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THE SPIRIT OF LOMÉ AND THE GHOST OF EURAFRICA: EURO-AFRICAN RELATIONS IN THE 1970s AND 1980s

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Abstract

According to the dominant narratives in European integration historiography, the European project was driven by two overarching concerns: securing peace among European states and establishing a West European bulwark against the Soviet menace. More recently, an emerging body of literature has highlighted a third, powerful driver of integration: the desire to perpetuate colonial ties with Africa. Seeking to extend this historiographical perspective into the more mature years of the European Economic Community, this thesis reconstructs Euro-African relations from 1969 to 1989, investigating the persistence of colonial aims and practices in the European approach to newly independent African states.

The research revolves around the making and the evolution of the Lomé Conventions – the agreements that governed Euro-African relations from 1975 onwards, which are examined in relation to the institutional dynamics of the Community, the interactions among Member States, and the broader international context. The African perspective is also taken into account, in order to interrogate the agency of African states in shaping Euro-African relations.

Given the multipolar nature of the subject, the study builds on a vast range of archival sources, starting with the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence. In light of Paris's central role in shaping Europe's approach to Africa since 1957, French national and diplomatic archives are extensively consulted. British national archives illuminate the influence of the other major colonial power on Euro-African relations from 1973 onwards. Finally, Senegalese and Ghanaian national archives are consulted to investigate the positions of Francophone and Anglophone African states, respectively. By drawing together these diverse sources and analysing them through an original theoretical framework, this reconstruction of Euro-African relations aims to offer a fresh understanding of both European integration history and Europe's external relations.

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List of abbreviations

ACP – African, Caribbean and Pacific States

ADB – African Development Bank

AEF – Afrique Équatoriale Française

AfCTFA – African Union and the African Continental Free Trade Area

AMAE – Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Site de La Courneuve

AN – Archives Nationales, Site de Pierfitte-Sur-Seine

ANS – Archives Nationales du Sénégal

AOF – Afrique Occidentale Française

APPER – Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery

CAP – Common Agricultural Policy

CCTA – Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa South of the Sahara

ECLA/CEPAL – United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America/Naciones Unidas
Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe

CET – Common External Tariff

CFF – Compensatory Financing Facility

CIEC – Conference on International Economic Cooperation

COREPER – Comité des Représentants Permanents

CSA – Commonwealth Sugar Agreement

DG – Direction General

EAD – Euro-Arab Dialogue

EAEC (Euratom) – European Atomic Energy Community

EAMA – États Africains et Malgache Associés

ECA – United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

ECU – European Currency Unit

ECSC – European Coal and Steel Community

EDC – European Defence Community

EDF – European Development Fund

EEC – European Economic Community

EFTA – European Free Trade Area

EID – European Integration Department

EMS – European Monetary System

EPC – European Political Cooperation

ERP – European Recovery Programme

EUA – European Units of Account

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization

FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FLN – Front de Libération Nationale

FRG – Federal Republic of Germany

GATT – General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GSP – Generalised System of Preference

G77 – Group of 77

HAEU – Historical Archives of European Union

IEA – International Energy Agency

IMF – International Monetary Fund

IPC – Integrated Programme for Commodities

IPU – Inter-Parliamentary Union

JORF – Journal Officiel de la République Française

LDCs – Less Developed Countries

MAE – Ministère des Affaires Étrangères

MRP – Mouvement Républicain Populaire

NAM – Non Aligned Movement

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NICs – Newly Industrialised Countries

NIEO – New International Economic Order

OAPEC – Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries

OAU – Organization of African Unity

OECD – Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development

OEEC – Organization for European Economic Cooperation

OPEC – Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

PRAAD – Public Records and Archives Administration Department, Ghana

PEU – Pan-European Union

SAPs – Structural Adjustment Programmes

SDA – Social Dimensions of Adjustment

SEA – Single European Act

STABEX - Système de Stabilisation des Recettes d’Exportation

SYSMIN – Système de Développement du Potentiel Minier

TNA – The National Archives, United Kingdom

UEF – Union of European Federalists

UNCTAD/CNUCED – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development/Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Commerce et le Développement

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNGA – United Nations General Assembly

UNIDO – United Nations Industrial Development Organization

WB – World Bank

WBGA – World Bank Group Archives

WEU – West European Union

Introduction:

Writing the history of Euro-African relations

The Mediterranean connects Europe and Africa more than it separates them. So Africa has become our closest neighbour and its destiny a part of our own destiny. From this perspective Pan-Europe is enlarged to Eurafrica – from the small Pan-Europe to a large political continent, stretching from Lapland to Angola, comprising 21 million km² and 360 million people.

(Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Afrika*, in «Paneuropa», 1929)

Africa is Europe's closest neighbour. The ties that bind Africa and the European Union are broad and deep as a result of history, proximity and shared interests. [...] We need to partner with Africa, our twin continent, to tackle together the challenges of the 21st century and to further our common interests and future.

(European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, *Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa*, 09/03/2020)

Although nearly a century separates the two quotations above, the similarities between the two bear testimony of the prominent role that the African continent plays in European political imagination, in the 2020s as in the 1920s. Both statements identify Africa as Europe's "closest neighbour". Both statements convey the notion that Europe and Africa share not only an intertwined past, but also a common destiny. As the second quotation illustrates, the European Union (EU) continues to frame its relationship with Africa as a strategic priority, identifying Africa as its own "twin continent" and thus as the ideal partner to address the challenges that the international system poses nowadays. While the formal colonial ties that once bound African territories to Europe were severed in the 1960s, Euro-African relations have remained central to the strategic, political, and economic thinking of both continents. Over time, however, their form and the narratives surrounding them have undergone significant transformation.

Although Africa occupied a significant role in the discussions that led to the onset of the European integration process, Euro-African relations officially began in 1957, when the Treaty of Rome envisaged the unilateral association of the six founding members' *pays et territoires d'outremer* to the nascent European Economic Community (EEC). Euro-African relations saw a

radical change in narrative at the beginning of the 1960s, as a consequence of decolonisation. By 1963, talks of Eurafrica, which had previously dominated the stage, had disappeared, virtually forgotten. From that point onwards, Euro-African relations were to be framed as an Association agreement between nominally equal partners. In spite of this new framework, the 1963 Yaoundé Convention did not significantly alter the substance of the previous Association system. African states would have to wait until the mid-1970s to negotiate a new agreement that would radically innovate the structure that tied them to the EEC since 1957. The Lomé Convention of 1975 would be renegotiated and renovated four times, regulating Euro-African relations until the eve of the 21st century. The Cotonou agreement of 2000 tried to completely transcend the Lomé framework by dividing the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries into six regional groupings that had to negotiate separate Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) with the EU. Since this task revealed itself to be more arduous than anticipated, the Samoa agreement signed in 2023 foresees a common framework for EU-ACP relations and three regional protocols: one for African states, one for Caribbean ones, and one for Pacific states. Although this chronology can be easily reconstructed, the two quotations that open this introduction illustrate how little has changed in the way European institutions perceive Euro-African relations. This is not a coincidence.

For decades, most historical accounts of the European integration process have reinforced the idea that colonialism and integration were antithetical processes. According to most common narratives in European integration historiography, indeed, the Communitarian project was driven by two overarching concerns: preventing the emergence of further conflicts among European states and creating a West European bulwark against the Soviet menace. In this context, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), pooling the production of coal and steel of six European states, would ensure “that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible”¹. Besides contributing to this objective, the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 responded to another necessity as well: guaranteeing the economic recovery of post-war Western Europe in order to prevent impoverished, war-torn states from defecting to the Soviet camp. In light of these noble purposes, it is no surprise that the first phase of European integration historiography maintained an almost hagiographic attitude towards the most prominent “founding fathers” of

¹ R. Schuman, *Declaration made in the Salon de l’Horloge at the French Foreign Ministry by the French Foreign Minister*, 9 May 1950, Paris.

the European project². Nor does it appear surprising that European integration historiography has traditionally praised the evolution of the integration process brought about by the European communities³.

Since the 1980s, however, a number of scholars have called for different historiographic approaches towards European integration. The first notable example was that of Alan Milward, who first suggested that European integration historiography was prevalently oriented towards celebrating the victories of federalist ideas over nationalistic resurgences and thus did not explore the real, less idealistic reasons why the “founding fathers” pursued integration. In the last two decades, authors like Mark Gilbert, Laurent Warlouzet, Kiran Klaus Patel, and many others have proposed original readings of the history of European integration. Their research have shed light on how controversial figures such as Margaret Thatcher or Charles De Gaulle have contributed to the advancement of integration⁴, explored the EEC’s contributions and responses to the great changes in the international economic system of the 1970s⁵, and enlarged the scope of European integration history beyond the Communitarian realm⁶. Nonetheless, both traditional and heterodox integration historians have seldom focused on how European integration history has intertwined with that of Member States’ colonial enterprises. On the contrary, integration has been commonly portrayed as antithetic to colonialism or, at best, as an endeavour that European states overtook once they realised that their empires would soon cease to be viable.

The idea of the ever diminishing importance of colonies and its juxtaposition to the alternative provided by new European opportunities can be traced back to Jacques Marseille’s study of French capitalism and colonialism⁷. Marseille argued that the new possibilities opened up by the nascent European integration project made the empire and its spiralling costs less and less appealing. According to his analysis, after decades in which the costs of the colonies’ *mise en valeur* had been steadily increasing, the return of Charles de Gaulle to power allowed France to finalise the “divorce” from its empire and finally embrace the European endeavour⁸. This

² A. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State*, London, Routledge, 1992.

³ M. Gilbert, *Narrating the process: Questioning the Progressive Story of European Integration*, in: «Journal of Common Market Studies», Vol. 46, issue 3, 2008, pp. 641-662.

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ L. Warlouzet, *Dépasser la crise de l'histoire de l'intégration européenne*, in: «Politique européenne», Vol. 44, issue 2, 2014, pp. 98-122.

⁶ K. K. Patel, *Project Europe: A History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020.

⁷ J. Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français: Histoire d'un divorce*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1984.

⁸ « Il faudra toutefois attendre l'arrivée au pouvoir de Charles de Gaulle pour que s'imposent les thèses de ceux qui pensaient que la France ne pouvait appartenir en même temps à deux marchés communs, l'un avec l'Europe, l'autre

interpretation was readily received by historians of Europe and European integration. In his classic work, Norman Davies suggests that decolonisation was a *conditio sine qua non* “for the emergence of a new European Community of equal, democratic partners”⁹. In their reconstructions, other historians postulate the innate incompatibility of colonialism and European integration: Derek Urwin claims that the “surge of nationalism in Asia and Africa [...] precipitated the end of the colonial era and [...] geographically entailed a retreat back to Europe”¹⁰, while Clemens Wurm argues that in the 1950s Paris devoted increasing attention to the integration process as the changing international context forced France to “abandon its colonial illusions”¹¹.

Interestingly, the narrative that frames integration as an alternative to colonialism has demonstrated to be more persistent than most other myths of European integration history. Even the scholars who recently pushed forward the boundaries of European integration historiography seem usually inclined to embrace this line of reasoning. Although these authors generally pay attention to the aftermath of decolonisation and how it intertwined with European integration, they still initially assume the incompatibility of colonialism and European integration. In the introduction to his book *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World*, Warlouzet, referring to Todd Shepard’s study of French decolonisation¹², asserts that “[t]he French colonial empire crumbled significantly in the 1950s, just as European integration offered a new opportunity for the French to heighten their influence in the world”¹³. Similarly, Patel, rightly praised for the way his book *Project Europe* dispels a number of myths in European integration history, makes it readily clear that the EEC is to be understood as “a creature of nation states, for which the choice for Europe was an effective means to withstand the tides of Cold War tensions, decolonisation and globalisation”¹⁴.

avec l’outre-mer. » J. Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme française: Histoire d’un divorce*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1984, p. 373.

⁹ N. Davies, *Europe: A History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 1068, quoted in: P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in «Journal of Historical Sociology», Vol. 27, No. 3-2014, p. 445.

¹⁰ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, London, Longman, 1995, pp. 71-72.

¹¹ C. Wurm, *Two Paths to Europe: Great Britain and France from a Comparative Perspective*, in Clemens Wurm, ed., *Western Europe and Germany: The Beginnings of European Integration, 1945–1960*, Oxford, Berg Publishers, 1995, p. 179, quoted in: P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in op. cit., p. 445.

¹² T. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, Ithaca New York, Cornell University Press, 2008.

¹³ L. Warlouzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World: Neoliberalism and its Alternatives following the 1973 Oil Crisis*, London, Routledge, 2018, p. 4.

¹⁴ K. K. Patel, *Project Europe: A History*, op. cit., p. 10.

Although perhaps it did not enjoy the same notoriety as the aforementioned books, in the last two decades an emergent body of literature has started to problematize the prevalent view on the relationship between European integration and colonialism. These works have shed light on how the desire to perpetuate colonial ties with Africa acted as a powerful driver for European integration. This innovative perspective, most comprehensively proposed by Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson¹⁵, recasts the history of European integration's inception in light of Member States' colonial aspirations. In their works, Hansen and Jonsson suggest that the prospect of pursuing colonialism as a joint European endeavour acted as an incentive for European states to share their sovereignty. In so doing, they argue that the intention to expand integration to Africa - summarised by the concept of "Eurafrica" - was central in the seminal phases of European integration. Once the *pays et territoires d'outremer* gained independence, however, these ideas were deemed unspeakable. They thus apparently disappeared from the stage of European politics. As the majority of the literature on European integration history tends to perpetuate this forgetfulness, the translation of colonial links between European *métropoles* and African territories into Euro-African relations still constitutes a scarcely investigated field, especially for the period that follows decolonisation.

Notable exceptions, of course, do exist. Giuliano Garavini has approached European integration history from a global perspective, providing insight on how Europe responded to decolonisation and the emergence of the Global South in other international fora¹⁶. Similarly, Sara Lorenzini's work on the evolution of the development issue during the Cold War offers fundamental insight on the European Community's attempts at self-refashioning as a sympathetic supporter of developing countries¹⁷. When it comes to investigating European member states' attitudes towards the Association, the literature is richer in the case of France: Yves Montarsolo¹⁸, Guia Migani¹⁹, Veronique Dimier²⁰ and others²¹ have shed light on Paris'

¹⁵ Among other works, see: Hansen, P. and Jonsson, S. (2014) *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism*, London, Bloomsbury Academic.

¹⁶ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012.

¹⁷ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2019.

¹⁸ Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, Aix-en-Provence, Presses universitaires de Provence, 2010.

