

SPEECH BY PRESIDENT ORTOLI

ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE LOMÉ CONVENTION

(Lomé, 28 February 1975)

Mr President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The moment has come for us to sign, and thereby seal, the Lomé Convention, the culmination of more than 20 months of long and difficult negotiations between the Governments of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries on one side and the European Community on the other.

First of all, as is, I think, only right and proper, I should like to acclaim the work and talent of the negotiators from our various countries. The tribute the Commission pays them is of the same order as the exceptional results which have been obtained.

Over and above the optimism and congratulations that are usual in such circumstances, all of us, I believe, feel that the event we are participating in today is a major turning-point in the history of international economic relations in the second half of the twentieth century, indeed in history as a whole.

.../...

1. The very fact that it has been possible to conclude an international agreement between nearly 50 developing countries and the nine European countries making up the Community is a unique phenomenon.

It is all the more remarkable in that the new Convention has not been negotiated between countries in isolation but between organized groups of States.

Developing countries from a whole region - several regions in fact - acting together, and with a single spokesman, were able to bring long and difficult bargaining to a successful conclusion. In spite of the diversity of situations in the various States you were perfectly united to the end. This present day reality which will continue in the future must be welcomed as a factor of major importance.

Thus, we have proof - and this is one of the most important lessons to be learned from the Lomé Convention - that regional groups of countries make for more effective, better balanced and fairer international collaboration than any which could be established by States acting singly, whose right to equality is often difficult to translate into fact.

What is more and this should be emphasized too, the progress made under these conditions has not led to the formation of inward-looking blocs, for the negotiations which we are concluding today have in no way caused the ACP countries to cut themselves off from other developing countries. (

These negotiations have also made it possible to win acceptance, in a particularly effective manner, for fresh ideas whose beneficial effect will, we hope, gradually permeate all relations between industrialized and developing countries.

For Europe too the negotiations were marked by cohesion and unity. By forging links of partnership with the peoples of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, the Community as a whole has proved itself able to undertake an overall policy which should make an effective

contribution to the development of non-industrialized countries.

For it is clear that the European Community does not regard the Lomé Convention simply as an instrument of development for the ACP States alone; it is also a fundamental component of comprehensive cooperation with all developing countries.

At the very moment when Europe is being cruelly hit by the world crisis and the bases for its economic expansion and prosperity are being called into question, such an attitude - and in particular the financial effort which it requires - shows convincingly how far the Lomé Convention is based on an act of deliberate political will and a profound and lasting commitment by the Community.

2. Quite apart from the special circumstances in which the Lomé Convention was negotiated, its originality and its importance lie also, and perhaps above all, in its content.

Never - and I am not exaggerating here, but merely describe the facts - have relations between industrialized countries and developing countries been defined by an agreement which is so complete and which aims to provide a comprehensive response to so many problems of such complexity. Witness the provisions on financial aid, on access to markets or on the stabilization of export earnings. Witness, with regard to sugar, the reciprocal undertakings on such matters as delivery guarantees and minimum price guarantees linked to the prices offered to Community producers. Witness also the organization of systematic cooperation for the industrialization of the developing countries. Witness lastly the establishment of an institutional framework to provide a vehicle for regular meetings and contacts - not only at the level of governments and the representatives of the people, but also between trade unions and industrialists. The Lomé Convention, which brings together this whole arsenal of resources and provisions, represents in the field of international cooperation the most comprehensive and thoroughgoing attack yet made on poverty and underdevelopment.

Of course any ambition to conclude the great debate on relations between developed and developing countries as of today is not possible, but we can pride ourselves on having managed to set up a very wide range of instruments of cooperation. Some have already proved their worth, for the Convention we are about to sign will be based partly on the experience of previous agreements concluded between the Community and a number of African States. But others are entirely new and take into account the needs born of the international economic developments of the past few years and the choices clearly expressed by the developing countries.

Though financial aid is still necessary - even fundamental for a number of particularly needy countries - it cannot remain the only method of development cooperation.

This is why we wished to open the European market to products from the ACP States and give them access to our technology and knowhow as part of intensive industrial cooperation.

This is also why we have established a mechanism for stabilizing export earnings which involves the principle of compensating States that are victims of the hazards and confusion reigning on the raw materials markets.

This is an immensely important innovation because it ~~demonstrates~~ demonstrates a concern to provide an immediate practical response to a real and important problem.

Such innovations at any rate highlight, in deeds as well as in words, Europe's sincere desire to contribute towards establishing a new type of relations on a basis of equality and having regard for the independence and individual identities of the partners. In so doing these innovations undeniably demonstrate - and this perhaps is the most important thing - Europe's wish to establish with the developing countries long-term links of economic interdependence which would be a better guarantee of progress and complementary action than any treaty.

This choice, this basic, deliberate, conscious opting for solidarity will, I am sure, have a considerable impact on the world. The redefining of relations between rich and poor countries, between producers and consumers of raw materials, between industrialized economies and primary producer economies, is the vital issue of our time. The conclusion of the Lomé Convention proves that it is possible - because we have had, on both sides, the will, the imagination, and I would say the courage to make it possible - to bring about the difficult birth of a new world order through cooperation, not confrontation. From this point of view,

today's agreement serves as an example; at a time when in many international forums the strategy of confrontation seems to be prevailing too often, the Lomé Convention combines the long-term preoccupations and objectives common to all the peoples of our planet into a single vision of their future: that of a community of civilization as much as of interests.

