and hold the meetings necessary for this purpose.

The Council agrees to study and evaluate at a future meeting the outcome of such an examination and any specific proposals for action which may be submitted to it as necessary.



ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Council held a wide-ranging discussion on this subject at the close of which it adopted the following conclusions:

1. The Council recognizes the importance of the role of a healthy and prosperous private sector for the balanced, successful development of the economy generally. It notes with satisfaction that many developing countries themselves have for a number of years shown increasingly clear and explicit recognition of the importance of that role.
  
2. The Community and its Member States have not been inactive in this area. Among the instruments created to promote and support investment and development of the private sector are certain forms of financial and technical co-operation, the European Investment Bank, the Centre for the Development of Industry (ACP-EEC) and instruments set up by Member States.

The Council nevertheless recognizes that, in view moreover of developments in current thinking in this area, there is a need to re-examine the policies pursued and the instruments used from the standpoint of stepping up and improving the effectiveness of the efforts and measures undertaken, in consultation with those of its partners wishing to embark upon this course of action.

3. The Council emphasizes that efforts to encourage the domestic and/or foreign private sector must be designed to complement and not to replace existing efforts and in no way imply any withdrawal by the Community and its Member States from their responsibilities in the field of official development assistance. The Council also considers that an efficient public sector provides a favourable framework for a growing private sector role in the development process.
  
4. The Council is mindful of the differences in situation between developing countries and of the variety of obstacles in the way of the domestic and foreign private sector's contribution towards development. The most serious of those obstacles is a discouraging economic environment. The Council considers that the progress to be made in this respect is of decisive importance.
  
5. With regard to existing potential for action and co-operation, the Council believes that efforts by the Community and the Member States will have to cover the following sectors:
  - (i) first of all, agriculture and the rural world:  
the agricultural production sector as such, together with related sectors upstream (production and distribution of agricultural inputs) or downstream (processing of products, storage and distribution of agricultural produce), or the development of the rural world in the broad sense (production and marketing of everyday consumer goods);

- (ii) industry, where - in view of the small scale of the market in many developing countries - the priority call should be for action in respect of small and medium-sized undertakings, concentrating primarily on covering the abovementioned agricultural and rural needs and rehabilitating existing industrial units. Such action should also take into account the possibilities afforded by the development of South-South trade and regional co-operation;
  - (iii) services, particularly in the sphere of tourism, the marketing of agricultural products and inputs, transport, financial services (collection of savings, decentralized credit networks, insurance, information, training and technical assistance for SMUs, etc.), and in other areas in which private sector services may prove worthwhile and be encouraged to a greater extent than in the past (urban transport, water and energy supply, construction and maintenance of economic and social infrastructure).
6. The Council also confirms the importance of the role of co-operation between undertakings from the EEC and developing countries and of foreign investment and the advantages which they can have for the development of countries wishing to seek recourse to them as a privileged tool for the transfer of know-how (in the organization of production, technology adaptation, management, marketing, training of executive and skilled staff, etc.) and as a possible catalyst for further inflows of resources. The Council considers that medium and even small-sized European undertakings should constitute an instrument especially suited to this form of co-operation.

7. The Council calls upon its subordinate bodies, the Member States and the Commission to intensify their thinking on the contribution which the private sector can make towards development. Discussion, in which greater participation on the part of private operators in the Community would be desirable, should focus in particular on:

- support for the structural reforms mentioned above, with the aim of creating a more stimulating economic environment;
- intervention in the framework of technical and financial assistance;
- encouragement of co-operation between undertakings from the EEC and developing countries, principally in the case of European small and medium-sized undertakings;
- promotion and protection of investments and intellectual property.

The Council requests the Commission to submit at a later date both the outcome of this examination and any more specific proposals.

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COMBATING AIDS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - Council conclusions

1. The Council, having taken note of a statement by the Vice-President of the Commission, Mr NATALI, stresses that the problem of AIDS is a major public health concern in every continent in the world, both in the developed and in the developing countries.

The situation in the developing countries is all the more alarming in that they largely lack the technical and financial resources to undertake the necessary preventive measures.