¹⁹ Among other works, see: G. Migani, *La France et l'Afrique Sub-Saharienne, 1957-1963: Histoire d'une Décolonisation entre Idéaux Eurafricains et Politique de Puissance*, Brussels, P. I. E. Peter Lang, 2008; G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l'Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961-1972)*, in: «Modern and Contemporary France», Vol. 26, issue 1, 2018, pp. 43-58.

²⁰ Among other works, see: V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

²¹ See, for example: D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in «Matériaux pour l'Histoire de Notre Temps», Vol. 77, issue Europe et Afrique au tournant des indépendances, 2005; J. Fremigacci,

pivotal role in establishing the EEC Association system in the 1950s, strengthening it in the 1960s, and attempting to protect it from British interferences in the 1970s. Urban Vahsen's works offer precious insights on how West Germany viewed and shaped Euro-African relations in the 1960s²². Robin De Bruin, on the other hand, has investigated the complex nature of Dutch attitude towards the Europeanisation of colonial and postcolonial relations²³. Moreover, authors like Martin Rempe²⁴ and Lindsay Aquí²⁵ have adopted distinctive vantage points from which to examine the evolution of Euro-African relations, offering rare accounts that foreground African responses and contributions. Additionally, other kinds of accounts of Euro-African relations have been produced. Authors like Marjorie Lister²⁶, John Ravenhill²⁷, and Carol Cosgrove-Twitchett²⁸ provided precious contemporary policy analyses of Euro-African relations, but the nature of their works is not historical.

All these works serve as a solid foundation for the present research, as they shed light on the ideological underpinnings, origins, and early functioning of Euro-African relations. However, most historical studies linking colonialism and European integration rely almost exclusively on European sources and concentrate on the formative years of the Community. Indeed, even those who have most convincingly uncovered the colonial roots of early European integration generally agree on according an ever diminishing role to Eurafrican ideals after decolonisation, and even more so after the EEC first enlargement. For Hansen and Jonsson, Eurafrica acted as a “vanishing mediator”²⁹ between the colonial past and the integrating future of Europe in the early 1960s. Writing about West Germany's position vis-à-vis the Association, Urban Vahsen acknowledges Konrad Adenauer's references to Eurafrica, but his works emphasise that, by the early 1960s, Bonn was determined to firmly place “the new association in a decolonising

Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957, in «Matériaux pour l'Histoire de Notre Temps», Vol. 77, issue Europe et Afrique au tournant des indépendances, 2005.

²² Among other works, see: U. Vahsen, *Eurafrikanische Entwicklungskooperation: Die Assoziierungspolitik der EWG gegenüber dem subsaharischen Afrika in den 1960er*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010.

²³ R. De Bruin, *Indonesian Decolonisation and the Dutch Attitude Towards the Establishment of the EEC's Association Policy, 1945-1963*, in «Journal of European Integration History», Vol. 23, issue 2, 2017, pp. 211-226.

²⁴ Among other works, see: M. Rempe, *Entwicklung im Konflikt: die EWG und der Senegal, 1957-1975*, Böhlau, Köln, 2012.

²⁵ Among other works, see: L. Aquí, *Macmillan, Nkrumah and the 1961 Application for European Economic Community Membership*, in «The International History Review», Vol. 39, issue 7, 2017, pp. 575-591.

²⁶ See, among other works: M. Lister, *The European Community and the developing world: the role of the Lomé Convention*, Aldershot, Gower Publishing, 1988.

²⁷ J. Ravenhill, *Collective clientelism: the Lomé conventions and North-South relations*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1985.

²⁸ See, among other works: C. Cosgrove-Twitchett, *A Framework for Development: the EEC and the EEC*, Sydney, Allen&Unwin, 1981.

²⁹ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in «History of the Present», Vol. 7, Issue no. 1, 2017, pp. 16-18.

context, [...] with the purpose of promoting the economic independence of the Associates”³⁰. Véronique Dimier, whose work traces the evolution of the EEC’s aid bureaucracy well beyond the 1960s, emphasises how the managerial restructuration of DG VIII that was spurred by British accession in the 1970s strongly limited neo-patrimonial practices inherited from French colonial administrations³¹.

This research aims to problematise such claims of Eurafrica’s early disappearance and to expand this line of research to the more mature years of the EEC³². Indeed, although it is true that references to Eurafrica were explicitly erased from European public discourse in the early 1960s, the quotations that open this dissertation show how in reality a Eurafrican conception of Euro-African relations – one grounded in the postulated affinity and complementarity of the two continents and the inextricability of their history and of their future – may still linger behind the current talks of partnership and cooperation. This raises a broader question: to what extent has this forgotten colonial legacy shaped the later evolution of European integration? More specifically, did the shift in self-representation undertaken by the Community after decolonisation truly leave behind its formative colonial ambitions? And if not, how deeply did colonial aims and practices continue to influence Europe’s approach to Africa after the 1960s?

The chronological scope of this research spans the two decades between 1969 and 1989 – a period that witnessed the conclusion of the Yaoundé Convention and the emergence of a new framework that would shape Euro-African relations until the eve of the 21st century: the Lomé Conventions. First signed in 1975 and renewed every five years into the 1990s, these agreements covered a wide range of areas, from trade provisions and cultural cooperation to the management of the European Development Fund (EDF) and technical assistance programmes. Moreover, in 1975 Lomé was presented by the Community as a new model of North-South relations, claiming that it responded to Third World demands for a New International Economic Order (NIEO)³³. What were the reasons for this rebranding of Euro-African relations? Did the Community truly support NIEO or was it just leveraging its postcolonial connections to Africa to face a rapidly-transforming international system?

³⁰ U. Vahsen, *Africa Policy in a European Framework? The Federal Republic of Germany and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s*, in: «Outre-mers», Vol. 98, issue 372-373, 2011, pp. 95-106, p. 104. See also: U. Vahsen, *Eurafrikanische Entwicklungskooperation: Die Assoziierungspolitik der EWG gegenüber dem subsaharischen Afrika in den 1960er*, op. cit.

³¹ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., pp. 175-190.

³² For an expanded reflection on how contemporary historiography frames Eurafrica and its influence on the European Integration process, see Chapter 1, pp. 61-65.

³³ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 145-147.

It is also necessary to recognise that a meaningful reconstruction of Euro-African relations requires a shift in perspective – one that considers African agendas, objectives, and agency, and investigates their influence in shaping Europe’s approach. Indeed, while in the 1960s Francophone and Anglophone African countries related to their former colonial powers through separate postcolonial structures – the EEC Association and the Commonwealth – the Lomé Convention provided African countries with a shared, negotiable framework for their relations with Europe. Thus, this research needs to consider how African states perceived and influenced these developments. Was there a discernible difference between entering a partnership with the EEC and conducting relations with their former *metropoles*? How did Anglophone and Francophone African states overcome the pre-existing mistrust and formulate a common stance vis-à-vis the Community? Finally, how did African countries’ agency shape the Lomé Convention and its iterations?

In addressing this evolution, this research aims at expanding the Eurafrican perspective on European integration history beyond decolonisation and the supposed demise of Eurafrica. Doing so, however, requires grappling with the complex and layered nature of the Eurafrican ideal and of Euro-African relations. Therefore, before briefly outlining the structure of the dissertation, the remainder of this introduction turns to the methodological and theoretical considerations concerning the nature of the Community, its member states, African actors, and the entangled relations between them.

The complex nature of European States and the European Community

European states as post-colonial polities

Crucial historian of colonialism Frederick Cooper had a valuable point when he wrote that “we need to think about empire not because it is about to be resurrected, but because it was such an important constituent of political life for so long, until so recently, and with such important effects”³⁴. His work on the conceptual bases of the history of colonialism provide an essential insight on the nature of Western European states in the post-war period. Cooper rightly observes that, even in the 1950s and early 1960s, actors such as Britain and France were not nation-states, but rather imperial polities³⁵. Accepting this claim entails the need to reconsider

³⁴ F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2005, p. 158.

³⁵ F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, op. cit., p. 188. See also: J. Burbank and F. Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011.

the history of European integration by taking this into account. Moreover, Community enlargements that took place between 1969 and 1989 saw more post-imperial states join the European integration project³⁶. As Cooper remarks, “it is not terribly demanding to ask historians of Europe to acknowledge that colonies mattered”³⁷. This is as true for the history of singular nation states as it is for the history of European integration. And indeed, this is what the authors who developed the Eurafrican perspective on European integration have been doing in the last two decades. On what theoretical grounds is it possible to expand this perspective to the later stages of integration?

Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler argue that empires are to be approached as organic units and not solely through the dichotomy that counterpoises the colonising nation to its empire³⁸. If this is the case, when these polities effectively became nation-states as a consequence of decolonisation, both colonisers and colonised nations found themselves in a postcolonial condition. In other words, the legacy of colonisation affected not only newly-independent African states, but also former *metropoles*, as they retained political and commercial connections with their former colonies, they set up aid programmes, they reincorporated settlers and witnessed an influx of migrants, and so on. Indeed, as Étienne Balibar asserts, even after decolonisation European states continued to be shaped – at least in some respects – by their postcolonial condition³⁹.

In this view, neo-colonial relations are also part of the postcolonial condition. Authors like Ndlovu-Gatsheni⁴⁰ and Grosfoguel⁴¹ have pointed out that the administrative and political decolonisation of the 1960s and 1970s has created the impression of an abrupt rupture with everything that the existence of colonial empires implied. This impression, they argue, is a false one: although decolonisation had formally happened, newly-independent countries found themselves embedded in the same international system that had been shaped by colonialism

³⁶ Britain joined the EEC in 1973, while Spain and Portugal did so in 1986.

³⁷ F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, op. cit., p. 52.

³⁸ F. Cooper and A. L. Stoler, *Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda*, in: F. Cooper and A. L. Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial cultures in a bourgeois world*, Berkley, University of California Press, 1997, pp. 15-18.

³⁹ É. Balibar, *Europe, an "Unimagined" Frontier of Democracy*, in: «Diacritics», Vol. 33, Issue 3-4, 2003, pp. 36-44, p. 41. It is worth to quote Balibar at length: «Essentially it is the extreme ambivalence of its relationship with the colonial past which makes Europe, in a sense, the postcolonial locus par excellence, and the place where the political effects of recognizing this reality will be decided. In fact it is Europe (part of Europe) that colonized the world in the strictest sense of the word (as opposed to other forms of imperialism also practiced by Europe), and therefore it is Europe that suffered a backlash».

⁴⁰ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization*, Dakar, CODESRIA, 2013, p. 7.

⁴¹ R. Grosfoguel, *The Epistemic Decolonial Turn*, in «Cultural Studies», Vol. 21, issue 2-3, 2007, p. 220.

for centuries. The characteristics of this international system, from the international division of labour to the dominant epistemological paradigm, stem directly from the colonial experience.

If this analysis of the late XX century international system is correct, it is necessary to consider that, even in 1970s and 1980s, the European Community and newly-independent African countries moved in a context which had been shaped by colonialism. As the theorists and historians of Eurafrica have shown, the presence of imperial actors who wished to Europeanise colonialism among the EEC founders did play a role in shaping the early phases of European integration. Thus, in expanding the chronological scope of the Eurafrican interpretation to our chosen chronology, it appears worthwhile to investigate whether the heritage of this forgotten colonial past, coupled with the growing presence of post-imperial states within the Community, continued to play a role in the evolution of Euro-African relations even after decolonisation. Such a perspective allows for a more comprehensive analysis of this history – one that can recognise the presence (or the absence) of colonial aims and practices in the European approach to Africa.

European states as Community members

Another point requires clarification: how should the EEC itself be understood? This is a crucial issue, as the history explored here raises the delicate question of how Community institutions and member states engaged both with one another and with external partners. Here the research draws from the analytic framework presented by Luuk Van Middelaar in his *Le Passage à l'Europe*, in which he calls into question the traditional dichotomous perspective that counterpoises supranationalism to intergovernmentalism. Deeming these two categories insufficient to describe the evolution of European political dynamic, he proposes to consider the latter as structured in three concentric spheres: the one of supranational communitarian institutions (the inner sphere), the one of sovereign, self-interested states (the outer sphere), and a last, hidden one, in which states consider themselves and each other as Community members, and thus act in accordance to Communitarian interests (the intermediate sphere). Van Middelaar's thesis posits that, since Communitarian membership has led European states to value their common belonging to the European space, it is thanks to the intermediate sphere that integration has deepened and progressed throughout time⁴².

Such an analytical framework seems particularly appropriate to explore how Euro-African relations were approached by the EEC, since the Europeanisation of colonial links was

⁴² L. Van Middelaar, *Le Passage à l'Europe : Histoire d'un Commencement*, Paris, Gallimard, 2012, pp. 37-55.

originally driven by a French impulse that was soon embraced by other member states and then pursued as a Communitarian objective. In other words, the incorporation of some members' colonial possessions in the EEC foundational treaty – a fact initially pertaining to the so-called “outer sphere” – came to be accepted and valued by the other member states – the “intermediate sphere” – and thus reverberated in the way in which the EEC conducted its external relations and structured its institutions – the “inner sphere”. In the following decades, the European approach to Africa developed as a result of changes occurring in every sphere of European integration, from the transforming international context (outer sphere), to Community enlargement (intermediate sphere), and DG VIII restructuration (inner sphere). It thus appears worthwhile to approach sources from European archives by taking into account the interplay among these different levels and the actors that inhabit them.

Thanks to the combined use of these perspectives, this history of Euro-African relations can shed light on aspects of these connections that have so far eluded the most common narratives of European integration history. This research's aim, indeed, is not to propose a completely alternative narrative of the evolution of European integration, but rather to contribute to a better understanding of these events through the use of new sources and innovative interpretative frameworks. First, however, it is necessary to clarify what these sources are and how they are approached.

A Euro-African approach to European Integration history: going beyond European integration historiography

This research concerns the evolution of Euro-African relations and, as such, it can be said to fall in the field of European integration history, namely in that of integrated Europe's external relations. Nonetheless, the scope of this analysis is not limited to the inner workings of the EEC institutions, nor does it consider solely European actors. Therefore, in order to properly consider the different actors involved and their interactions, this research draws on theoretical and methodological insights from other areas of historical inquiry.

The need for interaction with other fields of historical research is not a new phenomenon in European integration history. Aforementioned authors like Garavini and Patel have adopted a global outlook on European integration history, producing innovative accounts of post-war Europe's external relations. Their works have demonstrated the advantages of studying Europe by relating its integration process not only to its members and institutions, but also to third

states, other international organisations, and transnational movements and groups of interest. Patel's call to "decentre or even to provincialize the European Communities within historical research"⁴³ is meant for historians to rediscover other forgotten agents of the integration project, such as the United States, the Council of Europe, or the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In this sense, this research also answers such a call for decentring the European Communities and thus adopting a more global perspective when dealing with integrated Europe's external relations. But instead of turning to other European and Western actors, the forgotten agents of this particular facet of European integration history are postcolonial African states and their intergovernmental forums.