But the Lomé Convention countries have not only opted for a strategy based on cooperation and refusing confrontation; they have settled another fundamental question concerning the future of relations between the developing and the industrialized countries, a problem which sets the theorists and dogmatists against those who believe in real progress demonstrated by facts. And I think they have settled this great question very sensibly by choosing the path of practical, tangible achievements; ^{within an overall approach:} financial aid which some may still find too limited but which is in fact very important; and machinery for stabilizing the export earnings, which though probably not perfect is certainly an appreciable step forward.

Mr President, may the spirit of friendship and the ideal of justice which have brought us together here in Lomé today inspire relations between industrialized and developing countries more and more profoundly and thus make the new Convention a decisive landmark in the history of the community of mankind.

TALSMANDENS GRUPPE
SPRECHERGRUPPE
SPOKESMAN'S GROUP
GROUPE DU PORTE-PAROLE
GRUPPO DEL PORTAVOCÈ
BUREAU VAN DE WOORDVOERDER

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**INFORMATION A LA PRESSE
INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA
MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

Brussels, 28 February 1975

EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH BY PRESIDENT ORTOLI ON THE OCCASION
OF THE SIGNING OF THE LOMÉ CONVENTION
(Lomé, 28 February 1975)

"The event we are participating in today is a major turning-point in the history of international economic relations in the second half of the twentieth century; indeed in history as a whole..."

1. "...The new Convention has not been negotiated between countries in isolation but between organized groups of States. Developing countries from a whole region - several regions in fact - acting together, and with a single spokesman, were able to bring long and difficult bargaining to a successful conclusion. Thus, we have proof that regional groups of countries make for more effective, better balanced and fairer international collaboration than any which could be established by States acting singly, whose right to equality is often difficult to translate into fact. This present day reality which will continue in the future must be welcomed as a factor of major importance. What is more, the negotiations which we are concluding today have in no way caused the ACP countries to cut themselves off from other developing countries..."

"...It is clear that the European Community does not regard the Lomé Convention simply as an instrument of development for the ACP States alone; it is also a fundamental component of comprehensive cooperation with all developing countries.

At the very moment when Europe is being cruelly hit by the world crisis and the bases for its economic expansion and prosperity are being called into question, such an attitude - and in particular the financial effort which it requires - shows convincingly how far the Lomé Convention is based on an act of deliberate political will and a profound and lasting commitment by the Community."

2. "Quite apart from the special circumstances in which the Lomé Convention was negotiated, its originality and its importance lie also, and perhaps above all, in its content.

The Lomé Convention, which brings together this whole arsenal of resources and provisions, represents in the field of international cooperation the most comprehensive and thoroughgoing attack yet made on poverty and underdevelopment. Witness the provisions on financial aid, on access to markets or on the stabilization of export earnings. Witness, with regard to sugar, the reciprocal undertakings on such matters as delivery guarantees and minimum price guarantees linked to the prices offered to Community producers. Witness also the organization of systematic cooperation for the industrialization of the developing countries. Witness lastly the establishment of an institutional framework to provide a vehicle for regular meetings and contacts - not only at the level of governments and the representatives of the people, but also between trade unions and industrialists..."

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This is also why we have established a mechanism for stabilizing export earnings which involves the principle of compensating States that are victims of the hazards and confusion reigning on the raw materials markets: this is an immensely important innovation because it demonstrates a concern to provide an immediate practical response to a real and important problem..."

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DISCOURS DE MONSIEUR LE PRESIDENT ORTOLI

A L'OCCASION DE LA SIGNATURE DE LA CONVENTION DE LOME

(LOME, LE 28 FEVRIER 1975)

MONSIEUR LE PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE,
MESSIEURS LES PRESIDENTS,
MESSIEURS LES MINISTRES,
EXCELLENCES,
MESDAMES, MESSIEURS,

VOICI DONC VENU LE MOMENT DE CONSACRER, PAR LA SIGNATURE DE LA
CONVENTION DE LOME, L'ABOUTISSEMENT DE NEGOCIATIONS LONGUES ET DIFFI-
CILES, ENTAMEES IL Y A PLUS DE 20 MOIS ENTRE LES GOUVERNEMENTS DES
PAYS D'AFRIQUE, DES CARAIBES ET DU PACIFIQUE D'UN COTE ET LA
COMMUNAUTE EUROPEENNE DE L'AUTRE.

JE VOUDRAIS TOUT D'ABORD, CAR CELA EST, JE CROIS, JUSTE ET LEGITIME,
SALUER LES EFFORTS ET LE TALENT DES NEGOCIATEURS DE NOS DIFFERENTS
PAYS. L'HOMMAGE QUE LA COMMISSION ENTEND LEUR RENDRE EST A LA
MESURE DES RESULTATS EXCEPTIONNELS QUI ONT ETE OBTENUS.

AU-DELA DE L'OPTIMISME DE RIGUEUR ET DES SATISFECIT D'USAGE EN DE
SEMBLABLES CIRCONSTANCES, NOUS AVONS, EN EFFET, TOUS CONSCIENCE QUE
L'EVENEMENT AUQUEL NOUS PARTICIPONS AUJOURD'HUI CONSTITUE UN TOURNANT
IMPORTANT DANS L'HISTOIRE DES RELATIONS ECONOMIQUES INTERNATIONALES
DE LA SECONDE MOITIE DU XXEME SIECLE, C'EST-A-DIRE DANS L'HISTOIRE
TOUT COURT.

