Resolution 388 (1968)[1]

Reply to the 8th annual report of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) : The Association after eight years' activity

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Thanks the Ministerial Council of EFTA for the transmission of the Association's 8th annual report ;

2. Congratulates the Association and its Associate Finland on having added to the virtual removal of tariff barriers and quotas on industrial goods originating and traded within the area of the Association proper which took place on 31 December 1966, the removal with effect from 31 December 1967 of tariff barriers and quotas on industrial goods traded between the Association and Finland ;

3. Recalling the warm welcome it gave in Resolutions 324 of 1966 and 350 of 1967 to the decision of the Ministerial Council of EFTA "to review and analyse the economic impact of the present divergence between the two trading groups in Europe, with its waste of existing and potential resources", and convinced of the importance of there being an authoritative study on those economic consequences, looks forward with eager anticipation to the publication later this year of the first part of the report in question ;

4. Further convinced of the vital necessity for parliamentarians in democracies to have at their disposal the fullest information on which to base their judgments ; persuaded that this principle is unreservedly subscribed to by the governments of all EFTA states ; asks the Ministerial Council of EFTA to take the necessary policy decision to further develop in detail the information already given in the Association's annual reports, in its bulletin, in its press communiqués and otherwise ;

5. Expresses the hope that every effort will be made by the Association to further extend and develop technical cooperation in specific fields with other interested international organisations ;

6. Fully shares the view of the EFTA Ministerial Council that it is necessary to further develop the work of the Economic Committee of EFTA, and having regard to the importance which it attaches to this matter, would welcome further information on the position hitherto reached in this respect ;

7. Believes that it is vital for the Association to further accelerate its efforts to tackle the various national technical and administrative barriers of whatever sort which act as non-tariff barriers to trade and which tend to frustrate the economic benefits to be expected from the abolition of tariffs and quotas within the area of the Association ;

8. Considers that the Association has now reached a stage where more consultation and much more intensive study is needed of the indirect obstacles to free trade stemming from differences of laws and of long-standing basic economic arid financial policies in member states, the specific object being the taking of steps to abate such obstacles to trade whether by further measures of economic integration in EFTA or otherwise.

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1. Assembly debate on 27 September 1968 (18th Sitting) (see Doc. 2462see Doc. 2462, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 September 1968 (18th Sitting).