

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(77) 368 final

Brussels, 22 July 1977

COMMUNICATION OF THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION - MEDIUM TERM POLICY

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years the presence of the Community in international affairs has become increasingly substantial. The planning and implementation of Community policy has an affect on the world outside, on non-Community countries and on the major international organizations. It is time to take stock of the way in which the Community is represented externally, to see how far the present arrangements correspond to real needs and to plot the way ahead.

Several months ago, and more recently during the discussions on the opening of Commission delegations in the Maghreb countries, the Member States asked the Commission to supply an adequate overall survey of the policy the Commission intends to follow in respect of external delegations. The request coincided with the Commission's own intentions; for more than a year, the Commission has been giving thought to defining a coherent conception of its external representation.

This paper, which embodies the general conclusions of the Commission's reflections, is presented as an interim document which will be followed before the end of the year by a more detailed report.

It describes the present situation, outlines the problems which this description brings out and gives a number of guidelines for the medium-term programme for the opening of new delegations.

2. The present situation

The offices which the Commission has set up over the years in third countries were designed to serve different purposes. They may be divided into the following three categories :

- a) delegations concerned mainly with policy questions and negotiations between the Community and the third countries or international organizations concerned, which includes the work of press and information. Such delegations are capable of covering the whole range of activities of the Community;

They are established in countries whose relations with the Community are of obvious importance such as the United States, Japan and Canada; they may be at the level of a whole continent (South America); they may be established to enable the Commission to play its role in Community participation in the work of international organisations (GATT, the OECD and the U.N.).

b) press and information offices in certain other countries where there exist no delegations of the type described above (Turkey and Greece).

These offices circulate information on relations between the Community and the non-member countries and on Community objectives and activities. They also inform the Commission on opinion on the Community in the country concerned.

c) Delegations in the ACP countries, established to apply the Lome Convention, which have changed greatly since their inception. They were originally offices of consultant engineers from the Member States, without any political responsibility; in 1964 they took on the job of delegated supervision for the EDF, their principal function being to provide financial and technical control of the execution of projects financed by the EDF. With the Lome Convention they changed again, the delegated supervisors becoming Delegates of the Commission as a whole, covering all aspects of cooperation.

It will be seen that the Commission has adopted a pragmatic approach to the most imperative needs in three distinct administrative fields: external relations, press and information, and implementation of cooperation agreements.

Circumstances have led to the creation of a very substantial network, which at present comprises some fifty Delegations with a number of branch offices and other services.

In this paper, the term "external offices" is used to describe posts in all these three categories.

A list of existing external offices setting out staff is attached at Annex I.

Historical circumstances and the different approaches adopted in opening the external offices have led to a certain amount of divergence in the practices followed in each type of office, the methods they use and their administrative structure. These divergences are linked to the type of office involved and the tasks they have to carry out. By examining the problems which have arisen, however, ways of improving the organization and coordination of the work done by the external offices can be discerned.

3. General analysis of the functions of External Representation

The following are to varying degrees according to the circumstances, the tasks performed by the external offices :

- provide advice and logistic support for officials travelling to the host country on Community business
- act as an easily recognisable point of contact in the host country for authorities or individuals who wish to communicate with the Community institutions
- provide information within the host country on Community objectives and activities
- report on developments in the host country, and the attitudes or opinion of that country towards the Community
- assist in the execution of Community policies;
- cooperate with the Missions of Member States on matter for which the Commission is competent or when Community and Member States' responsibilities are closely associated, for example in international negotiations or negotiations with international organizations;
- ensure that missions of Member States on the spot are kept fully informed about the formulation and execution of Community policies, and encourage coordination and cooperation with the Missions of the Nine

- implement on the spot all aspects of comprehensive cooperation agreements,

It goes without saying that these tasks are not necessarily all performed at once by the external offices, but each office carries out one or more of them to differing extents.

4. Extent to which these functions are at present carried out by the Commission's external offices

a) It is clear from the historical development of the external offices that they have been set up to carry out one or more of these tasks, but not necessarily all of them. The existence of an ACP Delegation, for example is essentially due to the necessity of implementing a comprehensive general development cooperation agreement. But once a Delegation is established, it becomes the natural body to approach when Community affairs are involved. It therefore has to take on more general functions of external representation.

It goes without saying, that, because of the nature of the relationship between the Communities and the host countries, some external offices particularly in ACP countries will devote most of their effort to the particular purpose for which they were set up, and this will continue to be the case. But in general it is no longer possible for an external office to devote itself entirely to the tasks for which it was originally established.

