Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 225 (1962)[1]

Reply to the 2nd Report of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation to the Council of Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly thanks the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) for the transmission of its 2nd biennial Report to the Council of Europe and very much appreciates the courtesy of the Director-General of FAO in presenting the Report in person and replying to the debate. It expresses its great satisfaction at the fruitful co-operation which has grown up between the Council of Europe and the FAO and believes in the importance of maintaining and developing this co-operation in all matters of common interest.

2. The Assembly notes with concern that, although world food production has continued to increase, the gap between per capita food availabilities in less developed regions and those in such parts of the world as have better resources has tended to widen, and shares the view of FAO that the precarious balance between population growth and food supplies in economically less developed countries urgently needs to be stabilised at a safe level. It therefore endorses the activities of FAO which aim at raising nutritional standards in these countries as it already has given its support to the Freedom from Hunger Campaign and the World Food Programme.

The Assembly attaches great importance to exchanges of technical experience between FAO and countries engaged in bilateral aid programmes and is pleased to learn that both less developed countries and developed countries increasingly turn to FAO for advice on agricultural development problems.

3. In particular, the Assembly notes that there is an urgent need for trained personnel and administrators capable of introducing new techniques and methods and carrying out new projects in the economically less developed countries.

It therefore welcomes the special programme of agricultural education and training in Africa approved by the FAO Conference, as part of a co-ordinated programme of education and training that is being developed jointly by the interested UN agencies, and urges member Governments to give this programme all possible support.

4. The Assembly notes with great concern the further deterioration in the terms of trade of agricultural exporting countries. As illustrated in the Report, the volume of commercial agricultural exports has risen by one-third between 1948-1952 and 1960 while their value at current prices had increased by only 14 % and their real value, as measured by their capacity to purchase manufactured goods, by barely 4 %. The Assembly therefore hopes that the combination of efforts to ease this situation will soon lead to effective results, fair to all parties. It considers the recent arrangement of a joint session of the FAO Committee on Commodity Problems and the UN Commission on International Commodity Trade, as well as the FAO's current consultations with GATT, as steps towards a concerted attack on commodity problems, and urges all member Governments of the Council of Europe to give careful consideration to the suggestions made in this respect by FAO : diversification of production and exports, domestic stabilisation measures, international commodity agreements, compensatory financing, etc.

1. Assembly debate on 19th September 1962 (8th Sitting) (see Docs. 1411Docs. 1411, 2nd Report of FAO, and 1491, Report of the Committee on Agriculture). Text adopted by the Assembly on 19th September 1962 (8th Sitting).

5. The Assembly wishes to congratulate the FAO on the completion of its work on the formulation of guiding principles for national agricultural price stabilisation and support policies ; and notes that its recommendations have been endorsed by the FAO Conference and are at present before Governments for acceptance. Well aware of the fact that these recommendations, to some degree, represent a compromise between conflicting interests, the Assembly nevertheless shares the view of FAO that they would constitute, if adopted, an important step towards an internationally approved code of principles aimed at mitigating harmful repercussions of national support policies on the production and trade of other countries, and therefore urges member Governments to accept and implement loyally these recommendations.

6. The Assembly welcomes the establishment of an FAO Regional Office for Europe and the convocation of a Regional Conference for Europe as a means of confronting European agricultural problems with those of the world, as a whole, and, in particular, with those of the economically less developed countries. The Assembly hopes that, inter alia, the recent FAO study on agricultural commodity projections for 1970 will be discussed at the forthcoming Regional Conference for Europe, and requests member Governments to give attention to the relation between prospective developments in Europe and the current world situation. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that working relations between FAO, on the one hand, and OECD and the European Economic Community, on the other, have developed in a way which demonstrates the will of avoiding duplication and requests the Organisations concerned to continue their efforts in this respect.

7. The Assembly thanks the FAO for the detailed summary of its technical activities in Europe as well as of its activities arising out of the Mediterranean Development Project. The Assembly notes with interest that arrangements have been made for close co-operation between the FAO's European Commission on Agriculture and its European Forestry Commission, in order to foster co-operation between foresters and agriculturists. Further it expresses its appreciation of the work of the joint FAO/ECE secretariat of the ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems as reflected, inter alia, in studies such as Towards a Capital Intensive Agriculture, which the Assembly considers as being of great value.

8. Finally, the Assembly warmly congratulates the FAO on the important results achieved since the presentation of its 1st Report and expresses its interest in closely following FAO's activities during this "Decade of Development", as the 1960 s have been proclaimed by the United Nations.