



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT



PRESS RELEASE

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- Development Co-operation -

Brussels, 23 November 1988

President: Mr Theodoros PANGALOS,

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Hellenic Republic

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Presse 181 - G



Italy:

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Ministry of Foreign AffairsLuxembourg:

Mr Robert GOEBBELS

State Secretary,  
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Portugal:

Mr José Manuel DURAO BARROSO

State Secretary,  
Foreign Affairs and Co-operationUnited Kingdom:

Mr Christopher PATTEN

Minister for Overseas Development

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Commission:

Mr Lorenzo NATALI

Vice-President

FOOD SECURITY POLICY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The Council discussed food security policy in sub-Saharan Africa and adopted the following Resolution:

"1. For many years the Council has been concerned at the food situation in developing countries and, more particularly in the sub-Saharan African countries. As early as 1981, it made known that it was prepared to support food strategies in four African countries.

Subsequently, the food strategy approach was generalized in the third Lomé Convention, which gave priority to rural development, including the production of food crops for local consumption, and the establishment of food security with the aim of ensuring that populations have access to enough food to lead a healthy and active life.

Food security does not necessarily imply that a country has to be self-sufficient in foodstuffs. Many countries may find they need to import some of their food requirements. In such cases, an appropriate balance must be struck between local production and imports and this will vary from country to country and take account of financial criteria and, above all economic, social and political criteria.

Since the third Convention has been in force for nearly three years now the Council thinks, with a view to the negotiation of a new ACP-EEC Convention, the time has come to draw conclusions from the experience acquired in this area.

2. The Commission has therefore sent the Council a working document analysing the experience acquired with particular reference to cereal policies. The Council is in broad agreement with the Commission analysis but considers the following points worth emphasizing.
3. The Council notes that, despite the efforts made, the ability of a considerable number of sub-Saharan African countries to feed their populations adequately has diminished in recent decades. It consequently stresses that establishing food security must remain a priority both for the developing countries and in the co-operation policies of the Community and its Member States.
4. Alongside the co-operation provided for by the Lomé Convention, the Community has a number of aid instruments which can also help to achieve the desired aim. The recent reform of Community food aid policy was intended to help rather than hamper efforts to establish food security. Such efforts do not necessarily include self-sufficiency but must be part of a consistent long-term development policy. By allowing counterpart funds to be set up, the sale of food aid products at prices which do not compete with local produce and the restriction of such aid to compensating shortfalls in food crops are an illustration of this resolve to promote the development of the country being assisted. Similarly, the funding of food aid replacement

measures and triangular operations has been eased. Very recently, moreover, the Community introduced rules making it possible to finance storage programmes and early-warning systems and to co-finance purchases of food products or seeds with NGOs.

5. Efforts in this area should not be confined to cereals; the contribution livestock farming, fisheries and traditional agricultural products make to food security must also be remembered.
6. Particular attention should also be paid to scientific and technical research tailored to the climate, the environment and African farming methods with a view, inter alia, to promoting drought-resistant rain crops and to developing cost-effective viable small-scale irrigation schemes.
7. The Council considers that particular attention should be paid to the socio-economic situation of women, given the part they play in the agricultural sector.
8. The Council also stresses the need, in accordance with its Resolution of November 1987, to strengthen the environmental dimension in food security support policy if lasting development is to be ensured.
9. Following an examination of the problems posed by implementation of a strategy or a programme to strengthen food security, the Council thinks that any strategy or programme requires measures in the areas of food crop production, food markets and purchasing power.

A) Economic environment and increasing production

Any increase in the production and yield of food crops depends on a stable and remunerative economic environment. Accordingly, the policies and efforts of the African countries supported by Community aid should take account of the following:

- it is necessary to adopt a flexible and realistic approach to price policy which takes account of both internal factors, such as production costs and consumer purchasing power, and external factors, such as the world market situation, and which is aimed at stabilizing prices within a fixed range rather than maintaining a guaranteed minimum price;
- in order to avoid any disturbances which might be caused by exceptionally cheap imports resulting from overproduction on the world market, some degree of protection of the internal market may prove necessary. Moreover, protection aimed at giving local producers the possibility of gradually achieving a competitive position may prove desirable. Such protection should be temporary and degressive and should not give rise to an impossible economic burden;
- furthermore, the foundations should be laid for an increase in urban earnings, particularly by improving craft and service activities in towns. Domestic food markets will find their equilibrium only when trade links between town and country are improved;

- in the marketing sphere, the roles of the private and public sectors complement each other since public sector intervention is necessary when the private sector is not yet adequately represented or has only a limited intervention capacity (supplies to marginal areas or vulnerable sectors of the population, strategic stocks) or in order to absorb excessively sharp price fluctuations;
- as regards support for storage, encouragement should be given to the development of decentralized storage capacities at producer or trader level;
- since the agro-food economies of the developing countries are fragile and unfamiliar, efforts should be made to improve both information structures, especially as regards production levels, internal trade patterns and stocks, and the permanent monitoring of markets;
- the competitiveness of export crops is, in many cases, an essential feature of the economy; it is accordingly necessary to ensure a judicious division of labour between food crops and export crops, in the light of the local situation.