1. LE FAIT MEME QU'UN ACCORD INTERNATIONAL AIT PU ETRE CONCLU ENTRE
PRES DE 50 PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT ET LES NEUFS PAYS EUROPEENS
RASSEMBLES DANS LA COMMUNAUTE REPRESENTE EN EFFET UN PHENOMENE TOUT
A FAIT UNIQUE.

2.

CE PHENOMENE APPARAIT D'AUTANT PLUS REMARQUABLE QUE LA NOUVELLE CONVENTION N' PAS ETE NEGOCIEE PAR DES PAYS ISOLES MAIS PAR DES GROUPES ORGANISES D'ETATS.

S'AGISSANT DES PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT, UNE REGION ENTIERE - PLUSIEURS REGIONS MEME - ONT SU MENER A BIEN, COLLECTIVEMENT, DE LONGUES ET DIFFICILES TRACTATIONS PAR L'INTERMEDIAIRE D'UN SEUL PORTE-PAROL

. MALGRE XKLA DIVERSFVTE DES SITUATIONS DES DIFFERENTS ETATS, CETTE UNITE S'EST MAINTENUE SANS FAILLE JUSQU'AU BOUT. NOUS DEVONS SALUER CETTE REALITE D'AUJOURD'HUI ET DE DEMAIN COMME UN FACTEUR D'UNE IMPORTANCE ESSENTIELLE.

AINSI, LA PREUVE -A-T-ELLE ETE DONNEE - ET C'EST LA UNE DES PREMIERES GRANDES LECONS A TIRER DE LA CONVENTION DE LOME - QUE LES REGROUPEMENTS REGIONAUX PERMETTENT DE PARVENIR A UNE COLLABORATION INTERNATIONALE PLUS EFFICACE, PLUS EQUILIBREE ET PLUS EQUITABLE QUE CELLE POUVANT ETRE BATIE PAR LES ETATS AGISSANT SEULS ET DONT L'EGALITE EN DROIT EST SOUVENT DIFFICILE A CONCRETISER DANS LES FAITS.

DE SURCROIT, LES PROGRES ACCOMPLIS DANS CES CONDITIONS L'ON ETE - CELA MERITE AUSSI D'ETRE SOULIGNE - SANS ABOUTIR POUR AUTANT A L'APPARITION DE BLOCS "FERMES". EN EFFET, LES NEGOCIATION QUE NOUS CONCLUONS AUJOURD'HUI N'ONT NULLEMENT CONDUIT LES PAYS ACP A 'S'ISOLER DES AUTRES PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT. EN OUTRE, ELLES ONT PERMIS DE FAIRE PREVALOIR, DE MANIERE PARTICULIEREMENT EFFICACE, DE NOUVELLES IDEES DONT LE BENEFICE EST APPELE, NOUS POUVONS L'ESPERER, A S'ETENDRE PROGRESSIVEMENT A L'ENSEMBLE DES RELATIONS ENTRE PAYS INDUSTRIELS ET PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT.

S'AGISSANT DE L'EUROPE, CETTE NEGOCIATION SE TROUVE PLACEE AUSSI SOUS LE SIGNE DE LA CHESION ET DE L'UNITE: EN NOUANT DES LIENS D'ASSOCIATION AVEC LES PEUPLES D'AFRIQUE, DES CARAIBES ET DU PACIFIQUE, LA COMMUNAUTE DANS SON ENSEMBLE PROUVE QU'ELLE EST CAPABLE D'ENTREPRENDRE UNE POLITIQUE GLOBALE DESTINEE A CONTRIBUER EFFICACEMENT AU DEVELOPPEMENT DES PAYS NON INDUSTRIALISES, CAR IL VA SANS DIRE QUE LA COMMUNAUTE EUROPEENNE NE CONCOIT PAS SEULEMENT LA CONVENTION DE LOME COMME UN INSTRUMENT DE DEVELOPPEMENT PROPRE AUX ETATS ACP, MAIS AUSSI COMME UN ELEMENT FONDAMENTAL D'UNE COOPERATION GLOBALE AVEC TOUS LES PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT.

ALORS MEME QUE L'EUROPE SE TROUVE CRUELLEMENT FRAPPEE PAR LA CRISE MONDIALE ET QUE LES BASES DE SON EXPANSION ECONOMIQUE ET DE SA PROSPERITE SE TROUVENT REMISES EN CAUSE, UNE TELLE ATTITUDE - ET EN PARTICULIER L'EFFORT FINANCIER QU'ELLE SUPPOSE - DEMONTRE, DE MANIERE CONVAINCANTE, A QUEL POINT LA CONVENTION DE LOME REPOSE SUR UNE VOLONTE POLITIQUE DELIBEREE ET SUR UN ENGAGEMENT PROFOND ET DURABLE DE LA COMMUNAUTE.

2. INDEPENDAMMENT MEME DES CONDITIONS PARTICULIERES DANS ESQUELLES LA CONVENTION DE LOME A ETE NEGOCIEE, SON ORIGINALITE ET SON IMPORTANCE TIENNENT AUSSI, ET PEUT-ETRE SURTOUT, A SON CONTENU.

