Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1064 (1987)[1]

25th and 26th annual reports (1985 and 1986) on the activities of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the 25th and 26th annual reports of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Docs. 5577 and 5773), and the report of its Committee on Economic Affairs and Development in reply thereto (Doc. 5774) ;

2. Congratulating EFTA on the successful outcome of its numerous activities, not least the signature on 20 May 1987 of two conventions concluded with the European Community, one concerning a single administrative document, the other providing for a common procedure for goods in transit ;

3. Welcoming the progress achieved since the joint Luxembourg Declaration of 1984 towards the setting up of the industrial world's largest free trade area, and the institutional and working links that EFTA has succeeded in establishing with the European Community with a view to creating one integrated European area of economic activity ;

4. Considering that it is important for the member countries of EFTA, over 50% of whose foreign trade is with the European Community, to be involved in the process of achieving the single internal market due for 1992, and that everything possible must be done to avert economic disunion between the Community countries and the other countries of the Council of Europe, including the EFTA countries ;

5. Noting that co-operation between EFTA and the European Community extends to fields other than economics and trade ;

6. Concerned that this development involves a risk of duplication of activities already in progress in the Council of Europe, in education, environmental protection and the legal field, in particular ;

7. Trusting that the building of Europe will continue in as rational a manner as possible, aided by effective co-operation between the Council of Europe, the European Community and EFTA ;

8. Observing in this regard that in a number of places the White Paper of the Commission of the European Communities on completing the internal market - which is at present being examined by the EFTA countries also - raises issues connected with legal instruments adopted by the Council of Europe ;

9. Stressing the need to accelerate the abolition of remaining obstacles to the free circulation of people, goods and capital between Council of Europe and EFTA countries, and urging in this context the French Government to abolish visa requirements for all nationals of each of those countries ;

10. Noting in particular that, while the worldwide introduction in recent years of exclusive economic zones has led to more responsible management of fish resources by coastal states, this welcome reform has not been accompanied by a dismantling of remaining barriers to trade in fish products in Europe, especially in processed fish ;

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1. Assembly debate on 5 October 1987 (12th Sitting) (see Docs. 5577Docs. 5577 and Doc. 5773, reports of EFTA, and Doc. 5774, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development). Text adopted by the Assembly on 5 October 1987 (12th Sitting).

11. Considering that free trade in fish products would not only be beneficial to national economies and consumers, but would also benefit the large majority of fishermen, including those in the Third World, by permitting them access to a wider market,

12. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

a. call on the governments of the member states of the Council of Europe which are also members of either EFTA or the European Community, and on the Government of Finland :

1. actively to pursue their co-operation with a view to :

a. removing the non-tariff barriers to trade by working for :

1. mutual recognition of tests and test cer tificates ;

2. simplification of the certification of origin ;

3. transparency in the matter of government aids ;

4. liberalisation of public procurement policies ;

5. reconsideration of the rules governing trade in agricultural products ;

6. harmonisation of standards in information and telecommunications technology and in European trade law (by paying special attention to the problems which arise from the application of anti-dumping rules in international trade between the EFTA and European Community countries) ;

b. intensifying their co-operation in the fields of :

1. research and development (also by encouraging their firms to take new initiatives within the Eureka programme and by participating in Community research programmes) ;

2. education (with a view in particular to increasing exchanges of students) ;

3. the environment, using, inter alia, the report of the World Commission for Environment and Development (‘‘Brundtland report") ;

c. involving the EFTA countries in the process of setting up the internal market in Europe, due for 1992 ;

1. to strengthen, in close co-ordination with the Council of Europe, EFTA's role in its negotiations with the European Community on the implementation of the Luxembourg Declaration ;

2. to step up efforts to co-ordinate their economic and monetary policies, in order to make European industry more competitive, combat unemployment, increase social cohesion in the manner outlined by the Colombo report and the recent report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on social cohesion in Europe (Doc. 5710), and improve monetary stability ;

3. to explore the possibilities of reaching an agreement between EFTA and the European Community on the liberalisation of trade in processed food products ;

4. to work, in particular within all available forums such as GATT, OECD, the European Community and EFTA, for the speedy attainment of free trade in all fish products, and, in particular, for granting the same trade advantages to processed fish as they do to industrial products ;

5. to include transport among their fields of co-operation - in conjunction with the European Conference of Ministers of Transport - and, in that context, to take action on Resolution 876 (1987) of the Parliamentary Assembly on a European high-speed train network ;

6. to give constructive support to the new GATT multilateral trade negotiations (the Uruguay Round), and to the European Public Campaign on North-South Interdependence and Solidarity due to take place in the spring of 1988 under the aegis of the Council of Europe with the participation of the European Community and the non-governmental organisations concerned ;

b. contact the competent bodies of the European Community and of EFTA in order to ensure a role for the Council of Europe in the implementation of the Luxembourg Declaration, especially in the framework of the ‘‘High-Level Contact Group" ;

1. consider to what extent EFTA should be invited to take part as an observer in appropriate Council of Europe committees of experts with a view to facilitating co-ordination of efforts towards the building of Europe.