2. In order to help combat this scourge in those countries which ask for such help, the Vice-President of the Commission has proposed the implementation of a "Community programme to combat AIDS in the developing countries", the main aspects of which are as follows:

- the main objective, given that it is not yet possible to cure the disease or contain it by vaccination, will be to protect those not infected by the virus;
- action will be directed at responding swiftly to the proposals made by the WHO in its "Special Programme on AIDS" which is based in particular on the implementation of national programmes aimed essentially at strengthening the health care schemes through which AIDS must be combatted;

- this programme will be kept very flexible so that it can be adapted very rapidly to the realities of a constantly changing situation: technical advances, social attitudes to the disease, features peculiar to various countries and the need to integrate into international co-ordination;
  - action could for instance be taken to
    - = reduce transmission through blood (blood-bank screening, etc.), through sexual contact (information and education campaigns) and through injections (professional hygiene measures, provision of sterilizing equipment, etc.)
    - = assess the impact of the programme and study the evolution of the disease, conduct operational research into the incidence of AIDS and the dangers and methods of transmission
  - this programme will be able to mobilize technical support in particular via NGOs and European hospitals and research centres, preferably in the context of inter-institutional co-operation with their opposite numbers in the developing countries.
3. The Council welcomes the Commission's initiative, as expressed in Vice-President NATALI's oral communication. It notes the Commission's intention to make appropriate financial provision from funds at the Community's disposal. Consequently, it requests the Commission to make proposals rapidly in this respect, according to the usual Community procedures.

4. The Council emphasizes the need for close co-ordination of the Community programme, including the programmes on Medical and Health Research and Science and Technology for Development, with the measures taken by organizations and donors active in this field and with those taken by the Member States.

It calls in particular upon the Commission to co-ordinate its action closely with that of the WHO so that it dovetails with the special Programme on AIDS drawn up by the WHO.

The Council also welcomes the Commission's stated intention of holding regular meetings with Member States' experts in order to take stock of the implementation of the Community programme and to co-ordinate it with the bilateral action which the Member States are undertaking for their part. In this context the Commission will ensure that a working link is established with the other working parties of experts concerned and in particular the one which was set up following the Health Council meeting on 15 May 1987.

PREPARATIONS FOR UNCTAD VII

The Ministers for Development Co-operation held a wide-ranging exchange of views on the preparations for UNCTAD VII which will be held in July in Geneva with a view to the General Affairs Council defining the Community guidelines for the Conference at its June meeting.

Following the discussions the President noted in particular

- the importance of the forthcoming UNCTAD Conference which is an important instrument in the dialogue between developed and developing countries;
- the willingness of all delegations to approach the Conference in an open, pragmatic and realistic frame of mind;
- the wish that the Conference be an occasion for a new type of dialogue which could contribute to the strengthening of international economic co-operation;
- the need during the Conference debates to devote particular attention to the poorest developing countries, whose development prospects are severely affected by debt-servicing problems and their excessive dependence on exports of raw materials.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOME III

The Council heard a statement by Vice-President NATALI taking stock of the programming of Community aid under Lomé III and its implementation.



THIRD EEC-CENTRAL AMERICA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

The Council heard a report by the Commission on the outcome of the third EEC-Central America Ministerial conference which was held on 9 and 10 February 1987 in Guatemala City; it also took note of the comments made by various delegations on the subject.

EVALUATION OF AID

The Council took note of a report by Vice-President NATALI on the progress of proceedings in this sphere. In view of the importance it attached to improving the effectiveness of aid evaluation, it agreed to hold a substantive discussion at its next meeting.

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

After taking note of an introductory statement by Mr NATALI, the Council agreed on the following conclusions:

The Council - recalling its conclusions of 6 November 1984 on the environmental dimension in the Community's development policy, and of 17 April 1986 on a European plan for the protection of natural resources and the fight against desertification in Africa - invites the Commission to report on progress made in integrating environmental issues in the Community's development policy, including proposed policy guidelines for the future and any desirable changes in project appraisal, in time for substantive discussion of the report at the next Development Council.

SITUATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The Council heard a statement by Minister AURILLAC on the serious financial and economic situation of sub-Saharan Africa.

The Commission said it would submit a report to the Council on this matter.

CO-ORDINATION OF AID TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Council heard a statement by Minister BUKMAN on the importance of harmonizing procedures for the granting of aid by the various donors in order, in particular, to simplify the task of the authorities of the recipient countries.

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MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Food aid

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Regulation laying down implementing rules for Regulation (EEC) No 3972/86 on food aid policy and food aid management.

This Regulation indicates in particular the countries and organizations eligible for food aid as well as the criteria for meeting transport costs.

Aid to refugees in the countries of the Near East

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Decision on the conclusion of the Convention between the European Economic Community and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) concerning aid to refugees in the countries of the Near East.

The Convention confirms the Community's commitment to continue its aid to Palestinian refugees under the UNRWA aid programme. Such aid will take the form of contributions in kind or in cash extending over a three-year period for use under the UNRWA education and food programmes.

The Community will pay to UNRWA annually an amount of 20 million ECU for 1987, 1988 and 1989 as a contribution to the financing of the education programme.