In order to include their perspective and rediscover their contributions to the evolution of Euro-African relations, the theoretical and methodological framework must be adjusted accordingly. Indeed, given the political, diplomatic, and economic nature of Euro-African relations, this research is primarily based on sources produced in ministerial and diplomatic environments, such as national governments structures, diplomatic representations of various kinds, supranational and intergovernmental institutions and organisations. However, it is necessary to clarify how these governments, representations, and institutions were chosen and approached. A lack of reflection on this point can lead to two separate but related risks. On the one hand, there is the risk to approach Euro-African relations from a strictly Eurocentric point of view, failing to properly consider African agency. On the other hand, an even more insidious risk is posed by the acritical use of Eurocentric ideas and concepts to investigate the role of African agency in our reconstruction. Here, this research draws on the lessons of postcolonial history.

Indeed, it is not possible to talk about "provincializing" without referring to postcolonial history and one of its most well-regarded authors, Dipesh Chakrabarty. In his *Provincializing Europe*, Chakrabarty suggests that European ideas such as modernisation, democracy, capital, and so on, while essential to understand and produce history, are not as universal as they are claimed to be. On the one hand, Europe can be provincialized by including histories that do not fit in the historicist, universal narrative of societal development towards modern capitalism. On the

⁴³ K. K. Patel, *Provincializing the European Union: cooperation and integration in Europe in a historical perspective*, in «Contemporary European History», Vol. 22, Issue no. 4, 2013, pp. 649–673, p. 653.

other hand, to provincialize Europe is also to recognise how much Europe owes to other parts of the world in terms of its intellectual, political and economic prosperity⁴⁴.

Thus, besides investigating whether colonial aims persisted in the European approach to Africa by drawing sources from European, French, and British archives, this dissertation relies on Senegalese and Ghanaian archives so as to investigate how, in turn, African states wanted to shape their relations with Europe, how they pursued their aims in the negotiations for the Lomé Conventions and, finally, how their actions and contributions shaped the evolution of Euro-African relations and European integration itself. In so doing, particular attention must be devoted to the possibly different declinations and perceptions of key concepts that can exist between European and African actors. As it is the case with Eurafrica itself, concepts that are understood in a certain way among European officials can have substantially different meanings when they are used in documents and speeches by African leaders. Thus, sources need to be related to the specific geographical and historical (and thus ideational) context in which they are produced. At the same time, drawing sources referring to the same events from multiple and diverse archives allows for both sources triangulation and the inclusion of more perspectives.

It is also important to note that, throughout the chosen chronology, trade and aid remained the bedrock of Euro-African relations. This is evidenced by the fact that negotiations for each iteration of Lomé focused mostly on economic matters: each renegotiation revolved around demanding (and refusing) a stronger commitment to a fairer global economic order, better trade concessions, and improvements on the aid facilities offered by Lomé. As a result, this history cannot be disentangled from the broader transformations in the international economic order. Indeed, Euro-African relations were significantly shaped by the evolution of economic thought in the latter half of the twentieth century. The Global South's assertive demands for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), for instance, were grounded in the work of economists such as Raúl Prebisch, who first highlighted the structural inequalities embedded in trade between the industrialised core and the rural periphery⁴⁵. Likewise, any understanding of Euro-African relations in the 1980s must account for the paradigmatic shifts that redefined

⁴⁴ D. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007.

⁴⁵ R. Prebisch, *The Economic Development of Latin America and its Principal Problems*, Santiago, Naciones Unidas Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL), 1950. See also: E. Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raul Prebisch, 1901-1986*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008; J. Love, Raúl Prebisch and the Origins of the Doctrine of Unequal Exchange, in: «Latin American Research Review», Vol. 15, No. 3, 1980, pp. 45-72.

development economics during that decade. Engaging with the intellectual history of economic thought in the 1970s and 1980s is therefore essential for bridging the gap between the lofty, often vague rhetoric of political leaders and the technical, granular detail of aid, trade, and policy documents.

However, it must be emphasised that, as the Lomé framework evolved, the scope of cooperation between the EEC and African countries expanded considerably. By the late 1980s, technical cooperation under the Lomé framework encompassed an increasingly diverse range of themes, including references to human rights, environmental protection, and gender equality. Both European and African actors understood their relationship in broader terms than trade and aid alone, and the emergence of new issues – like human rights, migration, cultural cooperation, and so on – undoubtedly influenced the trajectory of Euro-African relations. Yet, while the incorporation of these new dimensions into Lomé constitutes an important subject for future inquiry, they remained secondary to the economic foundations of Euro-African relations. In the 1970s and 1980s, Lomé's trade and aid mechanisms continued to serve as the principal instruments through which both parties sought to advance their respective agendas within the international system: for the European Community, as a means to project its identity as a global economic actor and development partner; for African states, as a crucial channel for securing resources, markets, and influence in negotiations with external powers. Given these dynamics, and considering the time and resource constraints inherent to doctoral research, this thesis concentrates primarily on the evolution of Lomé's trade and aid provisions, which formed the enduring foundation of Euro-African engagement throughout the period under study.

Archives, sources, and the kind of history they can tell us

Europe and Africa seen from the archives

Given the multipolar nature of the subject, sources were drawn from a variety of archives. The European Union Historical Archives (HAEU) in Florence are the main repository of sources produced by European institutions, and were therefore extensively consulted. In light of Paris' centrality in shaping the European approach to Africa since the 1950s, French archives were considered as well. Among them, particular attention was devoted to the *Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* (AMAE) in La Courneuve, and to the various collections held by the *Archives Nationales* (AN), primarily the ones hosted in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine. British National Archives (TNA) in Kew (London) provide sources that shed light on how the EEC enlargement

to the other major European colonial power affected Euro-African relations from 1973 onwards. Finally, Senegalese and Ghanaian archives were consulted in order to reconstruct the composition of Francophone and Anglophone African positions. The *Archives Nationales du Sénégal* (ANS) are situated in Dakar. The Ghanaian national archives, on the other hand, have become part of the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), which is located in Accra. Before delving into strictly methodological considerations, however, it is important to clarify the rationale behind extending the scope of research beyond the European Community's archives to include French and British sources on the one hand, and Senegalese and Ghanaian archives on the other.

As noted above, French archives are virtually indispensable for this reconstruction. Britain's influence, meanwhile, is critical not only due to its legacy as a major colonial power, but also because its delayed accession to the Community served as a catalyst for reforming Euro-African relations. While the contributions of other member states such as the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy were by no means negligible, their role in the formulation and evolution of Euro-African relations was not as decisive as that of France and Britain. France remained the principal architect and defender of the Association system and of the special place that Africa should retain in the EEC's external relations, while Britain's accession in 1973 marked a turning point that prompted the expansion of the Community's relations with African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries. In contrast, Bonn, The Hague, Brussels, and Rome, lacking the extensive postcolonial networks that Britain and France enjoyed, generally operated within parameters set by the two main former colonial powers, exerting influence mainly through the Community's multilateral framework. For this reason, and given the practical limitations inherent to archival research, national archives from these countries were not consulted directly. Their positions, however, are not overlooked: they are reconstructed through the records of the European Community and through French and British sources, where their interventions, reservations, and alignments are well documented. This approach ensures that the analysis retains a comprehensive view of the internal dynamics shaping Euro-African relations while remaining proportionate to the scope and aims of the thesis.

At the same time, it is essential to recognise that Euro-African relations were not solely the product of European actors. While the concept of African agency is addressed in greater depth later, it must be acknowledged from the outset that African policymaking and diplomatic activity played a meaningful role in shaping the evolution of Euro-African relations. This

requires attention to how African states interacted both among themselves and with Europe, and how they collectively negotiated and contributed to the creation of a shared framework for these relations.

With this aim in mind, Senegal and Ghana were chosen because they were respectively at the heart of African Francophone and Anglophone groupings. At the same time, their governments and leaders were also inclined to bridge this divide, as Léopold Senghor's attempts at organising meetings between Francophone associated states and Commonwealth candidates for Association demonstrate⁴⁶. Nonetheless, it is also true that at least in the early 1970s Dakar and Accra approached Euro-African relations with very different outlooks: while Senghor cultivated tight personal and political relationships with France and still referred to Eurafrica as the ultimate goal behind Euro-African relations, Colonel Acheampong's military government⁴⁷ retained a certain distrust towards the Community, which was perceived to be heavily influenced by French neo-colonial aims⁴⁸. Thus, choosing Senegalese and Ghanaian archives serves two purposes: on the one hand, sources in Dakar and Accra shed light on how Francophone and Anglophone countries respectively envisioned Euro-African relations; on the other hand, they are essential for understanding whether and how these different visions were harmonised and synthesised in a common approach.

Here, a reflection on the role of Senegal and Ghana in this history is in order. As the chronology progresses, this narrative shifts from a focus on Francophone and Anglophone countries – particularly Senegal and Ghana – to the broader framework of the ACP group. On the one hand, this is dictated by the nature of the history recounted here: the distinction between Anglophone and Francophone is initially relevant because, while clearly Francophone and Anglophone countries had always interacted with each other, they often perceived each other through the lens of distinct and seemingly incompatible postcolonial structures when engaging with Europe. Thus, the experiences of two pivotal countries from each bloc provide a useful vantage point from which to observe how this divide was, at least in part, surmounted.

⁴⁶ *Telephone Conversation with M. Sylla*, N. Salter to H. Wade, Commonwealth Secretariat, 31 July 1972, TNA FCO 30/1265.

⁴⁷ From 1972 to 1979, Ghana was governed by military governments that took the name of National Redemption Council and became the Supreme Military Council in 1975.

⁴⁸ *Relations des pays d'Afrique avec la C.E.E.*, Letter from Jean Deciry, French Ambassador to Ghana, to Michel Jobert, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Accra, 5 September 1973, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (AMAE), 1089INVA/593.

Throughout the two decades, the ACP group remained far from homogeneous, with each country and sub-region seeking to maximise their own gains within the Lomé framework. Yet, from the first Lomé negotiations onward, ACP countries committed to presenting a united front to the Community. As a result, the distinction between Anglophone and Francophone states becomes less relevant as the narrative unfolds. At the same time, this account is shaped by the limitations of source availability and the logistical constraints encountered during archival research in Africa. Rather than offering a comprehensive reconstruction of African countries' varied positions vis-à-vis Europe, this study can only partially illuminate the complexity of intra-African dynamics – particularly during the 1980s. The following section addresses these issues in greater depth.

Archives in dialogue: navigating diversity and heterogeneity

One does not need to be a historian to notice that the archives mentioned above are significantly different from each other. The starkest contrast among them is defined, first and foremost, by their materiality⁴⁹: they are scattered across two continents and five states and they are located in buildings that range from historical *palazzi* to former shopping centres. This diversity is reflected by the physical sources contained in them, which vary greatly: telegrams and dispatches constitute, perhaps not surprisingly, the bulk of the documents conserved at the AMAE in La Courneuve, while TNA host XX century policy papers just as well as XIII century scrolls. ANS host the complete colonial archives of the *Afrique Occidentale Française* (AOF) and comparatively fewer documents produced by the Senegalese postcolonial state. The PRAAD repositories are rich with Nkrumah's correspondence and governmental documents from the 1960s, while it is more difficult to access analogous sources from the 1970s and later. Their diversity, however, is not confined to the material realm.

Among European archives, there exists a contraposition between national and supranational archives. While British and French archives respond to the criteria of national archives and thus hold records and documents produced by state authorities and institutions, the Historical Archives of the European Union are repositories of records that were produced by a hybrid organisation that is both supranational and intergovernmental at a time, comprising a complex range of institutions and decisional centres. This creates a first degree of source heterogeneity. The policy papers, dispatches, and letters that can be found in national archives usually have a

⁴⁹ On how the materiality of archives and documents plays a part in sanctioning the archives' purpose in politics, see: A. Mbembe, «The Power of the Archive and Its Limits», in *Refiguring the Archive*, C. Hamilton et al. (eds.), Berlin, Springer Dordrecht, 2003, pp. 19-26.

clear human imprint on them, which sometimes can grant us access to the unofficial impressions and opinions that are otherwise concealed by the official mode of discourse employed in diplomacy. Besides the EEC officials' personal collections, the documents hosted in the HAEU are much more likely to be impersonal records characterised by a technocratic register.

On the other hand, while British, French, and Communitarian archives respond to Western criteria of conservation and classification, Senegalese and Ghanaian archives are instead postcolonial archives. As such, they are characterised by processes of sources selection, conservation, and declassification which are generally more uncertain and troubled than Western European ones⁵⁰. As noted by Jean Allman during her research in Ghana, postcolonial states have "often been incapable of or uninterested in deploying an archive [...] as a 'technology of rule'"⁵¹. This results from a generally wide array of causes, that range from financial difficulties to political instability, from unintentional neglect to deliberate destruction. Whatever the cause, the consequence is that postcolonial archives cannot be approached with the same expectations and methods that researchers employ in British or French national archives. Dakar and Accra do not host apparently complete and perfectly catalogued collections of policy papers or diplomatic correspondence. Once again in the words of Allman, one might find that postcolonial national archives, if considered alone, "are not in a position to burden history-writing"⁵².

This sort of reflection begs the question of whether it is necessary to consume considerable time and resources to consult these archives: if this chronology can be reconstructed through European reports, dispatches, and documents, why include African archives and their often fragmented collections? Besides reiterating the willingness to transcend the traditional boundaries of European integration history and address the history of Euro-African relations through both European and African archives, their inclusion is necessary because, fragmentation and dispersion notwithstanding, African postcolonial archives have the power to dispel the myths and change the narratives that emerge from European archives⁵³. They thus

⁵⁰ S. Ellis, *Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa*, in: «The Journal of African History» Vol. 43, issue 1, 2002, pp. 12-16.

⁵¹ J. Allman, *Phantom of the Archives: Kwame Nkrumah, a Nazi Pilot Named Hanna, and the Contingencies of Postcolonial History-Writing*, in: «The American Historical Review», Vol. 118, issue 1, 2013, p.128. Here Allman refers to Stoler's conceptualisation of colonial archival production as "both a process and a powerful technology of rule". See: A. L. Stoler, *Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance*, in: «Archival Science», Vol. 2, 2002, pp. 87-109.

⁵² Ibidem, pp. 128-129.