**B) Measures relating to consumption**

The Council considers that measures should be taken in the sphere of consumption to supplement those connected with production and marketing, in particular to avoid changes in the dietary habits of the people as a result of imported goods:

- specifically, the consumption of local products should be encouraged, particularly by promotion campaigns and by improving processing through the development of appropriate technology;
- specific measures to combat malnutrition in vulnerable groups must be continued; in that context, dietary education should also be improved in order to enable the poorest consumers to make full use of the resources available;
- more attention should be paid to food problems in the framework of general economic policy, and in sectoral and structural adjustment programmes; it is particularly necessary to take the effects of such programmes on the dietary situation of vulnerable sections of the population into account when they are being drawn up.

**C) Use of aid instruments**

The Council invites the Commission, bearing in mind past experience, to use all the instruments available to it in the most consistent and effective manner possible so as to support the efforts of the

sub-Saharan African countries to achieve food security. It would draw attention to the following aspects:

- it may prove desirable, in agreement with the countries concerned, to make provision in national and regional EDF indicative programmes for the possibility of effectively supporting cereal market stabilization policies;
  - food aid must, as far as possible, back up the action undertaken as part of financial and technical co-operation; here, the setting up of multiannual programmes including the possibility of food-aid replacement measures would encourage the planning and subsequent use of counterpart funds to promote local production and support the stabilization of cereal markets;
  - food aid must be consistent with the objectives of food security policy. In order to avoid the deterrent effects which sometimes result from food aid, the Community should take an active part in drawing up a code of conduct for donors and recipients of food-aid;
  - regional co-operation should be encouraged in the sphere of food security. Greater use should be made of three-way operations as instruments of such co-operation.
10. The Council would stress the importance here of co-ordination, particularly at national and regional level in the sub-Saharan African countries, between the Community, its Member States and other donor countries and bodies.

It is particularly necessary to ensure consistency between actions undertaken to achieve food security and measures taken as part of macroeconomic structural adjustment programmes. The Council welcomes the growing consistency of approach shown by donors in this respect.

11. The Council would request the Commission and the Member States to continue vigorously with their action of providing support for food security policies in the sub-Saharan African countries, while taking account of the above comments."

FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Council held a policy discussion on financial and technical assistance to Asian and Latin American developing countries.

It instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue examining the Commission proposal concerning guidelines for 1989 once the European Parliament's Opinion was available and in the light of that day's discussions so that the Council could take a final decision as soon as possible.

NEGOTIATION OF THE FUTURE ACP-EEC CONVENTION

The Council took note of a detailed oral report by Vice-President NATALI on the progress of the negotiations for the future ACP-EEC Convention which opened in Luxembourg on 12 and 13 October 1988. The Council noted that the negotiations had got off to a good start.

COMBATING AIDS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Commission reported to the Council on the implementation of the programme to support the fight against AIDS in developing countries. The Council expressed its appreciation for the Commission's activities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME TO HELP CERTAIN COUNTRIES IN  
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

On the basis of an introductory statement by Vice-President NATALI, the Council held an exchange of views and information on the implementation by the Community and its Member States of the special programme to help certain poor and heavily indebted countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The exchange of views also covered the wider programme undertaken and co-ordinated by the World Bank.

At the close of the discussion the President noted that the Council attached great importance to the special programme. He noted that the programme was being implemented in a satisfactory manner and expressed his thanks to the Commission.

He also noted the importance of co-ordinating the various activities given that the Community contribution formed part of the wider action co-ordinated by the World Bank. In this connection emphasis was put in particular on the need for effective co-ordination on an operational level between the Community and the other international institutions which played a leading role in the dialogue on structural adjustment.

The President also referred to the usefulness of a periodic exchange of information between Member States and the Commission on action and measures taken by each of them to help the countries concerned, and of the strengthening of intra-Community co-ordination before the six-monthly meetings of the World Bank or the ad hoc meetings it organized on individual countries.