The amount and form of the Community contribution to the UNRWA food programmes (programme for the distribution of rations to special hardship cases, food programme in training centres and supplementary food programme) are defined by the Community each year as part of its food aid programmes in keeping with the requests submitted by UNRWA.

Relations with ACP States

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation on the application of Decision No 1/87 of the ACP-EEC Customs Co-operation Committee derogating from the definition of the concept of originating products to take account of the special situation in Fiji with regard to its production of canned tuna.

Textiles

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 4134/86 on import arrangements for certain textile products originating in Taiwan.

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Bruxelles, le 20 mai 1987

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NOTE BIO(87) 132 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

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PREPARATION DU CONSEIL DEVELOPPEMENT DU 21 MAI 1987  
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(C. Stathopoulos)

Le programme communautaire de lutte contre le SIDA dans les PVD et le rôle du secteur privé dans le processus de développement seront les principaux points de l'ordre du jour du Conseil Développement dont les travaux débiteront le 21 mai 1987 (à 10H00) à Bruxelles.

- A) En ce qui concerne la lutte contre le SIDA, le Vice-Président NATALI annoncera les principaux éléments d'un programme communautaire qui appuyerait le Plan de lutte contre cette maladie, élaboré par l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (OMS). L'OMS a estimé le coût d'un tel plan à environ 250 mio US\$ pour 3 ans et la Commission se propose de mobiliser 35 MECU sur les ressources non affectées, encore disponibles de LOME II. Ces ressources pourront être complétées pour les aspects recherches par des concours du Programme "Sciences et techniques au service du développement" lorsqu'il sera approuvé.

L'affectation des crédits par pays sera décidée ultérieurement en tenant compte de l'urgence relative des problèmes et de l'engagement des divers pays à élaborer et à mettre en oeuvre de façon organisée et systématique des programmes nationaux de lutte contre le SIDA selon le modèle proposé par l'OMS. D'où l'importance de la coordination à organiser sous l'égide des pays concernés avec l'OMS et les autres donateurs. La responsabilité de l'élaboration de ces programmes ainsi que de leur exécution appartiendra clairement aux pays concernés ; le rôle des aides Internationales sera de les appuyer sur le plan technique et financier.

C'est dans cette perspective que le Vice-Président NATALI a déjà écrit aux dirigeants des pays ACP pour leur demander s'ils étaient intéressés à une aide communautaire dans le cadre d'un programme de lutte contre le SIDA. Une trentaine de pays ont réagi de manière favorable à l'initiative de la Commission.

Les composantes du programme seront la création et le contrôle des banques de sang, des campagnes d'information et d'éducation, la fourniture d'équipement de stérilisation, de seringues non récupérables et la recherche opérationnelle.

La Commission cherchera demain une approbation politique des grandes lignes de son programme par le Conseil.

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**B) Rôle du secteur privé dans le processus de développement**

C'est la première fois que le Conseil aura une discussion de fond sur ce thème. M. NATALI soulignera dans son intervention que l'exercice de programmation engagé dans le cadre de la nouvelle Convention de Lomé a permis de constater que ce sujet, s'il est abordé de façon pragmatique, peut être discuté avec les partenaires de la Communauté dans une optique d'amélioration de l'efficacité de nos actions de développement. Il précisera aussi que tout effort en matière d'encouragement du secteur privé, national ou étranger, devrait être conçu et présenté en termes de complémentarité et non pas de substitution.

**C) Le Conseil aura aussi un échange de vues sur la préparation de la CNUCED VII et sur la sensibilisation de l'opinion publique de la Communauté aux questions de développement.**

Au cours du déjeuner qui est prévu, les ministres examineront l'état de la mise en oeuvre de Lomé III.

Enfin, la Commission fera rapport sur les résultats de la Troisième Conférence ministérielle CEE/Amérique Centrale de Guatemala (9/10 février 1987) en ce qui concerne l'aide au développement.

Amitiés,

  
C. Stathopoulos

Bruxelles, le 21 mai 1987

NOTE BIO(87) 132 (suite 1) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

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CONSEIL DEVELOPPEMENT DU 21 MAI 1987 (C. STATHOPOULOS)  
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Accueil favorable par le Conseil du programme de lutte contre le Sida. Le Conseil a marqué son appui politique à l'initiative de la Commission d'élaborer un programme de lutte contre le SIDA dans les pays ACP. Les ministres ont pris acte de l'intention de la Commission de mobiliser 35 MECU à partir des fonds de Lomé II dont elle dispose. Le Conseil a invité par conséquent la Commission à faire rapidement des propositions à cet égard. Ces propositions seront présentées probablement en juin.