⁵³ F. Gerits, *The Ideological Scramble for Africa: How the Pursuit of Anticolonial Modernity Shaped a Postcolonial Order, 1945–1966*, Ithaca New York, Cornell University Press, 2023, pp. 14-15. See also: M. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*:

provide access to a historical reality that is otherwise concealed by the apparent accuracy and exhaustiveness of European archives.

The fragmented nature of postcolonial archives, however, creates a second degree of source heterogeneity. Especially if one is interested in reconstructing fairly recent events, they are bound to discover that the majority of available sources are comprised of newspapers, periodicals, and the like. These are extremely valuable: besides reporting official statements and speeches that would otherwise be inaccessible, they offer a vantage point on how events and policies were framed and communicated to the wider public. Incorporating this kind of sources into a reconstruction that is otherwise based on documents produced by state and supranational institutions, however, requires careful methodological consideration⁵⁴. Periodical sources inherently contain a degree of mediation and narrative shaping absent from documents intended for a restricted circle of officials. As such, their analysis demands particular attention to the framing and rhetorical strategies at play.

Reconstructing Euro-African relations through such a diverse array of sources thus presents a multifaceted challenge. It is necessary to account for the gap that often exists between official declarations and reports, and the informal dynamics and underlying intentions that shape policymaking. Additionally, a further layer of mediation must be considered when engaging with newspapers and other media sources, which frame information for public consumption. Effective analysis therefore requires careful attention to the nature of each source, the institutional and ideological context in which it was produced, and the audience it sought to address. These criteria underpin the critical approach adopted in this research.

Substantiating Euro-African relations: key concepts

Before proceeding to define the key concepts underpinning this research, two caveats must be noted. First, while conceptual clarity is essential for the interpretation of sources, the act of defining terms inevitably involves a process of selection. This necessarily results in the exclusion of certain actors and events from the narrative. Although historical inquiry would ideally encompass all relevant phenomena, practical limitations dictated by time, resources, and feasibility inevitably constrain the scope of investigation. This is particularly true given that

Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. xi-xii.

⁵⁴ S. Ellis, *Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa*, in: op. cit., pp. 15-18.

the meaning and application of key concepts are likely to shift across the chronology and geographical scope under consideration. Second, the articulation of certain concepts requires engagement with discourses that extend beyond the traditional bounds of historical scholarship. In particular, any discussion of African agency or colonial practices necessitates recourse to debates within postcolonial studies, which are often situated within political science, sociology, and related disciplines. The intention here is not to enter into an epistemological debate about the boundaries between history and other social sciences, but rather to integrate relevant insights from postcolonial theory into the methodological framework of this study.

Africa as Sub-Saharan Africa

This research concerns the relations between the European Community and sub-Saharan African states. This entails a selection, because even though the geographical reality of the Sahara Desert does constitute a natural boundary, political and commercial ties have generated strong links between the polities and the peoples on the two sides of the desert for centuries. This is true for our chronology as well: geographical, racial, and religious differences notwithstanding, allegiances and close relations crossed the Sahara even after decolonisation, especially in the context of Global South coordinated efforts to refashion the international system.

Nonetheless, it is true that the sub-Saharan African space and the peoples that inhabit that space share a common history that is overall distinct from that of North Africa⁵⁵. Moreover, such a distinction is relevant for this research, since the European Community has adopted different approaches towards the two regions since its inception: Northern African countries were not included in the original Association policy, nor were they invited to join later Conventions. Thus, even though relations between the North and the rest of Africa existed and mattered, this dissertation focuses on sub-Saharan Africa.

Europe as the European Community

When addressing Europe, this research refers to the integration project that was brought about by the European Economic Community and its member states, according to Luuk Van Middelaar's tripartite conception of the Community⁵⁶. This necessarily entails a narrowing of

⁵⁵ F. Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The past of the present*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019 [second edition], pp. 15-16.

⁵⁶ For a more detailed description of how the EEC is conceived for the purposes of this research, see pp. 17-18.

the research's scope and the exclusion of other potential actors of integration. As Patel rightly observes, European integration was not confined to the EEC alone but was instead a multicentric process involving a broader array of institutional actors than may initially be apparent⁵⁷. However, given the chosen framework, this analysis already encompasses a wide range of institutions and actors, along with their interrelations and areas of overlap. Expanding the investigation to include additional entities such as the OECD or the Council of Europe would have required substantial further resources and time, thereby undermining the feasibility of the research.

Euro-African relations seen through the Lomé Conventions

As outlined above, Euro-African relations are understood here as the interactions between the European Community and sub-Saharan African countries. Analysing these interactions raises the broader question of how to conceptualise the Community's external relations. Especially in the 1970s, the Community undertook an effort to play a more active role in the international system: François Duchêne's famous formulation of 'Civilian Power Europe' started to circulate and seemed to inform the aims of European external relations policymaking⁵⁸. Nevertheless, member states' foreign policies were never really Europeanised, and the competences of the Community in that realm remained limited. As such, Euro-African relations must be considered within a framework distinct from traditional foreign policy, which is typically defined by military alliances and security arrangements. This contributed to the Community's distinctiveness as a partner for African countries, particularly within the geopolitical context of the Cold War.

Thus, exploring Euro-African relations in the 1970s and 1980s means examining how the European Community and African states engaged with one another through trade, cooperation, development aid, and related domains. This can be effectively achieved by reconstructing the origins and evolution of the Lomé Conventions. Encompassing trade, aid, market stabilisation attempts, technical assistance, cultural cooperation, and many other domains, the Conventions provided the principal framework for Euro-African relations over a period of 25 years.

⁵⁷ K. K. Patel, *Provincializing the European Union: cooperation and integration in Europe in a historical perspective*, in op. cit., p. 653.

⁵⁸ F. Duchêne, *Europe's Role in World Peace*, in: R. Mayne (eds.), *Europe Tomorrow: Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead*, London, Fontana/Collins, 1972, pp. 32-47. For an opposite view on how the EEC was perceived as a global actor in the 1970s, we can refer to the classical work of Johan Galtung: J. Galtung, *The European Community, A Superpower in the Making*, London, Routledge, 1973.

Analysing their inception and subsequent implementation offers a valuable lens through which to trace the transformation of these relations over time.

Eurafrica over time and space

In this context, *Eurafrica* refers to the notion of extending European integration to encompass the African continent. Although the concept originated in the 1920s, by the 1930s it had gained widespread traction across Europe, developed by thinkers from diverse disciplines including geography, philosophy, and colonial studies. The idea endured through the Second World War and became increasingly embedded in post-war political discourse, both nationally and at the European level. Yet *Eurafrica* was not solely a European construct. Methodological considerations are crucial here, as the research reveals a significant divergence between European and African interpretations of the concept. While the European vision was shaped by the belief that Africa's space and resources could alleviate Europe's political, demographic, and economic strains, African leaders such as Léopold Senghor embraced the idea in the 1950s and 1960s as a means of creating a transcontinental community capable of addressing the historic inequalities between colonising Europe and colonised Africa. This interpretation was particularly prevalent among Francophone leaders, although it was met with strong opposition in many Anglophone African countries. Throughout the analysis, attention is therefore paid to the evolving meanings and uses of *Eurafrica* across time and geographical context.

African agency throughout the history of Euro-African relations

In the last years, a growing number of political and social scientists have engaged with European Studies from a postcolonial perspective. This trend has grown over time, to the point that Belgian political scientist Jan Orbie wondered in 2021 whether a “post-colonial turn” was imminent for European Studies⁵⁹. In 2022, historical sociologist Gurinder Bhambra has proposed “a decolonial project for Europe”⁶⁰. One year later, Orbie and other scholars published an editorial that called for the decolonisation of Europe within the academic community⁶¹. In their view, decolonising Europe means making space for decolonial perspectives that engage with European development policies by truly recognising African agency and seriously calling into question European practices in terms of development. If many researchers seem to be

⁵⁹ Orbie, J., *The graduation of EU Development Studies: Towards a Post-colonial Turn?*, in: «Global Affairs», Vol. 7, issue n. 4, 2021, pp. 597-613.

⁶⁰ G. Bhambra, *A Decolonial Project for Europe*, in «Journal of Common Market Studies», Vol. 60, issue n. 2, 2022, pp. 229-244.

⁶¹ Orbie et al., *Decolonizing rather than Decentering 'Europe'*, in: «European Foreign Affairs Review», Vol. 28, issue n. 1, 2023, pp. 1-8.

answering this call, few of them are historians. Indeed, in their insightful article on Africa-EU relations and what they mean for European self-identity, Haastrupp, Duggan and Mah argue that African agency, usually neglected in policy analyses of European development, is now visibly emerging through the actions of institutions like the African Union (AU) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTFA)⁶². While these recent developments in African integration are indeed remarkable, they are far from unprecedented. African states have, on several occasions, collectively challenged the foundations of Euro-African relations. Thus, if the aim is truly to "decolonise" Europe, this endeavour must also be extended to the historiography of European integration.

Although he generally does not deal directly with relations between African countries and European integration⁶³, Frank Gerits' reflections on why and how to account for African agency in international history are precious. He recounts how international and Cold War historiography have traditionally considered African countries as "targets" of Western and Soviet foreign policy strategies. In this context, African agency has been mostly understood in terms of newly-independent countries' ability to benefit from East-West bipolar competition. The pervasiveness of this narrative, argues Gerits, has led historians to underestimate the capability of African actors to influence the international system and its dynamics⁶⁴. Gerits argues that historians need to engage with "[a]n Africa-centred history"⁶⁵ that starts from African archives and rediscovers African actors' agency in putting forward their ideologies and foreign policy strategies.

This reasoning can be extended to the historiography of European Integration too: it is worth to consider African agency into this history because African vision, policymaking, and diplomacy did have an impact on the evolution of Euro-African relations long before schemes like the AfCTFA. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, African countries consistently asserted their priorities, often compelling the Community to adjust its stance. The collective decision to reject the Community's blueprint for a third Yaoundé Convention and to negotiate jointly with the

⁶² T. Haastrupp, N. Duggan, L. Mah, *Navigating Ontological (In)security in EU–Africa Relations*, in «Global Affairs», Vol. 7, issue 4, 2021, pp. 541-557.

⁶³ For a notable exception, see: F. Gerits, *The reluctant soft power - 1989 and the European Community's hesitant turn towards normative power in Africa*, in: E. Braat and P. Corduwener, (eds.) *1989 and the West - Western Europe since the End of the Cold War*, London, Routledge, 2019.

⁶⁴ F. Gerits, *The Ideological Scramble for Africa: How the Pursuit of Anticolonial Modernity Shaped a Postcolonial Order, 1945–1966*, op. cit., p. 14.

⁶⁵ Ibidem, p. 15.

enlarged EEC in the early 1970s is but one example among many found in the archives. Uncovering this often-overlooked dimension of this history is one of the pillars of this research.

Colonial aims and practices

Despite the fact that African agency has impacted Euro-African relations, it is necessary to remember that these were nonetheless characterised by an asymmetry of power. As literature shows, the presence of colonial aims and practices in the European approach towards Africa is clear in the early stages of integration. In this context, European colonial aims can be defined as the intention to maintain close political and economic relations with Africa in order to benefit from its natural resources, its raw materials, its underexploited markets, and, last but not least, its political allegiance in the bipolar international system. Colonial practices can be instead understood as the persistence at a European level of the same *modus operandi* that had informed colonial bilateral relations. The clientelistic nature of Jacques Ferrandi's management of the EDF showcased by Véronique Dimier's works⁶⁶ is a case in point in this regard.

As the periodisation advances, however, the intention to perpetuate colonial forms of relations became less overt. After decolonisation, the EEC sought to distance itself from both its own and its member states' colonial past, while simultaneously building its relations with Africa upon that very legacy. Tracing the persistence of such aims and practices therefore requires a critical reading of the sources. In this sense, Senegalese and Ghanaian archives offer insight into how African actors interpreted European initiatives, and the extent to which these were perceived as (neo-)colonial. In parallel, postcolonial theory provides a framework for identifying how colonial aims and practices might have endured in new forms after formal decolonisation.

Theorising "postcolonial Europe", Gurminder Bhambra's seminal reflections on the erasure of colonialism in the European integration process have focused on how colonialism has contributed to the definition of European identity⁶⁷. In this paradigm, Europe's *mission civilisatrice* has shed its colonial character and has laid the foundations for the Community's aspirations to act as a normative power. Other authors, like the aforementioned Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Grofosguet, have focused instead on how European colonial empires have not only shaped the current international system, but also created a powerful matrix for the exercise of

⁶⁶ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., 2014.

⁶⁷ G. Bhambra, *Postcolonial Europe: Or, Understanding Europe in Times of the Postcolonial*, in: C. Rumford (eds.), *Handbook of European Studies*, London, Sage, 2009, pp. 69-85.

power and the production of knowledge⁶⁸. They define this matrix by conceptualising the “coloniality of power”, which, in Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s words

articulates continuities of colonial mentalities, psychologies and worldviews into the so-called ‘postcolonial era’ and highlights the social hierarchical relationships of exploitation and domination between Westerners and Africans that has its roots in centuries of European colonial expansion⁶⁹.

While applying such reflections to historical inquiry risks introducing a confirmation bias, engaging with these theoretical frameworks enables a more nuanced analysis of the persistence – or absence – of colonial aims and practices in the European approach to Africa throughout the period in question. In discussing colonial aims, Bhabra’s insight into the colonial foundations of Europe’s normative identity proves particularly useful. By taking into account this perspective, it is possible to interrogate the sources on whether Europe’s enduring desire to be perceived as the natural and ideal partner of Africa derived from an attempt to protect the colonial legacy that was nominally cancelled by decolonisation. Similarly, the concept of coloniality of power offers a valuable lens through which to assess whether Communitarian practices in Euro-African relations were shaped by inherited colonial power structures, even when presented as the basis for an equal partnership. This allows for a critical reading of European sources.

Structure

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first recounts the early history of Eurafrica and the role it played in the early stages of European integration, relying mostly on secondary sources. Chapter 2 explores instead how the process of Community enlargement to Britain spurred an intra-African diplomatic process that led African countries to devise a common approach vis-à-vis Europe. Chapter 3 covers the negotiations for the first Lomé Convention, highlighting how the 1973 oil shock emboldened African countries and forced the Community to adopt a new rhetoric surrounding Euro-African relations. Temporarily halting the chronological progression of the narrative, Chapter 4 examines on the Community’s attempt to position itself as a mediator in North-South relations, focusing in particular on STABEX – an export receipt stabilisation mechanism rooted in colonial-era market structures. Finally,

⁶⁸ R. Grosfoguel, *The Epistemic Decolonial Turn*, op. cit., pp. 217-219.

⁶⁹ S. J Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization*, op. cit., p. 8.