JAMAIS EN EFFET, ET JE DIS CELA SANS EMPHASE EN ME CONTENTANT DE DECRIRE LA REALITE, JAMAIS DONC, LES RELATIONS ENTRE PAYS INDUSTRIALISES ET PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT N'ONT ETE DEFINIES PAR UN ACCORD AUSSI COMPLET, VISANT A APPORTER UNE REponse D'ENSEMBLE A DES PROBLEMES AUSSI NOMBREUX, AUSSI COMPLEXES. QU'IL S'AGISSE DES DISPOSITIONS RELATIVES A L'AIDE FINANCIERE, A L'ACCES AUX MARCHES OU A LA STABILISATION DES RECETTES D'EXPORTATION. QU'IL S'AGISSE, POUR LE SUCRE, DES ENGAGEMENTS MUTUELS CONCERNANT NOTAMMENT DES GARANTIES DE LIVRAISON ET DES GARANTIES DE PRIX MINIMUM LIEES AUX PRIX OFFERTS AUX PRODUCTEURS COMMUNAUTAIRES. QU'IL S'AGISSE DE MEME DE L'ORGANISATION D'UNE COOPERATION SYSTEMATIQUE VISANT A L'INDUSTRIALISATION DES PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT. QU'IL S'AGISSE ENFIN DE LA MISE EN PLACE D'UN CADRE INSTITUTIONNEL DESTINE A ASSURER DES RENCONTRES ET DES CONTACTS REGULIERS AU NIVEAU DES GOUVERNEMENTS ET DES REPRESENTANTS DES PEUPLES SANS DOUTE, MAIS AUSSI ENTRE SYNDICATS ET INDUSTRIELS. LA CONVENTION DE LOME, QUI REGROUPE TOUT CET ARSENAL DE MOYENS ET DE DISPOSITIONS, REPRESENTE A CE JOUR DANS LE DOMAINE DE LA COOPERATION INTERNATIONALE " L'ATTAQUE " LA PLUS COMPLETE, LA PLUS ACCOMPLIE FACE AU DRAME DE LA PAUVRETE ET DU SOUS-DEVELOPPEMENT.

SANS DOUTE NE PEUT-ELLE AVOIR L'AMBITION DE METTRE AUJOURD'HUI UN POINT FINAL AU GRAND DEBAT SUR LES RELATIONS ENTRE PAYS DEVELOPPES ET PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT. MAIS NOUS POUVONS CEPENDANT NOUS FELICITER D'AVOIR SU METTRE EN PLACE UNE GAMME TRES LARGE D'INSTRUMENTS DE COOPERATION.

CERTAINS SONT DEJA EPROUVES : LA CONVENTION QUE NOUS ALLONS SIGNER 'F' S'INSPIRE EN EFFET, POUR UNE PART DE L'EXPERIENCE DES ACCORDS PRECEDENTS PASSES ENTRE LA COMMUNAUTE ET UN CERTAIN NOMBRE D'ETATS AFRICAINS. MAIS D'AUTRES SONT ENTIEREMENT NOUVEAUX ET TIENNENT COMPTE DES BESOINS NES DE L'EVOLUTION ECONOMIQUE INTERNATIONALE DES DERNIERES ANNEES AINSI QUE DES CHOIX CLAIREMENT AFFIRMES PAR LES PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT.

SI L'AIDE FINANCIERE RESTE NECESSAIRE, FONDAMENTALE MEME POUR UN CERTAIN NOMBRE DE PAYS PARTICULIEREMENT DEMUNIS, ELLE NE SAURAIT CEPENDANT DEMEURER LE SEUL MODE DE COOPERATION AU DEVELOPPEMENT,

C'EST POURQUOI NOUS AVONS VOULU OUVRIR LE MARCHÉ EUROPEEN AUX PRODUITS DES ETATS ACP ET LEUR PERMETTRE D'ACCEDER A NOTRE TECHNOLOGIE ET A NOTRE SAVOIR-FAIRE DANS LE CADRE D'UNE COOPERATION INDUSTRIELLE INTENSIVE.

C'EST POURQUOI, DE MEME, NOUS AVONS DEFINIS UN MECANISME DE STABILISATION DES RECETTES D'EXPORTATION, QUI ETABLIT LE PRINCIPE D'UNE COMPENSATION EN FAVEUR DES ETATS VICTIMES DES ALEAS ET DES DESORDRES CARACTERISANT LES MARCHES DES MATIERES PREMIERS : MECANISME ORIGINAL, MECANISME D'UNE IMMENSE PORTEE, PARCE QU'IL A MARQUE LE SOUCI D'APORTER UNE REponse IMMEDIATE ET CONCRETE A UN GRAND ET VRAI PROBLEME.

DE TELLES INNOVATIONS SOULIGNENT EN TOUT CAS, DANS LES FAITS ET NON SEULEMENT EN PAROLES, LA VOLONTE SINCERE DE L'EUROPE DE CONTRIBUER A INSTAURER UN NOUVEAU TYPE DE RELATIONS SUR UNE BASE EGALITAIRE ET DANS LE RESPECT DE L'INDEPENDANCE ET DE LA SPECIFICITE DES PARTENAIRES. CE FAISANT, ELLES DEMONTRENT SANS CONTESTATION POSSIBLE - ET C'EST LA SANS DOUTE LE PLUS IMPORTANT - LE SOUCI DE L'EUROPE D'ETABLIR AVEC LES PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT DES LIENS D'INTERDEPENDANCE ECONOMIQUE A LONG TERME CAPABLES D'ASSURER, MIEUX QUE TOUT TRAITE, LE PROGRES ET LA COMPLEMENTARITE.