Finally, the President stressed that experience gained with the implementation of this programme would be particularly valuable in the discussions concerning support for structural adjustment during the current negotiations for the next ACP-EEC Convention.

AID NOT TIED TO PROJECTS AND OTHER FORMS OF AID

After hearing a statement by the Italian Minister on the relative importance of aid not tied to projects compared with other forms of aid, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its examination of this matter in preparation for discussion by the Council at its next meeting on development.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONCommercial policy - Anti-dumping

The Council adopted the Regulation imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of serial-impact dot-matrix printers originating in Japan (CN code ex 8471 92 90).

The rate of duty is 47% of the net, free-at-Community-frontier price, before duty, with the exception of products exported to the Community by the following companies, the rate of duty applicable to which is set out below:

Alps Electrical Co. Ltd	6,1%
Brother Industries Ltd	35,1%
Citizen Watch Co. Ltd	37,4%
Copal Co. Ltd	18,6%
Japan Business Computer Co. Ltd	6,4%
Juki Corporation	27,9%
Nakajima All Precision Co. Ltd	12,0%
Nec Corporation	32,9%
Oki Electric Industry Co. Ltd	8,1%
Seiko Epson Corporation	25,7%
Seikosha Co. Ltd	36,9%
Shinwa Digital Industry Co. Ltd	9,5%
Star Micronics Co. Ltd	13,6%
Tokyo Electric Co. Ltd	4,8%

The duty does not apply to certain products which meet particular specifications indicated in the Regulation itself.

Transport

The Council adopted the Directive on standard checking procedures for the implementation of Regulation (EEC) No 3820/85 on the harmonization of certain social legislation relating to road transport and Regulation (EEC) No 3821/85 on recording equipment in road transport.

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Bruxelles, le 23 novembre 1988

NOTE BIO(88) 371 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

433

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PREPARATION DU CONSEIL DEVELOPPEMENT DU 23 NOVEMBRE 1988  
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Un rapport de la Commission sur la politique de sécurité alimentaire en Afrique au Sud du Sahara sera le principal point de l'ordre du jour du Conseil de Coopération au Développement qui se réunira le 23 novembre 1988 (à partir de 10h00).

Le Vice-Président L. NATALI fera un bilan des politiques céréalières, pratiquées en Afrique et tirera des conclusions au sujet des recommandations qui pourraient être formulées pour des futures actions dans ce domaine.

De l'avis de la Commission, l'objectif de sécurité alimentaire est d'assurer une alimentation suffisante, pour tous à tout moment, en maximisant à cette fin la mobilisation des ressources locales. Ceci ne signifie pas forcément l'autosuffisance alimentaire dont le niveau souhaitable dépend d'un ensemble de facteurs financiers mais aussi économiques et socio-politiques. Mais il faut que pour l'essentiel l'Afrique puisse se nourrir elle-même.

Pour aider ses partenaires à atteindre cet objectif, la Commission s'est orientée progressivement vers des approches de type sectoriel combinant d'une part des actions d'investissement dans la production et d'autre part des réformes de politique économique en matière de prix, d'importation, de commercialisation, de stockage, etc.

Les orientations générales qu'il faudrait suivre sont les suivantes :

- garantir aux producteurs un environnement économique stable et remunérateur. (Il s'agit là de politiques de stabilisation des prix des céréales assurant aux producteurs un niveau de rémunération attractif; il s'agit aussi d'une protection par rapport aux importations afin de donner aux productions locales le temps de devenir compétitives);

- compléter ces actions de production et de politiques économiques par des politiques de consommation (promotion de vivres locaux, inclure dans les politiques d'ajustement une dimension sociale, etc.).

Le Conseil examinera également les orientations générales pour 1989 en matière d'aide financière et technique en faveur des PVD d'Amérique latine et d'Asie, il aura un échange de vues sur la mise en oeuvre du programme spécial en faveur de certains pays pauvres et lourdement endettés d'Afrique au Sud du Sahara et il écoutera un rapport oral de la Commission sur les négociations en vue de la future Convention ACP-CEE. Enfin, à la demande de la délégation française, le Vice-Président L. NATALI donnera des informations sur la mise en oeuvre du programme communautaire de lutte contre le SIDA dans les pays en développement.

Amitiés,

 Stathopoulos

Bruxelles, le 24 novembre 1988

NOTE BIO(88) 371 (suite et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

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CONSEIL DEVELOPPEMENT (C. Stathopoulos)

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Accueil favorable du rapport de la Commission sur la sécurité alimentaire. De l'avis unanime du Conseil, le document sur les expériences récentes à ce sujet en Afrique sub-saharienne présenté par le Vice-Président L. NATALI dégage de manière exemplaire les orientations générales qui devraient guider l'action communautaire à l'avenir afin de renforcer la sécurité alimentaire dans les pays africains.