Chapter 6 traces the evolution of Euro-African relations in the changed context of the 1980s, investigating how the Lomé framework resisted to the emergence of a neoliberal economic international order.

Chapter 1

The prehistory of Euro-African relations: rediscovering Eurafrica, 1945-1963

Although conventional wisdom tends to associate the beginnings of European integration with the years following the Second World War, the idea of a united Europe stretches back several centuries. Needless to say, countless wars have been waged throughout history in pursuit of European unification under a single sovereign – be it the pope, the emperor, or an ambitious general from revolutionary France. Yet this aspiration was not confined solely to the battlefield: the notion that Europe might be united by means other than force has circulated through the continent's intellectual circles for almost as long. While initially confined to a few marginal voices at European courts or, later, within political circles, this line of thought began to surface more prominently in the writings of Enlightenment thinkers and early liberals, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Jeremy Bentham⁷⁰. By the early 19th century, the idea was further developed by the French philosopher Henri de Saint-Simon, who envisioned a more concrete political entity, “embracing a European monarch, government and parliament”⁷¹.

Gradually, the abstract notion of European unity began to take on a more defined shape, though monarchs and governments largely remained deaf to such calls. By the early twentieth century, however, imperial rivalries and the desire of nations to assert themselves dominated both the European and global political landscape, culminating in the outbreak of the Great War in 1914. In its aftermath, Europe's geopolitical map was dramatically redrawn: the great continental empires gave way to a host of new states in Eastern and Central Europe, and borders were revised elsewhere. Yet instability persisted – both politically and economically.

In the fraught atmosphere of the interwar years, numerous associations emerged advocating for intra-European cooperation and, ultimately, unity. Chief among them was the movement founded in 1923 by Austrian Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, the same year he published his vision for the continent's future in *Pan-Europe*⁷². In this work, he argued for the integration of European countries into a federation. His ambitious project was not confined to the printed

⁷⁰ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, London, Longman, pp. 2-3.

⁷¹ Ibidem, p. 3.

⁷² R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Pan-europe*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1926 (1923).

page: in that same year, he established the Pan-European Union (PEU), an organisation that would go on to attract a number of prominent political figures from across the continent, including Aristide Briand, Konrad Adenauer, and Georges Pompidou⁷³.

If these facts are easily found at the beginning of most historical accounts of the European Integration process, there are other aspects of the Count's works that are usually overlooked. The PEU was equipped with a monthly journal, also titled *Paneuropa* as well. In 1929, it featured an essay by Coudenhove-Kalergi himself, titled *Afrika*, in which he introduced a neologism that would become increasingly widespread in the years to come: *Eurafrica*⁷⁴. The Count used the term to describe the geopolitical entity envisioned by him and the PEU – an integrated space stretching from the Atlantic to an eastern boundary running from the Finland–Russia border down to Katanga⁷⁵.

The concept was not entirely new, as it had already appeared in Coudenhove-Kalergi's 1923 book, where he had made it clear that "the European territories of the Pan-European state-group form but a fraction of its power-complex"⁷⁶. In *Afrika*, however, the Count developed the idea further: echoing a broader contemporary tendency among Europeanists to compare Europe to the United States⁷⁷, he drew a parallel between *Eurafrica* and the relationship binding the US to the South American continent, asserting that:

Africa is our South America.

Africa is the tropical Europe. Gibraltar is our Panama. Politically, West Africa is the southern continuation of Europe beyond these straits.

Europe is a house with many apartments and many tenants – but Africa is its garden. Whereas the Soviet Union separates us from Asia, and the Atlantic Ocean separates us from America – the Mediterranean connects Europe and Africa more than it separates them. So Africa has become our closest neighbour and its destiny a part of our own destiny.

⁷³ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p.5.

⁷⁴ B. J. Thorpe, *Eurafrica: A Pan-European Vehicle for Central European Colonialism (1923-1939)*, in «European Review», Vol. 26, 3-2018, pp. 506-507.

⁷⁵ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in: op. cit., p. 17.

⁷⁶ R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Paneuropa*, op. cit., p. 32, quoted in: Benjamin J. Thorpe, *Eurafrica: A Pan-European Vehicle for Central European Colonialism (1923-1939)*, op. cit., p. 506.

⁷⁷ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., pp. 3-6.

From this perspective Pan-Europe is enlarged to Eurafrica – from the small Pan-Europe to a large political continent, stretching from Lapland to Angola, comprising 21 million km² and 360 million people.⁷⁸

Interestingly, the essay went on to declare that “Europe is the head of Eurafrica – Africa its body. The future of Africa depends on what Europe makes of it”⁷⁹. This description – one of a European thinking mind vis-à-vis an African receptive and responsive body – evoked a popular Medieval political allegory of the relations between the sovereign and its subjects. Essentially, Coudenhove-Kalergi conceived Africa as a passive entity, subject to European political will and rationalisation of the space. Indeed, the creation of Eurafrica would have demanded a few territorial adjustments aimed at achieving continuity, like the “colonial readjustment in Africa by an exchange of England’s West African colonies for equally valuable East African colonies belonging to Europe”⁸⁰.

European colonial territories in Africa were inextricably linked to the Pan-European space envisaged by Kalergi. Their full integration into a single geopolitical entity spanning much of the two continents would, in his view, provide Europe with everything it needed to compete meaningfully on the international stage: vast territories rich in natural resources and underexploited markets, which would enable self-sufficiency and prosperity. Moreover, Africa was seen as providing the physical space necessary to alleviate unresolved conflicts and the demographic and labour pressures that continued to afflict the European continent⁸¹. Uniting Africa with Europe was thus not merely a strategy to bolster Europe's power, but also a way to diffuse internal political tensions by projecting them outward into the African sphere. Coudenhove-Kalergi feared the prospect of conflict between colonial powers, backed by Britain, and non-colonial states supported by the USSR. A pan-European system of shared colonial exploitation would, he believed, balance these opposing blocs by allowing Central European states to acquire “a stake in colonialism” and to redress Germany’s grievances following the loss of its colonies at Versailles⁸². In a rhetorical reversal of his own earlier arguments, the Count now claimed that the realisation of Eurafrica would represent an irresistible opportunity for

⁷⁸ R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Afrika*, in «Paneuropa», 1929, p.3, translated and quoted in: Benjamin J. Thorpe, *Eurafrica: A Pan-European Vehicle for Central European Colonialism (1923-1939)*, op. cit., p. 507.

⁷⁹ Ibidem.

⁸⁰ R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Paneuropa*, op. cit., p.48, quoted in: B. J. Thorpe, *Eurafrica: A Pan-European Vehicle for Central European Colonialism (1923-1939)*, op. cit., p. 506.

⁸¹ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafrican Project, 1920–1960*, in «International Journal of Postcolonial Studies», Vol. 13, No. 3-2011, pp. 452-453.

⁸² B. J. Thorpe, *Eurafrica: A Pan-European Vehicle for Central European Colonialism (1923-1939)*, op. cit., p. 510.

European states, thus spurring their cooperation. As Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson compellingly argue, “the common or synergetic exploitation of Africa appeared as an aim so unquestionable, so attractive and beneficial, that it in itself would be a reason for the European states to make common cause”⁸³. In this vision, Europe would be united through the making of Eurafrica.

In the years that followed, a number of scholars and intellectuals proposed differing conceptualisations of Eurafrica. In 1933, for instance, Eugène Gurnier – a French writer known for his works on colonialism – published *L'Afrique – Champ d'expansion de l'Europe*, in which he underscored the geographical validity of the idea. Europe and Africa, he argued, formed part of the same geographical entity, divided merely by climatic zones and therefore inherently complementary⁸⁴. During the 1930s, the Eurafrican theme gained increasing prominence across Europe, as it was developed by thinkers from a range of disciplines including geography, philosophy, and colonial studies⁸⁵.

The concept, however, did not vanish with the outbreak of the Second World War. On the contrary, it remained deeply embedded in the political discourse of the post-war period, both at the national level and across the emerging European sphere. As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, the role of Eurafrica in the broader narrative of European integration has only recently been rediscovered by scholars working in European studies and history. This chapter therefore seeks to retrace the intellectual history of Eurafrica from the end of the Second World War to the creation of the European Economic Community in 1957, examining the extent to which the Eurafrican ideal influenced the efforts of European states towards integration. In so doing, it also offers an overview of how recent historiography has brought renewed attention to this once-overlooked dimension of European integration history.

1.1 Reconfiguring Europe and Africa after the Second World War

At the end of the Second World War, the idea of a united Europe gained renewed traction. During the conflict, numerous national resistance movements had produced declarations and

⁸³ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafrican Project, 1920–1960*, in op. cit., p. 453.

⁸⁴ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., p. 17.

⁸⁵ E. g. Paolo D'Agostino Orsini di Camerota, Italian geographer who in 1934 wrote a book called *Eurafrica: L'Africa per l'Europa, l'Europa per l'Africa*; Herman Sörgel, German philosopher, who in his book *Atlantropa* (1932) proposed to unite Europe and Africa by closing the Gibraltar strait with a dam.

manifestoes advocating for the creation of a European political entity capable of transcending national borders. Moreover, the prospect of European unity appeared to enjoy the support of the Allied powers. On one hand, the United States was favourably inclined towards such an outcome, not least due to Coudenhove-Kalergi's tireless propaganda efforts, which he had continued to advance during his exile in North America⁸⁶. On the other hand, the Soviet Union was not explicitly opposed to the idea, particularly given that significant segments of the resistance across Europe were composed of communist formations. However, by the war's end, the internal cohesion of these resistance movements began to fray, while relations between the US and the USSR similarly deteriorated. Tensions between the Western powers and the Soviet Union steadily increased, culminating in the infamous descent of the Iron Curtain across the European continent. The Cold War dynamic had been set in motion.

At this point, the United States began to reassess the strategic role of Western Europe: the war had left both France and the United Kingdom severely weakened, while Germany lay defeated and contested at the heart of the continent. In this geopolitical landscape, a dangerous power vacuum was emerging between the US and the USSR. The former, now increasingly aware of the latter's confrontational stance, decided to definitively abandon its isolationist past. Particularly in Europe – where alarming reports of communist guerrilla activity in Greece were reaching Washington – the US recognised the need to support like-minded democratic states, preventing them from succumbing to authoritarian (communist) regimes⁸⁷.

Thus, the Truman Doctrine of March 1947 first signalled the American intention to maintain a decisive role on the global stage. A few months later, with George Marshall's launch of the European Recovery Programme (ERP) in June 1947 and the promulgation of the Foreign Assistance Act in 1948, the focus shifted explicitly to the reconstruction and integration of Western Europe. While the ERP foresaw the allocation of funds for the rebuilding of European states, the subsequent Act stipulated that financial aid would not be channelled through multiple bilateral agreements⁸⁸. American generosity was indeed conditioned upon increasing economic and political cooperation among European states, for which an appropriate institutional framework would be required⁸⁹. To this end, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) was established and later transformed into a permanent

⁸⁶ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p. 9.

⁸⁷ Ibidem, pp. 9-11.

⁸⁸ Ibidem, pp. 17-19.

⁸⁹ G. Laschi, *L'Europa e gli altri. Le relazioni esterne della Comunità dalle origini al dialogo Nord-Sud*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015, p. 43.

intergovernmental body. Through it, Marshall Aid would be distributed to recipient countries, which in turn were expected to collaborate and harmonise their policies, thereby extracting the maximum benefit from the ERP⁹⁰.

Europe, however, was not the sole concern of this forum: according to Article 2 of the Convention for European Economic Cooperation, the OEEC's competence extended to European overseas territories as well. As with many of the OEEC's other areas of concern, American influence was clearly visible. Since 1947, George Kennan – the architect of the 'Containment' strategy – had been advocating for the joint exploitation of African land and resources within the broader framework of European integration, which was gradually taking shape at the time⁹¹. Indeed, up until 1950, this idea was largely developed in what might be described as 'Atlantic' terms. The Tripartite London Conference, held in early May 1950 and bringing together the British, French, and American Foreign Ministers, is illustrative in this regard: cooperation in Africa featured prominently among the key issues on its agenda⁹². While both the United Kingdom and France had attracted considerable American strategic interest in relation to their African overseas territories, it appeared that Paris was willing to follow the path being outlined by Washington. The French delegation's working papers were particularly encouraging in this respect:

it is not impossible to think that Africa, considered in this way, could be one of the common denominators that Western Europe cannot yet easily find within its own borders, in the search for itself that it is engaged in between Brussels, Strasbourg and the OEEC⁹³.

Essentially, well into 1950, French diplomats reiterated the same argument advanced by Coudenhove-Kalergi in 1929. European states could more easily find a reason to come together in the common exploitation of Africa, rather than through the exclusively European projects. Thus, the African question should be tackled in each of those European *fora*, so as to provide another important incentive to integration. And so it was. Along with the OEEC, different institutions and organisations aiming to foster cooperation and integration among European states were founded in the post-war years. At the same time, the 'Atlantic' character was progressively toned down, as the US was turning its attention away from Western Europe, since

⁹⁰ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., pp. 18-20.

⁹¹ Ibidem, p.41; pp. 56-57.

⁹² Ibidem, pp. 45-49.

⁹³ Ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE), *Afrique généralités*, 75 c, note signé Monod du 15 avril 1950, quoted in: Y. Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., p. 47, and translated by the author. Unless otherwise indicated, all the quotations originally in French are translated by the author.

the Cold War had spread to farther parts of the international system with the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950.

On the other hand, Europeans were seeking to take the future of the continent – and of Africa – into their own hands. The first major step in this direction was the Congress of Europe, held in The Hague in May 1948, a seminal moment in the process that would culminate in the establishment of the Council of Europe in the late summer of 1949⁹⁴. During the Congress, ideas concerning Africa's role in European integration were articulated largely from a colonial perspective: African territories under European control – whether part of the British Empire, the *Union Française*, or other arrangements – were to be seen as “natural extensions of the European economy”⁹⁵. The emphasis on European “economy” was not accidental: while the economic integration of African territories into the nascent united Europe was widely accepted and encouraged, the prospect of their political integration quickly proved far more contentious⁹⁶. Different political movements envisioned a spectrum of solutions. Some, more radical in character, proposed the realisation of Eurafrica through the placement of overseas territories under the tutelage of a supranational European authority, with the ultimate aim of guiding them to full independence⁹⁷. Others took a more conservative stance. Figures from parties such as France's Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP), for instance, maintained that the sovereignty of nation-states over their overseas possessions should remain fully intact and unaltered⁹⁸.