Whatever its principal activity every external office must be equipped in terms of staff and support from Brussels to be able to perform the most important functions of external representation.

b) In order to make economies of personnel through a more rational use of the manpower available, the possibility of covering certain functions on a regional basis should be examined.

In fact, the Commission has already adopted a regional approach so that a single delegation can be established covering several countries, which moreover form part of already existing regional entities (South America). The

Commission will try to follow this approach wherever possible in developing its external network, for example in South-East Asia.

It is clear that the regional approach cannot be applied to countries with which the Community has a general cooperation agreement, to the extent that the execution of such a cooperation agreement requires close relations with the administration concerned, particularly as regards financial and technical aid.

However, in suitable political conditions (particularly regional cooperation already in existence among the countries concerned), and if the scope of cooperation programmes made it appropriate, such an approach has been followed on a case by case basis (Caribbean, Pacific, Common delegation for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland).

5. Administrative problems of the external offices

a) The existing administrative relationships between external office staffs and the Commission represent a variety of practices according to the type of office involved.

The Commission is studying ways of bringing about greater harmonization of the internal administration of the different kinds of offices.

The final document which the Commission has undertaken to present to the Council by the end of the year will include a study of this question, which needs more thorough examination. Particular attention will be given to the study of staff policy, including the system of rotation, to establishing a system of inspection of external offices, and to guidelines for the external offices' property policy.

b) Certain problems can however be identified at this stage arising in the case of the ACP Delegations; examples are the development of the status of the EAC, the beginnings of a statutory link between the ACP Heads of Delegations and the Commission, and rotation of staff between the Commission departments and the Delegations.

Development of the status of the EAC

Since 1964, all staff serving in ACP Delegations are employed on contracts concluded with them by the European Association for Cooperation, a non-profit organization established under Belgian Law.

The development of the role of the Commission Delegations in the ACP countries most recently with the very precise provisions of the Lome Convention, shows how disturbing it is that the staff of the Delegations in the ACP countries, and especially the Delegates themselves, whose job is external representation of a public authority, still form part of a structure set up under private law, even if only in respect of their conditions of employment.

The new structure will take this consideration into account, with a view to maintaining the advantages of flexibility and independent administration which have shown their value over fifteen years.

Establishment of a statutory link between the Commission and the Heads of ACP Delegations

In view of the new function performed by Heads of ACP Delegations, they should have a direct statutory link with the Commission.

In order to establish such a link the budgetary authority agreed, in the 1977 Budget, to create ten temporary posts in the career brackets A 5/4 and A/3.

In its preliminary draft Budget for 1978, the Commission asked for a second instalment of ten temporary posts.

Secondment of Commission staff to ACP Delegations

The Commission has proposed that there should be the possibility of seconding Commission officials to ACP Delegations. In order to facilitate secondment of this kind, the budgetary authority, during discussion of the Budget for 1977, agreed in principle to the creation of 34 posts, subject to the resolution of various policy, financial and staff regulations problems. The Commission is examining these matters and will shortly be giving the information requested.

6. Improvement of the operation of the external offices

A further result of the different conditions in which the external offices have been set up has been that each office has tended to form channels of communication with the department of the Commission which has most frequent occasion to give it instructions. The two-way flow of information between Brussels and post, which should be one of the most valuable benefits of the existence of an external office, has therefore not always been put to full use. Still less has it been feasible to place information acquired at the disposal of other Community institutions or of Member States, who often have a lively interest in it.

In order to draw the greatest possible benefit from the external offices, improvements in their operations will have to be made. In particular, the flow of information between Brussels and the Delegations will have to be improved and information obtained will have to be distributed more widely. Better internal coordination would encourage greater use of the facilities of external offices by departments, would allow application of common rules of procedure, and provide a point of contact within the Commission for those with Community business who wish to make use of the facilities provided by the offices.

7. Access to the facilities of external offices

Although attached to the Commission, the external offices exist to carry out tasks of external representation of the Communities as a whole. They are naturally dependent on the Commission to the extent that the execution of Community policy is a Commission responsibility. The Commission is, however, ready to share their services with other Community users as required. The external offices have always provided facilities for members and staff of the other Institutions and will continue to do so. Similar facilities can be made available to Member States, if they so wish.

8. Relations with Missions of Member States

It is obvious that the closest cooperation must exist between the external offices and the Diplomatic Missions of the Member States in third countries. To a great extent this depends on close personal contacts on the spot, and practices have grown up over the years which on the whole give satisfaction. External offices can provide a service valuable to all by stimulating coordination among the Nine.

