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European Cultural Fund for Exiles

Report¹

Relations with European Non-Member Countries

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1. 1952 - 4th Session - Second part



A. Explanatory Memorandum

1.

1. On the 8th December, 1951, the Consultative Assembly, on the proposal of the Special Committee, unanimously adopted Recommendation 17 (1951) relating to the creation of a European Fund for Exiles.

2. It was one of the features of this Recommendation that the fund should be administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in co-operation with the Council of Europe.

3. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, however, subsequently informed the Secretary-General that he regretted that for special reasons he could not participate in the administration of the Fund.

4. The Special Committee, in view of the high hopes raised amongst exiles by the possible establishment of the Fund, decided, in the circumstances, to prepare a new draft Recommendation.

5. The opportunity was taken of including a provision enabling voluntary organisations and private persons to subscribe to the Fund. It was also suggested that the Fund should be administered by a Special Liaison Committee formed on the model of the existing Liaison Committee on Refugees.

6. The intention of the Special Committee is thus to renew and to supplement its earlier Recommendation. It is the Committee's hope that this new Recommendation, based on the old one, will receive the same unanimous vote of the Assembly.

B. Draft Recommendation

The Assembly,

Having regard to its Recommendation 17 (1951), relating to the creation of a European Fund for Exiles;

Having noted with regret that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees felt unable to participate, together with the Council of Europe, in the administration of the European Cultural Fund for Exiles ;

Considering it most important that its proposals to preserve among the exiles now in Western Europe the cultural inheritance and the national civilisations of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, should, nevertheless, be implemented without delay;

Reaffirming that, in its view, a practical method of preserving the cultural heritage of these peoples is through the establishment of a European Cultural Fund for Exiles;

Recommends to the Committee of Ministers :

- a. That there should be created a European Cultural Fund for Exiles, to be used and administered in accordance with the aims and policies set forth in the appended Schedule ;
- b. That, if any Member wishes to abstain from participating in it, the possibility should be envisaged of setting up the Fund as a result of a partial agreement.

European Cultural Fund for Exiles

Purposes of the Fund

1. To assist young exiles from Central and Eastern European countries to continue their studies without losing touch with their national culture.
2. To give practical encouragement, under adequate safeguards, to cultural, scientific and research institutions founded by national groups of exiles.
3. Generally, to take any lawful steps necessary or useful for the fulfilment of these purposes.

Contributions

4. The original contributors to the Fund responsible for its establishment and administration shall be those Member States of the Council of Europe whose Governments are willing to subscribe a specified amount on a yearly basis.
5. Contributions to the Fund may be received in cash or in kind from Member States of the Council of Europe, voluntary organisations or private individuals. In addition, contributions may be accepted from Governments who are not Members of the Council of Europe.

Policy

6. The policy of the Authority administering the Fund shall be to supplement the already existing programmes of aid to exiles and to their cultural organisations.
7. Assistance shall be granted to individuals or organisations only on the basis of a written agreement signed by the recipient and by a representative of the Authority administering the Fund. All beneficiaries will be required at regular intervals to report to the administering Authority on the use they have made of grants received from the Fund.
8. The Authority administering the Fund shall appeal to all voluntary organisations and individuals interested in exiles to continue and intensify their activities and shall co-operate with these agencies.
9. No activity of any kind in connection with the Fund shall be undertaken in any country except after consultation and with the prior consent of the Government concerned.

Management of the Fund

10. The Fund shall be administered by a Special Liaison Committee of the Council of Europe which shall determine the programme and allocate the resources in accordance with the objects and purposes described above.

11. This Special Liaison Committee shall take such measures as are deemed appropriate to ensure the proper use and distribution of the funds available, in accordance with such rules and regulations as it may adopt. Provisions shall be made for :

- a. Proper records to be kept of all moneys received, of all payments to be made out the Fund, and of all decisions and directions of the Special Liaison Committee.
- b. The equitable and efficient distribution of funds on the basis of need, without discrimination on grounds of nationality, creed or political opinions.

12. The Accounts of the Fund shall be made up to a stated day in every year and the Special Liaison Committee shall, within one month, prepare a balance sheet or statement showing the true position of the Fund in their hands as on that day. The Accounts and balance sheet shall be audited.

13. The annual balance sheet or statement of accounts of the Fund, together with a covering report, shall be submitted simultaneously to the Consultative Assembly and to the Committee of Ministers.

14. Staff and facilities required for the administration of the Fund shall be provided by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe and, insofar as they are required, by the participating Governments.

15. The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe shall make no charge to the Fund on account of staff and facilities so long as these can be provided from the established services of the Secretariat-General.

Immunity from taxation

16. The Fund shall be exempt from all taxation and currency restrictions.