By the autumn of 1949, the Council of Europe had ultimately been conceived as an essentially ‘continental’ body, primarily focused on European affairs. Nevertheless, according to Robert Schuman, the Council could, if necessary, turn its attention to issues concerning overseas territories⁹⁹. This position marked the conclusion of a debate initiated in the French *Assemblée Nationale* by Léopold Senghor, head of the Overseas Territories' parliamentary group. In a poignant intervention, Senghor posed a direct question to the Minister of Foreign Affairs – Schuman himself – seeking to clarify the role that African territories would play within the emerging European institution. Specifically, he asked how the French delegation to the

⁹⁴ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., pp. 30-35.

⁹⁵ Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., 2010, p. 60.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, pp. 62-66.

⁹⁷ Solution presented by members of the Union of European Federalists (UEF) during the organisation's Congress, held in Rome in November 1948. See: Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., 2010, pp. 68-70.

⁹⁸ Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., 2010, pp. 66-67.

⁹⁹ Ibidem, pp. 76-78.

Council's Consultative Assembly would be composed. This seemingly innocuous question concealed an attempt to compel the French Government to articulate its position on the inclusion of the *Union Française* within the nascent frameworks of European integration. To underscore the broader significance of the issue, Senghor made the connection explicit: "As you know, this debate is not just about Europe. It is about Europe in principle, but in reality, it is about Eurafrica"¹⁰⁰. In practice, despite Schuman's emphasis on a 'continental' mandate, Africa would prove to be a recurrent theme in the Council's proceedings, frequently invoked as a potential remedy to Europe's post-war challenges. For instance, as illustrated by an intervention from Johannes Semler, the German representative leading the Council's Committee on Economic Relations with Overseas Territories, the collective exploitation of African resources was presented as the solution to Europe's chronic shortage of raw materials and its resulting overdependence on foreign currencies – particularly US dollars – for their importation¹⁰¹.

Senghor, however, was not entirely right: the Council of Europe would not lay the foundations of European integration, let alone create Eurafrica. Soon, the Council saw its character shifting decisively from federalism towards intergovernmentalism, as members like Britain insisted on stressing the primacy of the Council of Ministers over the Consultative Assembly. Thus, since its membership was wide and variegated, the Council of Europe never succeeded in promoting deeper political and institutional integration¹⁰².

But while straightforward political integration had revealed itself to be a difficult path to follow, another way was opening in front of European political leaders of the time. What would become known as the 'functional approach' to European integration was presented by Robert Schuman on the 9th of May 1950. Engineered by the long-serving French public official Jean Monnet, the new vision reversed the logic that had been followed up to that point. Instead of pushing for immediate political union, which risked to be diluted in nothing more than mere intergovernmental cooperation like in the case of the Council of Europe, integration was to be attained by placing a strategic industry under the control of a supranational authority¹⁰³. In Jean Monnet's project, no production sectors would be better suited than the ones of carbon

¹⁰⁰ Journal Officiel de la République Française (JORF), Assemblée nationale, 2e séance du 9 juillet 1949, p. 4488, quoted in Y. Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepont de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., 2010, p. 65.

¹⁰¹ Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafrican Project, 1920–1960*, in op. cit., pp. 459-460.

¹⁰² S. Guerrieri, *Un Parlamento oltre le nazioni*, op. cit., pp. 36-51.

¹⁰³ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafrican Project, 1920–1960*, in op. cit., pp. 461-462.

extraction and steel production. Both essential for the military-industrial complex, they were also of paramount importance for the Ruhr region, at that time still subject to the International Ruhr Authority¹⁰⁴. Therefore, the idea presented by the then French Foreign Minister had the advantage to provide a single solution for two pressing European problems: how to provide a first, attainable step towards political integration and how to safely embed the resurgent West German power in a consortium of democratic Western European states. Initially presented as a Franco-German scheme, a year later the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established by the Treaty of Paris, signed by France, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries¹⁰⁵.

Although the ECSC founding documents did not explicitly mention Africa¹⁰⁶, the Schuman Declaration did include a key passage in which African development was presented as one of Europe's essential "tasks"¹⁰⁷. Schuman emphasised that a united Europe – of which the ECSC was merely the initial phase – would provide Africa with the means to achieve development¹⁰⁸. His remarks were not incidental. The inclusion of African development in the Declaration was a deliberate diplomatic manoeuvre aimed at attracting British interest: in early May 1950, ahead of the aforementioned Tripartite London Conference and at a time when British participation in the ECSC remained a possibility, French diplomats suggested that a reference to the African overseas territories might help draw the United Kingdom closer to the continental integration project¹⁰⁹. This objective, however, was not realised. Participation in the ECSC required acceptance of its supranational character – something Britain ultimately rejected. Addressing the House of Commons, Prime Minister Attlee firmly declared that Britain could not in any way "accept the principle that the most vital economic forces of [the] country should be handed over to an authority that is utterly undemocratic and responsible to nobody"¹¹⁰. Attlee's statement presaged a recurrent theme in the British position towards European integration – particularly when such integration implied the surrender of national sovereignty to supranational institutions.

¹⁰⁴ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem, pp. 46-47.

¹⁰⁶ Y. Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., 2010, p. 92.

¹⁰⁷ Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafican Project, 1920–1960*, in op. cit., p. 451.

¹⁰⁸ Y. Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., 2010, p. 90.

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem, pp. 92-93.

¹¹⁰ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p. 46.

On the other hand, the reference to African development in the Schuman Declaration had virtually no bearing on the actual design of the ECSC. Despite Monnet's efforts to formulate a comparable scheme involving the African territories¹¹¹, the Treaty of Paris ultimately made no provision for Africa, nor did it address the question of its development. Nonetheless, the preferential conditions under which the Six were allowed to exchange coal and steel among themselves were extended to their overseas territories. In practice, this meant that European countries could export coal and steel to their African possessions under advantageous terms, while African exports were not granted the same favourable treatment¹¹².

Given these developments, it is unsurprising that Senghor reacted with scathing criticism. In mid-May 1950, writing on behalf of the Overseas Territories' parliamentary group, he drafted a resolution in which he articulated the nature of the relationship that should have characterised Eurafrica – drawing a sharp contrast with the structures that Europeans were in fact putting into place:

[...] Eurafrica in particular, which we believe to be necessary and possible, can only be conceived in the form of an economic association, freely entered into on an equal footing, in which the present and future interests of Africa are safeguarded under the same conditions as those of Europe. To envisage it, as the Franco-German coal and steel pool project seems to do, under the guise of European domination over Africa, even if skilfully concealed, would inevitably lead to failure, because it can be taken for granted that, now or later, Africa will not accept becoming an appendage of Europe, its reservoir of raw materials and an outlet for its surplus production¹¹³.

It is worth noting that Senghor himself advocated for a transcontinental entity encompassing both Africa and Europe. Yet, his vision of Eurafrica differed fundamentally from the one conceived by European thinkers in the interwar years and revived on the eve of the 1950s. This was not the only instance in which African elites had re-appropriated terms rooted in colonial discourse. African politicians had already engaged with concepts such as “assimilation” and “association”, employing them respectively to demand full equality between colonisers and colonised, and to assert the right to govern their territories with greater autonomy¹¹⁴. In much the same way, Senghor supported the idea of Eurafrica insofar as it embodied a community that,

¹¹¹ Y. Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., p. 94

¹¹² Ibidem, pp. 95-96.

¹¹³ ANOM, 1 AFFPOL 2224, 2, A.F.P spécial outre-mer du 17 mai 1950 n° 1128, quoted in: Y. Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

¹¹⁴ J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in: op. cit., pp. 7-8.

transcending both national and continental boundaries, could redress the historical inequalities that had defined relations between colonial Europe and colonised Africa:

[...] To be effective, this European action requires total disinterestedness, the repudiation of economic colonialism and cultural imperialism. It also requires a certain humility on Europe's part. [...] Only in this way will we achieve the Eurafrica that we are calling for with our lives, and which must be the cornerstone of civilisation¹¹⁵.

Once again, however, the creation of the ECSC did not bring this vision to life. Nonetheless, the functional integration of Europe's coal and steel industries initiated a crucial process which, over the course of the 1950s, would give rise to several initiatives aimed at expanding the scope of European integration.

1.2 Trial and error: the failed European Defence Community and Francophone African demands for consideration

In June 1950, while the Six were engaged in negotiations over the structure of the ECSC, international attention shifted dramatically to the outbreak of the Korean War, which further deepened the global bipolar confrontation. This development posed a challenge for the allocation of US military resources. Specifically, America's growing commitment to the Korean front resulted in a reduction of the resources available to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Atlantic alliance established in 1949. As this left Western Europe's defence and strategic needs insufficiently covered, Washington urged its European allies to compensate by increasing their military budgets. When they declined, the United States proposed what had, until then, seemed almost unthinkable: the rearmament of West Germany to supply the missing resources¹¹⁶.

While this proposal found favour in the United Kingdom, it rekindled deep anxieties on the continent—particularly in Paris—about the resurgence of a powerful German state at the heart of Europe¹¹⁷. Crucially, if German military strength was deemed essential to satisfy American demands, the other European nations felt the need to ensure that its rearmament would remain under some form of collective control¹¹⁸. It was in this context that, at the end of October 1950,

¹¹⁵ L. S. Senghor, *Ce qui l'Afrique attend de l'Europe*, in: «Marchés Coloniaux du monde», issue n. 496, 14 May 1955, Centre de Documentation des Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS), p. 1325.

¹¹⁶ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

¹¹⁷ S. Guerrieri, *Un Parlamento oltre le nazioni*, op. cit., p. 93.

¹¹⁸ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p. 61.

French Prime Minister René Pleven proposed the creation of a common European army. First suggested by Adenauer in 1949 and previously debated – without success – within the Council of Europe¹¹⁹, the idea of a European military force now appeared both urgent and fitting. Once again, this proposal could be ascribed to Monnet's functionalist logic: by integrating the vital defence sector, yet another core prerogative of nation-states would be transferred to a supranational entity, bringing Europe one step closer to federation.

Although many continental capitals hoped for British participation in this new phase of integration, by the end of 1951 it had become clear that, despite Winston Churchill's return to Downing Street, the United Kingdom would not take part in what was increasingly referred to as the European Defence Community (EDC). As a result, the momentum behind the geographical expansion of European integration began to falter, and in May 1952 only the six ECSC member states signed the EDC Treaty. In outlining the structure of the Community, they envisaged an institutional overlap between the existing ECSC framework and that of the new EDC. At the initiative of Italian Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi, Article 38 of the treaty tasked the parliamentary body shared by the two Communities with studying and drafting a proposal for political integration. By 1952 – before the EDC had even been officially established – the ECSC Assembly was enlarged to include additional members, renamed the Ad-hoc Assembly, and began to explore the possibility of establishing a genuine European political union¹²⁰.

The political debate surrounding the ratification of the EDC Treaty and the prospects of further integration was highly charged. While Europeans were engrossed in discussions over national defence, foreign policy, and sovereignty, African voices were by no means absent from the debate. The apparent acceleration of the integration process raised serious concerns among representatives of African territories within the *Union Française* – concerns that were voiced in the French Parliament during the many sessions devoted to the EDC's implications throughout 1953 and 1954. One of their most pressing anxieties stemmed from the anti-German sentiment that the French *métropole* had successfully instilled in its African colonies over the first half of the 20th century – sentiment further fuelled by the direct experiences of the Second World War¹²¹. A report on the EDC presented by Sourou Migan Apithy, representative of Dahomey (now Benin), underscored the perceived danger of German demographic pressure and resource needs, which, under the guise of European integration, could be directed towards France's

¹¹⁹ Ibidem.

¹²⁰ S. Guerrieri, *Un Parlamento oltre le nazioni*, cit., p. 96.

¹²¹ J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p.6.

overseas territories¹²². Yet such concerns were not limited to Germany: similar apprehensions were voiced regarding Belgium and Italy. Italy was seen as burdened by overpopulation, while Belgium was criticised particularly in debates about the political rights of African citizens. Since Belgium denied citizenship to its Congolese subjects, there was a fear that it would oppose the extension of the rights already granted to Africans within the *Union Française*¹²³.

Apithy's report revealed the enduring influence of the same geopolitical vision that had linked Europe and Africa in the 1930s. Even by the mid-1950s, Europe was still widely perceived as overpopulated and thus in need of a *Lebensraum* to absorb its economic and demographic pressure. What had changed, however, was that this discourse was no longer confined to European political thought. During a parliamentary session in late November 1953, Sourou Migan Apithy informed the *Assemblée Nationale* that Europe's population nearly matched that of the United States, drawing attention to the stark territorial disparity between the two. Europe, he claimed, was "a head without a body"¹²⁴. By allowing his audience to infer that Africa would serve as the missing 'body', Apithy invoked the very same image that Coudenhove-Kalergi had employed to characterise the relationship between the two continents in his essay on Eurafrica. Significantly, whereas in the 1930s this image had served to highlight Africa's presumed readiness to be directed and developed by Europe, Apithy now described this geopolitical construct as "a monstrosity"¹²⁵ that would result in European immigration to Africa. This prospect was particularly troubling to African representatives, not least because such immigration would likely originate from countries like Italy and Germany, whose colonial pasts were still viewed with acrimony in many parts of the continent¹²⁶.

On the other hand, several African representatives opposed the EDC for reasons rooted in another politically sensitive issue. Since the new community's institutional structure would be partially integrated with that of the ECSC, a significant number of African parliamentarians expressed frustration at the exclusion of the overseas territories from this further stage of European integration – just as they had been sidelined during the establishment of the first

¹²² Ibidem.

¹²³ Ibidem.

¹²⁴ Journal Officiel de la République Française (JORF) 1953, p. 5478, 24 novembre 1953, quoted in: Jean Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p.6.

¹²⁵ Ibidem.

¹²⁶ Documents parlementaires, 1954, pp. 1785-1789, rapport de S. M. Apithy sur le traité instituant la CED, et JORF 1954, p. 4416, séance du 29 août 1954, quoted in: J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p.6.

European Community¹²⁷. This criticism was grounded in the Constitution of the French IV Republic, which defined the French state as comprising both the *métropole* and the overseas territories¹²⁸. By relegating these regions to the margins of France's new European endeavour, the government and its European partners were not only contravening the letter of the Constitution but were also reaffirming, in a strikingly anachronistic fashion, the status of colonial subjects of these lands and peoples¹²⁹. For those Africans who identified as both African and French, this exclusion constituted a grave injustice¹³⁰. Apithy himself did not conceal his opposition to the EDC on these grounds, later declaring that "France, in the political sense of the term, is only partly European and [would have to] be mutilated to fit into a framework that was too narrow for it"¹³¹.