This cooperation could be reinforced by organizing exchanges of personnel, on a short-term basis of say three-month tours, between Commission officials serving or likely to serve in a Delegation and diplomats of Member States. A start has already been made on the Commission's side with short-term secondment of officials to the British High Commissions in New Delhi and Canberra. Similarly, a number of officials from the German Ministry of Cooperation have been seconded to ACP Delegations to serve for several years as economic advisers. An exchange system of this type should be put on a regular basis, within the framework of the existing system for the exchange of officials serving with the Community Institutions.

External offices could perform a useful task by regularly providing Member States' Missions in the same capital with information on Community work and policy. The Commission already uses this link to ensure a regular supply of its publications. This service should be extended to include the regular provision of more sensitive information as the means of communication as the Commission's disposal improve. A start has been made with a cypher service. Member States are themselves discussing ways of sharing bag services, a development in which the Commission hopes to share. As the communications system develops and is rationalised, more information can be sent to Missions from Brussels via the external offices with a consequent improvement in efficiency through cutting down transmission time.

More generally, relations between the Commission's external offices and the corresponding offices of the Member States in non-Community countries could be made more complementary. Member States and the Community could well reach the conclusion that it would be preferable for them to try to avoid duplication. Any formula which would help to achieve economies of scale should be looked at. Of course the overall aim would not be to confuse the different interests and roles of the Member States' missions and the external offices, but to achieve a degree of complementarity allowing the Member States and the Community to be seen in non-member countries as entities which are certainly distinct, but which carry out their respective functions in close collaboration.

9. CONCLUSION

The account given of the present situation and the analysis made of the various problems arising make it possible, as the Council requested, to discern

the framework in which the medium-term programme for the opening of external delegations, for which the Commission is seeking or will be seeking the necessary budgetary authorization, should be seen.

In order to avoid artificial expansion of the number of its external offices and their staff, the Commission's objective is to meet particular needs for external representation as they arrive. Three areas can be identified as likely to require coverage in the next few years :

- i) countries which are not at present members of the Community but which may be expected to seek full membership or other close ties of an institutional nature;
- ii) some countries with cooperation agreements with the Community or with aid programmes which must be administered on the spot;
- iii) countries whose role in world affairs is such that direct relations with the Community are indispensable.

In application of these principles, the Commission believes that at the present stage the opening of offices in the following areas can be foreseen :

- a) Madrid and Lisbon;
- b) the Maghreb countries, the Mashreq countries and Israel (for which proposals are already before the Council);
- c) South America, where the Commission now plans to transfer its regional representation to Caracas, leaving a sub-office in Santiago; other sub-offices might become necessary in countries such as Mexico and Brazil depending on the development of cooperation with them;
- d) Asia, where the Commission believes a regional delegation should be set up to cover the members of ASEAN, other Asian countries such as Iran and India, and Australasia, to the extent justified by the development of relations with these countries;
- e) possibly Belgrade;
- f) in addition, the increasingly close cooperation between the Community and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as shown by the conclusion of the verification agreements of 5 April 1973 and 6 September 1976 and the cooperation agreement of 1 December 1975, will make it necessary for the Commission, as well as Member States, to be represented with the IAEA.

ANNEX I

| | Officials | | | | Local Staff | | | | | | | | | | Total |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---|---|-------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| | A | B | C | Total | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 | |
| Geneva including Press | 5 | 5 | 1 | 11 | - | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | - | 14 |
| | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 5 |
| Washington including Press | 7 | 2 | - | 9 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 44 |
| | 1 | - | - | 1 | 4 | 3 | - | 1 | 2 | 4 | - | 6 | 2 | 1 | 23 |
| Paris (Delegation OECD) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 9 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| New York including Press | 4 | - | 1 | 5 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 7 |
| Ottawa including Press | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | 2 | - | 4 | - | 3 | - | 4 | 1 | - | 14 |
| | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 5 |
| Santiago including Press | 4 | - | - | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | 16 |
| | 1 | - | - | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| Tokyo including Press | 4 | 3 | 2 | 9 | - | 4 | - | 4 | - | 6 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 17 |
| | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | 7 |
| Ankara (Press) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 7 |
| Athens (Press) | 2 | 1 | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | 8 |

