



Resolution 671 (1978)¹

Agricultural production levels in certain commodities (food supply policies)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report on agricultural production levels in certain commodities (food supply policies) in Europe, presented by its Committee on Agriculture ([Doc. 4149](#)) ;
2. Having regard to previous texts adopted, such as [Resolution 647 \(1977\)](#), on the evolution of agricultural structures in Europe, and [Resolution 666 \(1977\)](#), in reply to the report on the activities of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1976 ;
3. Concerned at the heavy fluctuations that have characterised agricultural production levels in recent years, and the serious impact of such fluctuations on world markets and thereby on export earnings and producers' incomes, on the one hand, and import costs and consumer prices on the other ;
4. Realising the particularly harmful effects of such fluctuations on the economies of developing countries that do not possess either the funds or the storage capacity to increase their purchases when markets are low ;
5. Deploping the fact that recessionary conditions, continuing inflation, monetary instability and balance-of-payments problems jeopardise efforts aimed at maintaining more stable conditions in agricultural and food production,
6. Stresses its view that adequate and regular supplies of food at national and international level can only be achieved by means of agricultural policies which assure producers fair prices and confidence in the development of markets ;
7. Recognising, in particular, that persistent unemployment creates problems as regards structural adaptations in agriculture, while such adaptations as well as improved processing and distribution of agricultural products constitute a prior condition for the pursuance of rational agricultural production and marketing policies ;
8. Recognising in this context that income discrepancies within farming in certain member states tend to widen ;
9. Noting that agriculture in most member countries is highly capital intensive, technologically advanced, but also highly dependent on energy for its major inputs, therefore advocates more emphasis to be placed on production policies which will be in line with energy policy objectives, thus favouring the development of technologies which could aid the provision of opportunities in agricultural employment and also be of interest to food deficient developing countries ;
10. Whereas certain surplus production could be avoided by encouraging consumption, so that marketing arrangements and organisations can play a role in stimulating desirable demand ;

1. Assembly debate on 25 April 1978 (2nd Sitting) (see [Doc. 4149](#)see [Doc. 4149](#), report of the Committee on Agriculture). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 April 1978 (2nd Sitting).



11. Considering that any attempts to increase agricultural production in member countries should be considered from both the point of view of exporting and food importing countries, and in any case take into account the possibilities inherent in specialised branches of production which may add to the volume of world trade and help in reducing malnutrition ;
12. Convinced that the balanced development of world trade in agricultural products constitutes the best way of opening the opportunities for economic development,
13. Notes that, for the first time in this decade, world cereal production seems to be sufficiently abundant as to cover market demand, food aid pledges, as well as stock needs, and that European agricultural activity should contribute to the maintenance of this capacity ;
14. Expresses itself in favour of an internationally co-ordinated system of nationally held stocks adequate to provide food security and to introduce a greater measure of future stability especially in regard to the international grain market ;
15. Recognises the importance of the availability of feed grain, since this affects the economy of alternative farm production in which feed grain represents a major input ;
16. Conscious of the fact that there is an increasing tendency for surplus problems encountered on the national level to be passed on to international trade, and thereby to other markets, which can reinforce protectionist trends and recalling that in the past such practices of "exporting" internal difficulties have seriously limited opportunities for the maintenance or encouragement of economic growth ;
17. Whereas market trends and competition are the driving forces of the economies of member states, such interplay of forces should be monitored and qualified in order that adequate production can be maintained ;
18. Believes that the market organisations can constitute useful instruments for agricultural policies, and that they should be used to assist the achievement of the agreed objectives ;
19. Reiterates its support for the activities of OECD in the field of food market observation with a view to making joint use of such information, and hopes the OECD Ministers for Agriculture (which in early 1978 met for the first time since 1973) will meet more frequently henceforth in order to establish at least a set of agreed principles concerning agricultural production and trade ;
20. Whilst market conditions will require adjustment of practices to meet changing circumstances, insists that full regard shall be given to achieving sensible and sensitive land use arrangements, both in terms of agricultural and forestry activity, in order that land can be maintained in good heart, and to ensure that wholesome environmental and ecological needs are fully served ;
21. Urges its members to make suitable approaches to their governments so that the necessary regulations may be introduced in accordance with the text of this resolution.