Therefore, when the debate shifted from the EDC to the project of political union being drafted in the meantime by the Ad-Hoc Assembly, this issue forcefully resurfaced in the French Parliament. Unsurprisingly, Senghor emerged as one of the most outspoken critics of the proposed scheme's strictly European character. Referring to the future composition of the European parliamentary assembly, he denounced the complete absence of representation for the overseas territories¹³²: how could an institution that claimed to represent the populations of different countries entirely ignore the millions of people living in Africa under French sovereignty? Once again, Senghor underscored the importance of integrating both Africa and Europe as a necessary first step towards the realisation of Eurafrica. Indeed, Eurafrica could not transcend its economic foundation and evolve into a genuine political entity unless the voices from across the Mediterranean were heard and taken seriously¹³³. Senghor warned that if the gradual march towards equality that the French Overseas Territories were pursuing within the *Union Française* were to be arrested by the European integration project, then the integrity of the *Union* itself would be called into question. He even evoked the spectre of separatism, cautioning that "other voices" might come to shape the destiny of these territories and their peoples. Here, Senghor was likely alluding to the pan-African sentiments then being

¹²⁷ J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., pp. 7-8.

¹²⁸ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., p. 19.

¹²⁹ J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p. 7.

¹³⁰ Journal Officiel de la République Française (JORF), p. 5630, 27 novembre 1953, quoted in Jean Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p. 7.

¹³¹ S. M. Apithy, *Les Projets de Construction Européenne et les T. O. M.*, in : «Marchés Coloniaux du monde», issue n. 480, 22 January 1955, ANS, p. 177.

¹³² D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., pp. 19-20.

¹³³ Ibidem.

championed by Kwame Nkrumah, Governor of the soon-to-be independent Gold Coast (Ghana)¹³⁴.

This line of argument stemmed from the belief that France – at the time deeply embroiled in the Indochina War – needed to retain its sovereignty over its Overseas Territories. Without them, argued Apithy in 1954, Paris would have been deprived of a vital asset and, regardless of the progress of European integration, France would have been “definitively removed from the ranks of the great powers”¹³⁵. In short, the longstanding notion that a united Europe required Africa was now being employed by Africans themselves to demand inclusion in the European integration project on equal footing. Furthermore, the repeated invocation of arguments emphasising the overseas territories’ importance to France’s international status reveals how far Paris was from being ready to relinquish its colonial aspirations in the 1950s.

The momentum behind further integration, however, came to a sudden halt when the French Parliament rejected the EDC Treaty, refusing even to debate its ratification in August 1954. The Mendès-France government, appointed shortly after France’s crushing defeat in Indochina that May, could do little more than accept the failure of this new chapter in integration. The resounding collapse of the common defence initiative, along with that of political union, meant that the integration of such sensitive areas of national sovereignty would not be revisited for many years to come¹³⁶. Writing in the pages of the *Marchés Coloniaux du Monde*, Apithy welcomed the French Assembly’s decision, closing the article in which he defended his negative vote with the assertion that Eurafrican integration appeared neither indispensable nor opportune¹³⁷.

Still, the problem of German rearmament remained unresolved. The opportunity was then seized by Britain which, in line with its strategy of steering European integration away from supranationalism, proposed extending the Brussels Pact – a defensive alliance established in 1948 between the UK, the Benelux countries, and France – to include Italy and West Germany. In this way, German rearmament would occur within the framework of an intergovernmental

¹³⁴ J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p. 8 For a more detailed account of Nkrumah’s pan-Africanism and its repercussions on the African continent and the international system, see: F. Gerits, *The Ideological Scramble for Africa: How the Pursuit of Anticolonial Modernity Shaped a Postcolonial Order, 1945–1966*, Ithaca New York, Cornell University Press, 2023.

¹³⁵ Journal Officiel de la République Française (JORF) p. 4419, 29 août 1954, quoted in J. Fremigacci, *Les Parlementaires Africains face à la construction Européenne, 1953-1957*, in op. cit., p. 9.

¹³⁶ G. Laschi, *L’Europa e gli altri. Le relazioni esterne della Comunità dalle origini al dialogo Nord-Sud*, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

¹³⁷ S. M. Apithy, *Les Projets de Construction Européenne et les T. O. M.*, in: «Marchés Coloniaux du monde», issue n. 480, 22 January 1955, ANS, p. 177.

organisation, offering the guarantees France required while simultaneously reinforcing the Atlantic alliance¹³⁸. In October 1954, the Six and the UK signed agreements that admitted the Federal Republic of Germany into NATO and, once ratified, established the Western European Union (WEU). Although the treaties proclaimed support for European integration as one of the WEU's objectives, in practice it never evolved beyond its intergovernmental nature, essentially serving as a tool to enhance coordination between the Western European powers and NATO¹³⁹.

1.3 The path to Rome: a further step towards Eurafrica

After the blow dealt to the European unification project by the failure of the EDC, the period between 1954 and 1955 was marked by intense activity within the ECSC Assembly and among the governments of the Member States, aimed at identifying new avenues to advance integration¹⁴⁰. In May 1955, the Benelux governments presented a joint memorandum formally putting forward two proposals that had been taking shape in previous months: the pooling of atomic energy programmes and the creation of a common market¹⁴¹. These proposals were discussed by the Six at an intergovernmental conference held in Messina the following month, where the representatives of Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands succeeded in securing Italy's support and attracting the interest of France and Germany¹⁴². As a result, a special committee was established to examine the feasibility and technical details of the proposals. Chaired by Belgian Foreign Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, the committee carried out its work from July 1955 to March 1956¹⁴³.

However, the representatives of the Six were not the only participants in the committee: the United Kingdom had been invited to take part in its sessions, in the hope that this might pave the way for British involvement in this new phase of integration. While such a prospect was welcomed by all six governments, France saw in it a particular strategic advantage. Indeed, Paris feared that a common market could easily fall under German economic – and consequently political – hegemony¹⁴⁴. In this context, British participation was viewed as a means of restoring the balance of power among the Member States. In their discussions with

¹³⁸ G. Laschi, *L'Europa e gli altri. Le relazioni esterne della Comunità dalle origini al dialogo Nord-Sud*, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

¹³⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁰ S. Guerrieri, *Un Parlamento oltre le nazioni*, cit., pp. 224-225.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem.

¹⁴² D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, cit., p. 74.

¹⁴³ Ibidem, pp. 74-75.

¹⁴⁴ S. Burgess e G. Edwards, *The Six Plus One: British Policy-Making and the Question of European Economic Integration, 1955*, in «International Affairs» Vol. 64, 3-1998, p. 401.

British counterparts, French diplomats even appeared to suggest that the UK's involvement was almost a *conditio sine qua non* for their own support of the initiative. The British, for their part, believed that similar concerns about Germany were shared by the Benelux countries¹⁴⁵. Thus, calculations in London were based on the assumption that, should the UK withdraw from the committee, its work would collapse under the weight of the divergences and mutual mistrust among the Six.

On this basis, Her Majesty's Government – judging an outright refusal as a politically dangerous and isolating choice – resolved to send representatives to the Spaak Committee in a capacity that went beyond that of mere observers, albeit on cautious and non-committal terms¹⁴⁶. Nevertheless, the Eden Government had not abandoned the traditional Conservative stance on European integration: Europe continued to be regarded as the least strategically significant of the arenas in which Britain could exert influence. It was therefore deemed essential to avoid entanglement in any tightly knit supranational or federal structure¹⁴⁷. Indeed, when the British Government commissioned a special inquiry to examine the implications of joining the European integration process, the resulting 'Trend Report' of October 1955 concluded that potential British membership would be detrimental to the United Kingdom's international prestige. The report further emphasised that participation in a European common market would have been fundamentally at odds with Britain's global economic relationships – particularly those within the Commonwealth, which were oriented towards the promotion and expansion of international free trade. At the same time, however, the report warned that, should a continental common market come to fruition, Britain's exclusion could have serious adverse consequences for its economy. As Harold Macmillan's Foreign Office had come to regard British participation as essential to the Spaak Committee's success, London adopted a strategy aimed at influencing its proceedings from within for as long as possible. Ultimately, the plan was to withdraw and wait for the Six to reach an impasse, at which point Britain could re-emerge and steer the Six towards a looser framework to be realised under the auspices of the OECE¹⁴⁸.

Macmillan's ambitious plan, however, failed to yield the desired results. Despite the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the Committee, the *Spaak Report* – having secured the support of

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 407.

¹⁴⁶ Ibidem, pp. 397-399.

¹⁴⁷ Ibidem, pp. 396-397.

¹⁴⁸ Ibidem. pp. 405-407

the ECSC Assembly¹⁴⁹ – was formally presented at the intergovernmental conference held by the foreign ministers of the Six in Venice in May 1956¹⁵⁰. The Spaak Committee was thereby transformed into a permanent conference tasked with negotiating the treaties that would establish a European common market. It was at this juncture that the French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau reintroduced the question of the Overseas Territories – a topic that had thus far been overlooked by the Spaak Committee. While affirming that the French government accepted the Spaak Report as a suitable basis for negotiations, Pineau also made it clear that France could not participate in the process if the overseas parts of the *République* were to be excluded¹⁵¹. In doing so, he was giving voice to a broader consensus within the French government. Gaston Defferre, Minister for the Overseas Territories, similarly insisted on the necessity of integrating these regions, arguing that this was essential for the creation of a “common Eurafrican market”¹⁵².

Pineau’s declaration introduced an additional issue in the Six’s negotiation agenda. This development came at a moment when alarming developments in the international arena – most notably Nasser’s nationalisation of the Suez Canal in July 1956 – intensified the pressure on Western Europe to maintain its influence in Africa. Within the context of bipolar competition, the strategic importance of retaining access to such a resource-rich continent served as a further incentive for the other negotiating parties to accommodate French demands¹⁵³. By the end of November, an *ad hoc* Overseas Territories Group was established¹⁵⁴. Chaired by Belgian diplomat Albert Hupperts, before the end of 1956 the group produced a notable draft outlining the benefits that integrating the Overseas Territories – particularly the African ones – would bring to the prospective common market. Unsurprisingly, the report reiterated many of the classical of the Eurafrican discourse:

Economically speaking, the European member states of the common market have an essential need for the cooperation and support that the overseas territories – particularly the African ones – are able to offer in order to establish long-term balance of the European economy. The sources of raw material, variegated and abundant, which the overseas

¹⁴⁹ S. Guerrieri, *Un Parlamento oltre le nazioni*, cit., pp. 225-229.

¹⁵⁰ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁵¹ Ibidem.

¹⁵² Letter from G. Defferre to the President of the Council of Ministers, 17 May 1956, quoted in: D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁵³ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁵⁴ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in «Journal of Historical Sociology», Vol. 27, No. 3-2014, p. 452.

territories dispose of are likely to ensure for the entirety of the European economy of the common market the indispensable foundation for an expanding economy and present the additional advantage of being situated in countries whose orientation may be influenced by the European countries themselves¹⁵⁵.

Here, the insistence on Africa's abundance of natural resources and raw materials was coupled with the geopolitical relevance of these regions. Beyond offering economic gains, their integration was seen as a means of securing continued availability of those resources. In this way, Europe would also retain a degree of influence over the political development of its overseas territories, thereby preventing them from severing the historical ties with their respective *métropoles*.

This strategy, proposed by France and swiftly endorsed by Spaak's Belgium¹⁵⁶, also succeeded in attracting support from West Germany. In early December 1956, Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano reminded Chancellor Adenauer of the recurring emphasis on Africa during earlier phases of European integration. He reiterated its geopolitical significance, concluding that West Germany had no reason to oppose French demands on the matter¹⁵⁷. Despite strong objections from key figures within the German government – most notably Ludwig Erhard – Adenauer, persuaded by the strategic importance of securing a Western-aligned Africa, ultimately chose to follow his Foreign Minister's recommendation¹⁵⁸. In the meantime, Italy had joined what appeared to be a growing consensus around the French proposal. As negotiations drew to a close, the only remaining sceptical voice came from The Netherlands. Dutch reservations were twofold. Economically, The Hague was concerned about the potential financial burden of integrating Africa and disliked the protectionist orientations of the French government, which

¹⁵⁵ Conférence intergouvernementale (1956) "Projet de préambule, établi par le Président du groupe ad hoc territoires d'outre-mer". MAE 818 f/56. HAEU CM 3/NEGO-252 (Conférence intergouvernementale: Historique de l'article 131 du traité), translated and quoted in P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in op. cit., p. 452.

¹⁵⁶ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., p. 21. See also: F. Gerits, *The Ideological Scramble for Africa: How the Pursuit of Anticolonial Modernity Shaped a Postcolonial Order, 1945–1966*, op. cit.

¹⁵⁷ H. Brentano, Letter to Konrad Adenauer, 8 Dec. 1956. Politischen Archivs des Auswärtigen Amts, PA AA. B 10 Abteilung II, Politische Abteilung, Bd. 915 (Brüsseler Integrationskonferenz), translated and quoted in P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in op. cit., p. 451.

¹⁵⁸ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafrikan Project, 1920–1960*, in op. cit., pp. 453–454; U. Vahsen, *Africa Policy in a European Framework? The Federal Republic of Germany and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s*, in: op. cit., pp. 96–99. See also: Urban Vahsen, *Eurafrikanische Entwicklungskooperation. Die Assoziierungspolitik der EWG gegenüber dem subsaharischen Afrika in den 1960er Jahren*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010.

would contradict the open-door trade policy adopted in Dutch colonies¹⁵⁹. Politically, the Dutch government remained hesitant to support the Europeanisation of French and Belgian colonial holdings¹⁶⁰.

Nevertheless, these objections never solidified into an unyielding Dutch position. As a result, on 25 March 1957, the highest representatives of the Six convened in Rome to sign the treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC). Part IV of what would become known as the Treaty of Rome – comprising Articles 131 to 136 – regulated the *Association des Pays et Territoires d’Outre-Mer*. In a notable semantic choice, these articles defined the *pays et territoires* as non-European countries and territories that maintained “special relationships” with France, Belgium, Italy, or The Netherlands¹⁶¹. According to Annex IV of the treaty, these included French West and Equatorial Africa, the Autonomous Republic of Togoland, Madagascar, French Cameroons, the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, Italian Somaliland, and Dutch New Guinea. In this way, the colonial structures that enabled European governance over these territories were euphemistically rebranded as ‘special relations’.

The treaty further stipulated that the principal objectives of the Association were the promotion of the social and economic development of the designated territories, and the establishment of close economic relations between them and the Community as a whole. To this end, the Member States agreed to extend the common economic regime of the nascent EEC to the overseas territories. Consequently, exports from these countries and territories were granted free access to the markets of the Six¹⁶². In return, the associated territories were required to accord all EEC exports the same preferential treatment that had previously been reserved for exports from their respective metropolises¹⁶³. An exception to this principle was also envisaged: the territories were permitted to impose customs duties in order to secure revenue for their budgets, development, and industrialisation, provided such duties did not discriminate between imports from the various Member States. Nonetheless, these duties were to be gradually reduced and eventually abolished. Thus, the principle of reciprocity was

¹⁵⁹ R. De Bruin, *Indonesian Decolonisation and the Dutch Attitude Towards the Establishment of the EEC’s Association Policy, 1945-1963*, in: op. cit., pp. 223-225.