| Country | Composition of the Delegation | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| | Delegate | Expatriate Personnel | | Local Personnel | |
| | | Advisers | Technical Staff | Secretaries | Others |
| Dutch West Indies | (A/3) | 1 (A/4) | 2 (B/1 + B/5) | 2 | 8 |
| Barbados | (A/3) | 2 (A/4 + A/7) | - | 3 | 8 |
| Benin | (A/3) | 1 (A/5) | 4 (B/3 to B/1) | 5 | 16 |
| Botswana - Lesotho - Swaziland | (A/3) | 3 (2 A/5 + 1 A/6) | 3 (B/1) | 4 | 14 |
| Burundi | (A/3) | 3 (A/7-6) | 1 (B/1) | 6 | 13 |
| Cameroun | (A/3) | 4 (A/5) | 4 (B/2 to B/1) | 8 | 16 |
| Central Africa | (A/3) | 3 (A/7-6) | 3 (B/2) | 4 | 13 |
| Congo | (A/4) | 3 (A/7 to A/5) | 2 (B/2 + B/1) | 5 | 18 |
| Ivory Coast | (A/3) | 6 (A/7 to A/5) | 2 (B) | 4 | 17 |
| Ethiopia | (A/3) | 4 (A/6 to A/4) | - | 4 | 18 |
| Pacific | (A/3) | 2 (A/7 + A/4) | - | 3 | 9 |
| Gabon | (A/3) | 1 (A/7) | - | 3 | 9 |
| Gambia | (A/3) | 1 (A) | - | 3 | 7 |
| Ghana | (A/3) | 4 (A/7 to A/5) | 1 (B/2) | 5 | 17 |
| Guinee Bissau | (A/3) | - | 1 (B/1) | 4 | 4 |

| Country | Composition of the Delegation | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------|
| | Delegate | Expatriate Personnel | | Local Personnel | |
| | | Advisers | Technical Staff | Secretaries | Others |
| Guinée Conakry | (A/4) | 2 (A/6 to | 1 (B/1) | 1 | 11 |
| Guyana | (A/4) | 2 (A/6 + A/5) | - | 3 | 11 |
| Upper Volta | (A/4) | 5 (A/7-6) | 2 (B) | 6 | 15 |
| Mauritius | (A/4) | 2 (A/5-4) | 2 (B/2) | 3 | 10 |
| Jamaica | (A/3) | 3 (A/6 - A/5) | - | 3 | 10 |
| Kenya | (A/3) | 3 (A/5) | 2 (B/1) | 6 | 12 |
| Liberia | (A/3) | 2 (A/5) | - | 2 | 11 |
| Madagasca | (A/3) | 5 (A/6 to A/4) | 2 (B/2 + B/1) | 8 | 18 |
| Malawi | (A/3) | 3 (A/7 to A/5) | - | 5 | 12 |
| Mali | (A/3) | 3 (A/6 to A/5) | 4 (B/3 to B/1) | 5 | 18 |
| Mauritania | (A/3) | 3 (A/5 to A/4) | 1 (B/1) | 3 | 16 |
| Niger | (A/3) | 3 (A/6 to A/4) | 4 (B/2 to B/1) | 5 | 15 |
| Nigeria | (A/3) | | | | |
| Uganda | (A/3) | 4 (A/7 to A/5) | - | 2 | 11 |
| Rwanda | (A/3) | 3 (A/5) | - | 6 | 11 |

| Country | Composition of the Delegation | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| | Delegate | Expatriate Personnel | | Local Personnel | |
| | | Advisers | Technical Staff | Secretaries | Others |
| Senegal | (A/3) | 7 (A/7 to A/4) | 2 (B/2) | 8 | 19 |
| Sierra Leone | (A/3) | 3 (A/7 to A/4) | - | 3 | 14 |
| Somalia | (A/3) | 4 (A/7 - A/5) | 2 (B/1) | 4 | 13 |
| Sudan | (A/3) | 4 (A/6 to A/4) | 2 (B/1) | 4 | 14 |
| Surinam | (A/3) | 1 (A/6) | 1 (B/1) | 3 | 12 |
| Tanzania | (A/3) | 4 (A/6 to A/5) | 3 (B/3 to B/1) | 2 | 10 |
| Tchad | (A/3) | 5 (A/7 to A/5) | 1 (B/3) | 3 | 15 |
| Togo | (A/3) | 4 (A/7 to A/5) | - | 6 | 12 |
| Trinidad and Tobago | (A/4) | 3 (A/6 to A/4) | 1 (B/2) | 3 | 12 |
| Zaire | (A/4) | 5 (A/6 to A/5) | 2 (B/1) | 5 | 20 |
| Zambia | (A/3) | 3 (A/6 to A/5) | 1 (B/1) | 3 | 11 |
| TOTAL | | 124 | 55 | 165 | 505 |

220

670

The grades shown are the approximate equivalents of Commission grades.