Dans son intervention, le Vice Président NATALI a annoncé les grandes lignes du programme de la Commission, qui sera axé sur les mesures suivantes :

- la réduction de la transmission par la voie sanguine lors de transfusions (création et contrôle des banques de sang, lancement de programmes de dépistage) ;
- des campagnes d'information et d'éducation pour réduire la transmission par voie sexuelle, destinées au public dans son ensemble, et en particulier aux groupes à haut risque ;
- la réduction de la transmission par voie d'injection, notamment par la formation du personnel de santé et l'application de mesures d'hygiène professionnelle, la fourniture d'équipement de stérilisation, de seringues non récupérables, et
- la mise en oeuvre d'un système de surveillance pour évaluer l'impact du programme et pour étudier l'évolution de la maladie ;
- la recherche opérationnelle, composante essentielle de tout programme de prévention et de contrôle, sur des sujets prioritaires comme l'incidence du SIDA, les risques et modes de transmission, etc...

Le Conseil a procédé aussi à un échange de vues sur un document de la Commission concernant la sensibilisation de l'opinion publique de la Communauté aux questions de développement.

Les Ministres ont constaté que l'opinion publique qui est facilement mobilisée dans des cas d'urgence (famine en Ethiopie, etc.), reste relativement indifférente à l'action menée par la Communauté dans le domaine du développement et qui concerne l'aide structurelle.

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Suivant la Commission, le Conseil a souligné l'importance de sensibiliser l'opinion publique même sur ces thèmes. Il a aussi reconnu l'opportunité d'une collaboration accrue au niveau européen.

Le Vice-Président NATALI a précisé dans son intervention qu'il ne s'agit pas de chercher à influencer l'opinion publique, de la mettre en quelque sorte "de notre côté", par une série d'actions de type publicitaire.

Il s'agit plus fondamentalement - car l'opinion publique doit être traitée en partenaire adulte et respectée comme telle, y compris dans son pluralisme - de lui fournir le plus possible d'éléments factuels d'information pour qu'elle puisse mieux situer, mieux comprendre les enjeux de la coopération, les problèmes qui se posent, mais aussi les réalisations et les progrès d'ores et déjà accomplis et attendus.

A suivre,

Amitiés,

C. Stathopoulos



Bruxelles, le 22 mai 1987

NOTE BIO(87) 132 (suite 2 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

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CONSEIL DEVELOPPEMENT (suite et fin) (C. STATHOPOULOS)  
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Le rôle du secteur privé dans le processus de développement est particulièrement important. C'est la conclusion essentielle du Conseil après une discussion constructive sur ce sujet, basée sur une communication de la Commission. Le Conseil a identifié certains secteurs où l'entreprise privée peut jouer un rôle important. Il s'agit de l'agriculture (production et distribution des intrants agricoles, transformation et distribution des produits agricoles), de l'industrie (avec priorité aux PME) et des services (notamment en matière de tourisme, de transports, de services financiers).

Le Conseil a décidé d'approfondir ses réflexions sur certains aspects de ce sujet.

(Sur l'intervention du Vice-Président NATALI, voir BIO·  
préparation du Conseil).

En ce qui concerne la préparation de la CNUCED VII qui se tiendra à Genève du 9 au 31 juillet 1987 la position de la Communauté sera fixée par le Conseil (Affaires Générales) en juin. Néanmoins les Ministres du Développement ont pu faire part de leurs observations sur la préparation de cette position.

Intervenant au débat, le Vice-Président NATALI a souligné que la Communauté et ses Etats membres devront examiner dans une approche positive les sujets principaux qui seront traités à Genève : les ressources pour le développement, la problématique des produits de base, le commerce international ainsi que la situation particulière que connaissent les économies les moins avancées. M. Natali a mis l'accent sur l'interdépendance de ces différents thèmes qui devront, selon lui, être examinés dans leur globalité.

Le commerce international, a-t-il dit, est un des facteurs essentiels qui puisse soutenir sainement des activités économiques prometteuses dans les pays du Sud.

Ceci est vrai en particulier dans le domaine des matières premières : on sait qu'une croissance économique supplémentaire de 1% du Produit Intérieur Brut des pays industrialisés occasionne une croissance de l'ordre de 3% des exportations des pays producteurs des matières premières. La réduction des possibilités d'exportation dans le domaine des matières premières résulte donc non seulement de phénomènes structurels, mais aussi d'une baisse généralisée de la demande des pays du Nord.

Pendant le déjeuner les Ministres ont entendu un rapport de la Commission sur les résultats de la 3ème session ministérielle CEE/Amérique Centrale qui s'est tenue au Guatemala les 9/10 février 1987 en ce qui concerne l'aide au développement. Ils ont aussi été informés de l'état de la mise en oeuvre de Lomé III.

Amitiés,

 C. STATHOPOULOS