Recommendation 167 (1958)[1]

Exploitation of the Natural Gas Resources of the Northern Sahara

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly,

2. Considering the substantial prospects of development opened by the creation of the European Economic Community and the setting up of a Free Trade Area ;

3. Considering the vital importance of European energy supplies ;

4. Considering that in their Report Target for Euratom the Wise Men forecast that for the next twenty years there will be an aggregate power shortage in the countries of the Six corresponding to more than 200 million tons of coal a year ;

5. Considering that in the French Northern Sahara there are, apart from petroleum, several hundred thousand million cubic metres of reserves of natural gas which by themselves could each year make good a large part of the above deficit ;

6. Considering that, though France can undertake the exploitation of these reserves from her own resources, the problem of distributing this natural gas raises extremely important questions of financing as well as technical, economic and political problems ;

7. Recognising the great potential importance of these resources for the development of Africa which was envisaged by the Consultative Assembly in its Recommendations 158 and 159 ;

8. Recognising also that such action would be a major contribution to the success of the European Economic Community and the European Economic Association (Free Trade Area);

9. Recommends to the Committee of Ministers

10. that it should invite the European and African Governments most closely concerned to open negotiations for the study and possible realisation of a large-scale plan for transporting to and distributing in Africa and Europe the natural gas produced in the Northern Sahara reserves, the potential of which could by itself make good a large part of the serious shortage of power which it is forecast will obtain in Western Europe and North Africa for the next twenty years. - first four lines of the English text to read as follows : "that it should invite the European and African Governments most closely concerned to study the possible realisation of a large-scale plan for ..."

1. (a) Subject introduced on 30th April 1958 by the tabling of a Motion for a Recommendation,Doc. 821, by M. Lemaire and a number of his colleagues.
(b) 3rd May 1958, reference to the Economic Committee (Reference No. 213).
(c) 3rd October 1958, tabling of the report of the Economic Committee,Doc. 862.
(d) 15th October 1958, debate in the Assembly (see 17th Sitting of the 10th Session). The Recommendation was adopted unanimously.