Dans une résolution adaptée, le Conseil

- rappelle et confirme la priorité qu'il attache à la recherche de la sécurité alimentaire dans les pays au sud du Sahara;
- souligne l'importance d'utiliser tous les instruments d'aide dont dispose la Communauté afin d'appuyer les efforts des pays bénéficiaires à assurer leur sécurité alimentaire;
- attire l'attention sur un certain nombre d'aspects plus spécifiques dans les domaines de l'amélioration de l'environnement économique et de l'augmentation de la production de la consommation et de l'utilisation des instruments d'aide;
- souligne l'importance d'une coordination des efforts en vue d'assurer la sécurité alimentaire entre la Communauté, ses Etats membres, et les pays et organismes donateurs tiers.

Les autres points traités :

Aide financière et technique en faveur des PVDALA

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Les ministres ont procédé à un large échange de vues sur les orientations générales pour 1989 de l'aide communautaire vers les PVDALA. Le PE devra s'exprimer en décembre prochain sur la répartition des crédits entre les pays d'Asie et ceux de l'Amérique Latine. Ainsi le Conseil ne pouvait pas statuer aujourd'hui.

La discussion qui a eu lieu a permis néanmoins de dégager deux approches différentes. La délégation britannique souhaite maintenir la clé de répartition pratiquée dans le passé (75 % Asie, 25 % Amérique latine). Elle propose que 75 % de l'aide soit octroyée aux pays dont le PNB per capita est inférieur ou équivalent à 800 US dollars. La délégation espagnole demande qu'à côté du critère économique soit reconnu aussi un critère politique, à savoir l'opportunité d'une présence politique accrue de la Communauté en Amérique latine. L'augmentation des crédits pour l'Amérique latine en découlerait.

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Intervenant au débat le Commissaire CHEYSSON a souligné la nécessité de sauvegarder la capacité de gestion de la Commission en fixant les orientations générales de l'action communautaire sur une base pluriannuelle. Pour la période 1976-1987, 82 % des crédits utilisés ont été octroyés aux pays les plus pauvres (PNB moins de 800 dollars). Cette priorité, a-t-il ajouté, devrait être maintenue, ainsi que l'autre qui prévoit la concentration de l'aide aux actions de développement rural. M. CHEYSSON a également attiré l'attention des Ministres sur le fait que les crédits inscrits au budget au titre de la coopération financière et technique des PVDALA ne sont qu'une partie seulement de l'aide communautaire vers ces pays.

#### Mise en oeuvre du programme SIDA

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Le Vice-Président NATALI a tracé un premier bilan du programme communautaire de lutte contre le SIDA :

- S'agissant des pays ACP pour lesquels 35 MECU ont été mobilisés, l'action communautaire consiste essentiellement dans le financement de composantes des plans élaborés sous l'égide de l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé. 50 % de ces 35 MECU ont déjà été engagés ;

- Le budget prévoit pour 1988 5 MECU pour des actions dans des pays non-ACP. Pour la fin novembre, 100 % de ces ressources seront engagées principalement au Mexique, Honduras, Haïti, Brésil et Thaïlande.

En ce qui concerne l'efficacité réelle de ces actions, M. NATALI a remarqué qu'il en est trop tôt pour en juger, mais on perçoit déjà que le défi est redoutable. L'épidémie, surtout en Afrique Centrale et de l'Est, régions très démunies financièrement y est plus virulente qu'ailleurs. A titre d'exemple à Kigali, environ 1/3 de la population sexuellement active est séropositive; le SIDA y représente déjà dans les hôpitaux la première cause de morbidité et de mortalité.

#### Programme spécial en faveur de certains pays pauvres et lourdement endettés d'Afrique Sud-Saharienne

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Il s'agit d'un programme d'environ 500 MECU proposé par la Commission en fin 1987, dont 300 MECU de ressources additionnelles pour les pays concernés. M. NATALI a insisté dans son intervention sur la nécessité d'une coordination très étroite avec le FMI et la Banque Mondiale dans des cas d'appui de programmes d'ajustement structurel. Il est nécessaire pourtant que la Communauté veille aussi à préserver son autonomie de jugement. Par ailleurs, le programme, a-t-il ajouté, offre une occasion idéale de renforcer la coordination intra-communautaire.

Enfin, le Vice-Président NATALI a informé les ministres du déroulement des négociations en vue de la future Convention CEE-ACP.

Amitiés,

  
C.D. EHLERMANN