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CE CHOIX, CETTE OPTION FONDAMENTALE CONSCIENTE ET DELIBERE EN FAVEUR DE LA SOLIDARITE AURA, J'EN SUIS CONVAINCU, UN IMPACT CONSIDERABLE DANS LE MONDE. LA REDEFINITION DES RELATIONS ENTRE PAYS RICHES ET PAYS PAUVRES, ENTRE PRODUCTEURS ET CONSOMMATEURS DE MATIERES PREMIERES, ENTRE SOCIETES INDUSTRIALISEES/ ET SOCIETES PRODUCTRICES PRIMAIRES, EST LE PROBLEME ESSENTIEL DE NOTRE EPOQUE. LA CONCLUSION DE LA CONVENTION DE LOME PROUVE QU'IL EST POSSIBLE - ET POSSIBLE PARCE QUE NOUS EN AVONS EU LES UNS ET LES AUTRES LA VOLONTE, L'IMAGINATION, ET J'OSERAI DIRE LE COURAGE - D'ASSURER LA DIFFICILE NAISSANCE D'UN NOUVEL ORDRE MONDIAL, PAR LA VOIE DE LA COOPERATION ET NON PAS DE LA CONFRONTATION. DE CE POINT DE VUE, L'ACCORD D'AUJOURD'HUI REVET UNE VALEUR EXEMPLAIRE, AU MOMENT MEME OU, DANS DE NOMBREUSES ENCEINTES INTERNATIONALES, LA STRATEGIE DE L'AFFRONTLEMENT PARAIT TROP SOUVENT PREVALOIR, LA CONVENTION DE LOME CONJUGUE, AU CONTRAIRE, LES PREOCCUPATIONS ET LES OBJECTIFS A LONG TERME COMMUNS A TOUS LES PEUPLES DE NOTRE PLANETE, DANS LE CADRE D'UNE MEME VISION DE LEUR AVENIR : CELLE D'UNE COMMUNAUTE DE CIVILISATION AUTANT QUE D'INTERETS.

MAIS LES PAYS DE LA CONVENTION DE LOME N'ONT PAS SEULEMENT OPTÉ POUR UNE STRATEGIE FONDEE SUR LA COOPERATION ET RECUSANT L'AFFRONTEMENT, ILS ONT TRANCHE UN AUTRE DEBAT FONDAMENTAL SUR L'AVENIR DES RELATIONS ENTRE PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT ET PAYS INDUSTRIALISES: CELUI QUI OPPOSE LES HOMMES DE THEORIE ET DE DOCTRINE AUX PARTISANS DE PROGRES VERITABLES INSCRITS DANS LES FAITS. ET CETTE AUTRE GRANDE QUESTION, ILS L'ONT, JE CROIS BIEN TRANCHEE EN CHOISSISSANT, INSEREE DANS UNE VISION D'ENSEMBLE, LA VOIE DES REALISATIONS CONCRETES ET TANGIBLES : AINSI UNE AIDE FINANCIERE DONT CERTAINS TROUVERONT SANS DOUTE ENCORE QU'ELLE EST TROP LIMITEE MAIS QUI EST EN FAIT TRES IMPORTANTE, AINSI UN MECANISME DE STABILISATION DES RECETTES D'EXPORTATION, SANS DOUTE IMPARFAIT, MAIS QUI REPRESENTÉ UN PAS EN AVANT APPRECIABLE.

PUISSENT DONC, MONSIEUR LE PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE, L'ESPRIT D'AMITIE ET L'IDEAL DE JUSTICE QUI NOUS ONT REUNIS AUJOURD'HUI A LOME INSPIRER SANS CESSÉ D'AVANTAGE LES RELATIONS ENTRE PAYS INDUSTRIALISES ET PAYS EN VOIE DE DEVELOPPEMENT ET CONFERER AINSI A LA NOUVELLE CONVENTION LA VALEUR D'UNE ETAPE DECISIVE DANS L'HISTOIRE DE LA COMMUNAUTE DES HOMMES.

SPEECH BY PRESIDENT O R T O L I

ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE LOME CONVENTION

(LOME, 28 FEBRUARY 1975)

MR PRESIDENT,
YOUR EXCELLENCIES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

THE MOMENT HAS COME FOR US TO SIGN, AND THEREBY SEAL, THE LOME CONVENTION, THE CULMINATION OF MORE THAN 20 MONTHS OF LONG AND DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC COUNTRIES ON ONE SIDE AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON THE OTHER.

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FIRST OF ALL, AS IS, I THINK, ONLY RIGHT AND PROPER, I SHOULD LIKE TO ACCLAIM THE WORK AND TALENT OF THE NEGOTIATORS FROM OUR VARIOUS COUNTRIES. THE TRIBUTE THE COMMISSION PAYS THEM IS OF THE SAME ORDER AS THE EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS WHICH HAVE BEEN OBTAINED.

OVER AND ABOVE THE OPTIMISM AND CONGRATULATIONS THAT ARE USUAL IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, ALL OF US, I BELIEVE, FEEL THAT THE EVENT WE ARE PARTICIPATING IN TODAY IS A MAJOR TURNING-POINT IN THE HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, INDEED IN HISTORY AS A WHOLE.

1. THE VERY FACT THAT IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO CONCLUDE AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN NEARLY 50 DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THE NINE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES MAKING UP THE COMMUNITY IS A UNIQUE PHENOMENON.

IT IS ALL THE MORE REMARKABLE IN THAT THE NEW CONVENTION HAS NOT BEEN NEGOTIATED BETWEEN COUNTRIES IN ISOLATION BUT BETWEEN ORGANIZED GROUPS OF STATES.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FROM A WHOLE REGION - SEVERAL REGIONS IN FACT - ACTING TOGETHER, AND WITH A SINGLE SPOKESMAN, WERE ABLE TO BRING LONG AND DIFFICULT BARGAINING TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. IN SPIITE OF THE DIVERSITY OF SITUATIONS IN THE VARIOUS STATES YOU WERE PERFECTLY UNITED TO THE END. THIS PRESENT DAY REALITY WHICH WILL CONTINUE IN THE FUTURE MUST BE WELCOMED AS A FACTOR OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE.

THUS, WE HAVE PROOF - AND THIS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE LOME CONVENTION - THAT REGIONAL GROUPS OF COUNTRIES MAKE FOR MORE EFFECTIVE, BETTER BALANCED AND FAIRER INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION THAN ANY WHICH COULD BE ESTABLISHED BY STATES ACTING SINGLY, WHOSE RIGHT TO EQUALITY IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO TRANSLATE INTO FACT.

WHAT IS MORE AND THIS SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED TOO, THE PROGRESS MADE UNDER THESE CONDITIONS HAS NOT LED TO THE FORMATION OF INWARD-LOOKING BLOCS, FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WE ARE CONCLUDING TODAY HAVE IN NO WAY CAUSED THE ACP COUNTRIES TO CUT THEMSELVES OFF FROM OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

THESE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE ALSO MADE IT POSSIBLE TO WIN ACCEPTANCE, IN A PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE MANNER, FOR FRESH IDEAS WHOSE BENEFICIAL EFFECT WILL, WE HOPE, GRADUALLY PERMEATE ALL RELATIONS BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

FOR EUROPE TOO THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE MARKED BY COHESION AND UNITY. BY FORGING LINKS OF PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND THE PACIFIC, THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE HAS PROVED ITSELF ABLE TO UNDERTAKE AN OVERALL POLICY WHICH SHOULD MAKE AN EFFECTIVE

CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES.

FOR IT IS CLEAR THAT THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DOES NOT REGARD THE LOME CONVENTION SIMPLY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ACP STATES ALONE, IT IS ALSO A FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT OF COMPREHENSIVE COOPERATION WITH ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

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6. AT THE VERY MOMENT WHEN EUROPE IS BEING CRUELLY HIT BY THE WORLD CRISIS AND THE BASES FOR ITS ECONOMIC EXPANSION AND PROSPERITY ARE BEING CALLED INTO QUESTION, SUCH AN ATTITUDE - AND IN PARTICULAR THE FINANCIAL EFFORT WHICH IT REQUIRES - SHOWS CONVINCINGLY HOW FAR THE LOME CONVENTION IS BASED ON AN ACT OF DELIBERATE POLITICAL WILL AND A PROFOUND AND LASTING COMMITMENT BY THE COMMUNITY.

2. QUITE APART FROM THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE LOME CONVENTION WAS NEGOTIATED, ITS ORIGINALITY AND ITS IMPORTANCE LIE ALSO, AND PERHAPS ABOVE ALL, IN ITS CONTENT.

NEVER - AND I AM NOT EXAGGERATING HERE, BUT MERELY DESCRIBE THE FACTS - HAVE RELATIONS BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BEEN DEFINED BY AN AGREEMENT WHICH IS SO COMPLETE AND WHICH AIMS TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO SO MANY PROBLEMS OF SUCH COMPLEXITY. WITNESS THE PROVISIONS ON FINANCIAL AID, ON ACCESS TO MARKETS OR ON THE STABILIZATION OF EXPORT EARNINGS. WITNESS, WITH REGARD TO SUGAR, THE RECIPROCAL UNDERTAKINGS ON SUCH MATTERS AS DELIVERY GUARANTEES AND MINIMUM PRICE GUARANTEES LINKED TO THE PRICES OFFERED TO COMMUNITY PRODUCERS. WITNESS ALSO THE ORGANIZATION OF SYSTEMATIC COOPERATION FOR THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. WITNESS LASTLY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK TO PROVIDE A VEHICLE FOR REGULAR MEETINGS AND CONTACTS - NOT ONLY AT THE LEVEL OF THE GOVERNMENTS AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE, BUT ALSO BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND INDUSTRIALISTS. THE LOME CONVENTION, WHICH BRINGS TOGETHER THIS WHOLE ARSENAL OF RESOURCES AND PROVISIONS, REPRESENTS IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND THOROUGHGOING ATTACK YET MADE ON POVERTY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT.

OF COURSE ANY AMBITION TO CONCLUDE THE GREAT DEBATE ON RELATIONS BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS OF TODAY IS NOT POSSIBLE, BUT WE CAN PRIDE OURSELVES ON HAVING MANAGED TO SET UP A VERY WIDE RANGE OF INSTRUMENTS OF COOPERATION. SOME HAVE ALREADY PROVED THEIR WORTH, FOR THE CONVENTION WE ARE ABOUT TO SIGN WILL BE BASED PARTLY ON THE EXPERIENCE OF PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND A NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES. BUT OTHERS ARE ENTIRELY NEW AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS BORN OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PAST FEW YEARS AND THE CHOICES CLEARLY EXPRESSED BY THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

THOUGH FINANCIAL AID IS STILL NECESSARY EVENT FUNDAMENTAL FOR A NUMBER OF PARTICULARLY NEEDY COUNTRIES - IT CANNOT REMAIN THE ONLY METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION.

THIS IS WHY WE WISHED TO OPEN THE EUROPEAN MARKET TO PRODUCTS FROM THE ACP STATES AND GIVE THEM ACCESS TO OUR TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWHOW AS PART OF INTENSIVE INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION.

THIS ALSO WHY WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A MECHANISM FOR STABILIZING EXPORT EARNINGS WHICH INVOLVES THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPENSATING STATES THAT ARE VICTIMS OF THE HAZARDS AND CONFUSION REIGNING ON THE RAW MATERIALS MARKETS.

THIS IS AN IMMENSELY IMPORTANT INNOVATION BECAUSE IT DEMONSTRATES A CONCERN TO PROVIDE AN IMMEDIATE PRACTICAL RESPONSE TO A REAL AND IMPORTANT PROBLEM.

7.

SUCH INNOVATIONS AT ANY RATE HIGHLIGHT, IN DEEDS AS WELL AS IN WORDS, EUROPE'S SINCERE DESIRE TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A NEW TYPE OF RELATIONS ON A BASIS OF EQUALITY AND HAVING REGARD FOR THE INDEPENDENCE AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITIES OF THE PARTNERS. IN SO DOING THESE INNOVATIONS UNDENIABLY DEMONSTRATE - AND THIS PERHAPS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING - EUROPE'S WISH TO ESTABLISH WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LONG-TERM LINKS OF ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE WHICH WOULD BE A BETTER GUARANTEE OF PROGRESS AND COMPLEMENTARY ACTION THAN ANY TREATY.

THIS CHOICE, THIS BASIC, DELIBERATE, CONSCIOUS OPTING FOR SOLIDARITY WILL, I AM SURE, HAVE A CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON THE WORLD. THE REDEFINING OF RELATIONS BETWEEN RICH AND POOR COUNTRIES, BETWEEN PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS OF RAW MATERIALS, BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZED ECONOMIES AND PRIMARY PRODUCER ECONOMIES, IS THE VITAL ISSUE OF OUR TIME. THE CONCLUSION OF THE LOME CONVENTION PROVES THAT IT IS POSSIBLE - BECAUSE WE HAVE HAD, ON BOTH SIDES, THE WILL, THE IMAGINATION, AND I WOULD SAY THE COURAGE TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE - TO BRING ABOUT THE DIFFICULT BIRTH OF A NEW WORLD ORDER THROUGH COOPERATION, NOT CONFRONTATION. FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW, TODAY'S AGREEMENT SERVES AS AN EXAMPLE, AT A TIME WHEN IN MANY INTERNATIONAL FORUMS THE STRATEGY OF CONFRONTATION SEEMS TO BE PREVAILING TOO OFTEN, THE LOME CONVENTION COMBINES THE LONG-TERM PREOCCUPATIONS AND OBJECTIVES COMMON TO ALL THE PEOPLES OF OUR PLANET INTO A SINGLE VISION OF THEIR FUTURE: THAT OF A COMMUNITY OF CIVILIZATION AS MUCH AS OF INTERESTS.

BUT THE LOME CONVENTION COUNTRIES HAVE NOT ONLY OPTED FOR A STRATEGY BASED ON COOPERATION AND REFUSING CONFRONTATION, THEY HAVE SETTLED ANOTHER FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DEVELOPING AND THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES, A PROBLEM WHICH SETS THE THEORISTS AND DOGMATISTS AGAINST THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN REAL PROGRESS DEMONSTRATED BY FACTS. AND I THINK THEY HAVE SETTLED THIS GREAT QUESTION VERY SENSIBLY BY CHOOSING THE PATH OF PRACTICAL, TANGIBLE ACHIEVEMENTS: WITHIN AN OVERALL APPROACH: FINANCIAL AID WHICH SOME MAY STILL FIND TOO LIMITED BUT WHICH IS IN FACT VERY IMPORTANT, AND MACHINERY FOR STABILIZING THE EXPORT EARNINGS, WHICH THOUGH PROBABLY NOT PERFECT IS CERTAINLY AN APPRECIABLE STEP FORWARD.

MR PRESIDENT, MAY THE SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP AND THE IDEAL OF JUSTICE WHICH HAVE BROUGHT US TOGETHER HERE IN LOME TODAY INSPIRE RELATIONS BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MORE AND MORE PROFOUNDLY AND THUS MAKE THE NEW CONVENTION AS DECISIVE LANDMARK IN THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY OF MANKIND.

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TALSMANDENS GRUPPE
SPRECHERGRUPPE
SPOKESMAN'S GROUP
GROUPE DU PORTE-PAROLE
GRUPPO DEL PORTAVOCE
BUREAU VAN DE WOORDVOERDER

**PRESSE-MEDDELELSE
MITTEILUNG AN DIE PRESSE
PRESS-RELEASE**

**INFORMATION A LA PRESSE
INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA
MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

Bruxelles, le 28 février 1975

EXTRAITS DU DISCOURS DE M. LE PRÉSIDENT ORTOLI A L'OCCASION DE LA
SIGNATURE DE LA CONVENTION DE LOMÉ (Lomé le 28 février 1975)

"L'événement auquel nous participons aujourd'hui constitue un tournant important dans l'histoire des relations économiques internationales de la seconde moitié du XXIème siècle, c'est-à-dire dans l'histoire tout court..."

1. "...La nouvelle Convention n'a pas été négociée par des pays isolés mais par des groupes organisés d'Etats.

S'agissant des pays en voie de développement, une région entière - plusieurs régions même - ont su mener à bien, collectivement, de longues et difficiles tractations par l'intermédiaire d'un seul porte-parole.

Ainsi, la preuve a-t-elle été donnée que les regroupements régionaux permettent de parvenir à une collaboration internationale plus efficace, plus équilibrée et plus équitable que celle pouvant être bâtie par les Etats agissant seuls et dont l'égalité en droit est souvent difficile à concrétiser dans les faits. Nous devons saluer cette réalité d'aujourd'hui et de demain comme un facteur d'une importance essentielle.

De surcroît, les négociations que nous concluons aujourd'hui n'ont nullement conduit les pays ACP à s'isoler des autres pays en voie de développement..."

"...La Communauté Européenne ne conçoit pas seulement la Convention de Lomé comme un instrument de développement propre aux Etats ACP, mais aussi comme un élément fondamental d'une coopération globale avec tous les pays en voie de développement.

Alors même que l'Europe se trouve cruellement frappée par la crise mondiale et que les bases de son expansion économique et de sa prospérité se trouvent remises en cause, une telle attitude - et en particulier l'effort financier qu'elle suppose - démontre, de manière convaincante, à quel point la Convention de Lomé repose sur une volonté politique délibérée et sur un engagement profond et durable de la Communauté."

2. "Indépendamment même des conditions particulières dans lesquelles la Convention de Lomé a été négociée, son originalité et son importance tiennent aussi, et peut-être surtout, à son contenu.

Qu'il s'agisse des dispositions relatives à l'aide financière, à l'accès aux marchés ou à la stabilisation des recettes d'exportation. Qu'il s'agisse, pour le sucre, des engagements mutuels concernant notamment des garanties de livraison et des garanties de prix minimum liées aux prix offerts aux producteurs communautaires. Qu'il s'agisse de même de l'organisation d'une coopération systématique visant à l'industrialisation des pays en voie de développement...."

"...Qu'il s'agisse enfin de la mise en place d'un cadre institutionnel destiné à assurer des rencontres et des contacts réguliers au niveau des gouvernements et des représentants des peuples sans doute, mais aussi entre syndicats et industriels. La Convention de Lomé, qui regroupe tout cet arsenal de moyens et de dispositions, représente à ce jour dans le domaine de la coopération internationale "l'attaque" la plus complète, la plus accomplie face au drame de la pauvreté et du sous-développement...."

"Si l'aide financière reste nécessaire, fondamentale même pour un certain nombre de pays particulièrement démunis, elle ne saurait cependant demeurer le seul mode de coopération au développement. C'est pourquoi nous avons voulu ouvrir le marché européen aux produits des Etats ACP et leur permettre d'accéder à notre technologie et à notre savoir-faire dans le cadre d'une coopération industrielle intensive.

C'est pourquoi, de même, nous avons défini un mécanisme de stabilisation des recettes d'exportation, qui établit le principe d'une compensation en faveur des Etats victimes des aléas et des désordres caractérisant les marchés des matières premières : mécanisme original, mécanisme d'une immense portée, parce qu'il a marqué le souci d'apporter une réponse immédiate et concrète à un grand et vrai problème..."

"De telles innovations traduisent le souci de l'Europe d'établir avec les pays en voie de développement des liens d'interdépendance économique à long terme capables d'assurer, mieux que tout traité, le progrès et la complémentarité..."

"...La redéfinition des relations entre pays riches et pays pauvres, entre producteurs et consommateurs de matières premières, entre sociétés industrialisées et sociétés productrices primaires, est le problème essentiel de notre époque. La conclusion de la Convention de Lomé prouve qu'il est possible - et possible parce que nous en avons eu les uns et les autres la volonté, l'imagination, et j'oserais dire le courage - d'assurer la difficile naissance d'un nouvel ordre mondial, par la voie de la coopération et non pas de la confrontation. De ce point de vue, l'accord d'aujourd'hui revêt une valeur exemplaire; au moment même où, dans de nombreuses enceintes internationales, la stratégie de l'affrontement paraît trop souvent prévaloir, la convention de Lomé conjugue, au contraire, les préoccupations et les objectifs à long terme communs à tous les peuples de notre planète, dans le cadre d'une même vision de leur avenir : celle d'une communauté de civilisation autant que d'intérêts."