¹⁶⁰ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in «History of the Present», Vol. 7, No. 1-2017, pp. 7-8.

¹⁶¹ *Traité Instituant la Communauté Économique Européenne et documents annexes*, 25 Mars 1956, Quatrième Partie, Art. 131, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11957E/TXT&from=IT> (last access 09/12/2019).

¹⁶² Ibidem, Art. 132.

¹⁶³ Ibidem, Art. 133.

enshrined in the Treaty of Rome. Also known as the 'reverse preferences' regime, it would inform all subsequent trade relations between the EEC and the Associated Countries and Territories until 1975.

The Convention established another crucial element of the Association regime: the European Development Fund (EDF). This Fund was to be financed by each Member State according to previously negotiated quotas, expressed in fixed contributions. France and West Germany were to provide equal and substantial shares, thereby shouldering the majority of the Fund's financial burden¹⁶⁴. For the West German Foreign Ministry, the costs of the EDF were justified by the belief that Association could improve African perceptions of Europe – particularly in the wake of the 1955 Bandung Conference and the growing tide of anti-colonial sentiment¹⁶⁵. Yet, in securing this arrangement, France succeeded in embedding within the Treaty of Rome a collective European commitment to support the economic development of its overseas territories. One of Paris's principal negotiation objectives was thus achieved: securing steadily increasing contributions from other Member States while simultaneously limiting its own overseas public expenditure¹⁶⁶. That this was a key French objective had not escaped the attention of its partners. French Prime Minister Guy Mollet had made it explicit in his statement to the United Nations General Assembly on Algeria at the beginning of 1957, asserting: "All of Europe will be called upon to help in the development of Africa, and tomorrow Eurafrica may become one of the principal factors in world politics"¹⁶⁷.

Therefore, the establishment of the EEC marked the realisation of two intertwined ambitions. Beyond its overall significance for European integration, Part IV of the Rome Treaty constituted a pivotal step towards the long-anticipated creation of Eurafrica. It is little surprise, then, that during a visit to Washington at the end of February 1957, a rather triumphant Mollet announced the conclusion of the EEC negotiations to the press by declaring:

I would like to insist upon the unity of Europe: it is now a fact. A few days ago we jumped over the last hurdles that were on its way, and now an even broader unity is being born:

¹⁶⁴ Art. 1 of the *Convention d'Application relative à l'Association des Pays et Territoires d'Outre Mer à la Communauté*, annexed to the *Traité Instituant la Communauté Économique Européenne et documents annexes*, op. cit.

¹⁶⁵ U. Vahsen, *Africa Policy in a European Framework? The Federal Republic of Germany and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s*, in: op. cit., pp. 98-99.

¹⁶⁶ D. Avit, *La question de l'Eurafrrique dans la construction de l'Europe de 1950 à 1957*, in op. cit., pp. 21-22.

¹⁶⁷ G. Mollet, *Text of the French Government's Statement on Algeria*, 9 January, 1957. HAEU, Dep. Emile Noël, EN-2736 (EN.01-04.01- Discours de Guy Mollet 1956-58), quoted in: P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in op. cit., p. 453.

EURAFRICA, a close association in which we will work together to promote progress, happiness and democracy in Africa¹⁶⁸.

1.4 Decolonisation and new narratives of Eurafrican relations

Through the establishment of the Association, France succeeded in drawing its European partners into its African sphere, thereby spreading the considerable costs of developing its overseas territories among the Six¹⁶⁹. This accomplishment was especially significant for Paris, given the mounting challenges it faced in managing its colonial domains. Indeed, the French diplomatic effort during the EEC negotiations – which ultimately led to the first formal instance of Eurafrican integration – ran parallel to a broader reconfiguration of France's domestic colonial policy. Following its humiliating defeat in Vietnam, which culminated in the disintegration of French Indochina in the summer of 1954, hostilities erupted in Algeria in the autumn of that same year. The Algerian uprising, with independence as its ultimate goal, further compelled the French government to reconsider the framework that linked the *métropole* to its overseas possessions.

Determined to avert further costly conflicts and to temper independentist ambitions in its African territories¹⁷⁰, in June 1956 the French government – in an effort led by Gaston Defferre, Minister for Overseas France – introduced the *Loi-Cadre*. Marking a decisive break with the previously centralised colonial governance model, the *Loi-Cadre* granted increased autonomy to territorial governments in Africa, which had until then been administered through the federations of *Afrique-Occidentale Française* and *Afrique-Équatoriale Française*¹⁷¹. This decentralisation of power, however, did not quell calls for full independence emerging across the French Union. If anything, it enabled what some critics have described as the “Balkanisation” of these federations, evoking the old logic of *divide et impera*¹⁷².

¹⁶⁸ G. Mollet, *Statement given by French Premier Guy Mollet on his Arrival at the Washington Airport*, 25 February, 1957. HAEU, Dep. Emile Noël, EN-2737 (EN.01-04.01-Discours de Guy Mollet 1956-58), quoted in: P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Another Colonialism: Africa in the History of European Integration*, in op. cit., p. 453.

¹⁶⁹ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2014, pp. 15-16.

¹⁷⁰ L. Kottos, *Linking Europe and Empire: Making Strategic Choices on the Eve of the Treaty of Rome*, in P. Winand, A. Benvenuti, M. Guderzo (eds.), *The External Relations of the European Union: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Brussels, P. I. E. Peter Lang, 2014, pp. 323-325.

¹⁷¹ D. Rothchild, *African Federations and the Diplomacy of Decolonization*, in «The Journal of Developing Areas», Vol. 4, 4-1970, pp. 514-515.

¹⁷² A. Tevoedjre, *Pan Africanism in Action: An Account of the U.A.M.*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1965, p.3, quoted in D. Rothchild, *African Federations and the Diplomacy of Decolonization*, in op. cit., p. 515.

By the autumn of 1960, the territorial entities that had once constituted French West and Equatorial Africa – along with several other dependencies – had achieved independence from the French *métropole*, emerging as sovereign, newly-independent states. Yet the bonds that tied them to France, and to Europe more broadly, were far from broken. Following the collapse of the IV Republic and General Charles de Gaulle's return to power amid escalating tensions in Algeria, Paris had continued to overhaul its colonial regime. The establishment of the Fifth Republic in 1958 effectively marked the end of the *Union Française*, which was replaced by the newly conceived *Communauté Française*¹⁷³. With the sole exception of Sékou Touré's Guinea-Conakry, which opted for immediate independence, all French African territories at that time voted to become autonomous republics within this new Community framework.

According to Hansen and Jonsson, one of the principal reasons African citizens endorsed the new French Constitution – and thereby membership in the French Community – lay in the very Association established by the Treaty of Rome. For political figures such as Félix Houphouët-Boigny, leader of the African Democratic Assembly and former minister in Mollet's cabinet, this initial phase of integration was seen as the only viable path for African territories – still too underdeveloped and politically inexperienced for full independence – to secure their rightful place on the international stage alongside France and Europe¹⁷⁴. Given France's central role in the integration process, maintaining close ties with Paris through the French Community was viewed as indispensable. This strategy offered African countries multiple advantages: they could preserve their privileged relationship with the *métropole* while simultaneously transcending its colonial dimension, thanks to the perceived emancipatory potential of Eurafrican integration. Furthermore, the Association and the European Development Fund (EDF) formally detached development aid from colonial dependency, allowing these territories to access funds on the basis of their status as developing countries rather than colonial possessions. Although this logic was strongly contested by numerous Anglophone African leaders, as well as by some key Francophone figures such as Sékou Touré¹⁷⁵ and Sourou Migan Apithy¹⁷⁶, it resonated with many others among Francophone African elites.

In light of this, two distinct yet interrelated observations may be drawn. First, even in the late 1950s, a significant segment of Francophone Africa's political elites continued to view Eurafrica

¹⁷³ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁷⁴ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in op. cit., pp. 22-23.

¹⁷⁵ Ibidem, p. 21.

¹⁷⁶ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 15.

as a vehicle for achieving equality and shedding the lingering colonial structures that shaped their relations with Europe. Certainly, they had developed their own conception of Eurafrica, which did not necessarily align with Europe's vision. As in the early 1950s, the transcontinental integration advocated by leaders such as Houphouët-Boigny and Senghor was not centred on the joint exploitation of Africa as Europe's *prolongement naturel* – a notion that had long underpinned the European version of Eurafrica¹⁷⁷. Nevertheless, they believed that the EEC Association framework could serve as a vehicle to attain a truly equal Eurafrica. Secondly – and subsequently – France's reconfiguration of its colonial structures and African participation in European integration were, at this moment, mutually instrumental¹⁷⁸. Each process reinforced the other, creating a dynamic of reciprocal consolidation.

Thus, even when the associated African countries attained independence, they remained firmly anchored to Europe through the Association. This enduring connection was reflected in the administrative structure of the EEC, particularly in the management of the Association and the European Development Fund (EDF). These were placed under the authority of the *Direction Générale Développement* (DG VIII), a department within the Commission led by Director-General Helmut Allardt, a former German diplomat¹⁷⁹. Being the largest contributor to the EDF together with Paris, Bonn wished to influence the evolution of the Association system after the advent of political decolonisation¹⁸⁰. However, France retained a leading role in shaping policy towards its former empire and other European colonies by securing the appointment of the first European Commissioner for Development, Robert Leimagnen. According to Leimagnen, having a German official at the helm of DG VIII was instrumental in drawing West Germany's attention to a policy area that had otherwise been met with scepticism by some factions of the German government¹⁸¹.

Despite this, DG VIII came to be dominated by another Frenchman, Jacques Ferrandi, who served as Head of Cabinet to Commissioner Leimagnen at the latter's explicit request. Ferrandi was among the many former colonial officers who, having lost their careers within the French colonial administration, transitioned into equivalent roles within the emerging European

¹⁷⁷ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in op. cit., p. 23.

¹⁷⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁹ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

¹⁸⁰ U. Vahsen, *Africa Policy in a European Framework? The Federal Republic of Germany and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s*, in: op. cit., pp. 103-105.

¹⁸¹ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

institutions¹⁸². Drawing upon his prior experience and official positions, Ferrandi was able to cultivate close personal relationships with African counterparts and consolidate a considerable degree of influence, ultimately running DG VIII in a manner that Véronique Dimier has described as “neo-patrimonial”¹⁸³. Thus, rather than vanishing in the wake of decolonisation, French colonial expertise and institutional practices were transferred directly into DG VIII through Ferrandi and his fellow former colonial administrators. In this way, DG VIII began to operate in a curiously paradoxical fashion. Its official purpose – namely, to demonstrate that the Association and its implementation marked a clear break from colonial regimes – stood in stark contrast to its methods and institutional culture, both of which remained steeped in colonial traditions and attitudes¹⁸⁴.

Whereas reforms of France’s overseas political structures had enabled a relatively smooth transition towards independence, the Association regime proved less amenable to such change. The Treaty of Rome had not anticipated the possibility that associated territories might gain independence, nor did it provide any legal mechanism through which those territories could formally withdraw from the Association¹⁸⁵. Consequently, when the majority of the associated countries achieved independence in the early 1960s, the necessity of crafting a new Association framework quickly became apparent. According to the European Commission, indeed,

During the five years 1958–62 the associated states, which had meanwhile become independent, [...] on a number of occasions reaffirmed their desire to see the Association continued beyond the five years laid down in the implementing convention. The movement of opinion in the associated states in favour of close collaboration with the European Community was reflected in many official statements by political leaders from Africa and Madagascar, and in resolutions adopted in regional organizations set up on the African continent after the associated states had attained independence¹⁸⁶.

While this attitude may have been shared by many associated states, it was by no means representative of the wider African continent. Prominent African political figures such as

¹⁸² J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711; J. Chapperon, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT706.

¹⁸³ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

¹⁸⁴ Ibidem, p. 21.

¹⁸⁵ M. Lister, *The European Community and the Developing World*, Avebury, Aldershot, 1988, p. 12.

¹⁸⁶ European Commission, *Partnership in Africa: the Yaoundé Association*, Community Topics 26, European Community Information Service, 1966, p. 6, quoted in P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in op. cit., p. 24.

Kwame Nkrumah, Sékou Touré, and Frantz Fanon¹⁸⁷ were consistently critical of the Community's Association policy, which also attracted condemnation from the Soviet Union¹⁸⁸. As Hansen and Jonsson argue, such reactions reveal that the "Eurafrican framework" established through the Association served its intended function of keeping former African colonies at Europe's arm's length, despite the formal processes of independence and decolonisation¹⁸⁹. In June 1961, the representatives of 18 African and Malagasy states – collectively known as *États Africains et Malgache Associés* (EAMA) – attended the *Conférence Parlementaire Euro-Africaine de Strasbourg* in order to discuss the future of the Association with their European counterparts¹⁹⁰. By the end of that year, these states had resolved to enter into new negotiations with the EEC, with the aim of drafting a revised Convention to govern relations between the Community and the newly independent states¹⁹¹.

The negotiations, which lasted until the summer of 1963, culminated in the signing of the Yaoundé Convention in July 1963 by the EEC and the EAMA. Yaoundé, however, introduced few innovations to the framework originally established under the Treaty of Rome. It maintained a five-year term, confirmed the application of common market provisions to the Associates, preserved the system of reverse preferences, and established a second EDF¹⁹². However, the Convention's language was notably more attuned to the changed political context: the Associates were no longer *pays et territoires d'outre-mer*, but fully sovereign states. The Yaoundé Convention would later be renewed with minimal changes in 1969 and would continue to govern Euro-African relations until the signing of the Lomé Convention in 1975.

Yaoundé was presented as the free association of fully equal partners, bound together through a contractual agreement¹⁹³. This principle of equality underpinning the new relationship between the EEC and the EAMA was institutionalised through the creation of joint bodies modelled on those of the EEC: the Council of the Association and the Parliamentary Conference

¹⁸⁷ P. Pasture, *The EC/EU between the Art of Forgetting and the Palimpsest of Empire*, in «European Review», Vol. 26, 2018-3, p. 550.

¹⁸⁸ S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L'Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d'une Identité Postcoloniale*, in «Relations Internationales», Vol. 140, issue 4, 2009, p. 24.

¹⁸⁹ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in op. cit., pp. 24.

¹⁹⁰ S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L'Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d'une Identité Postcoloniale*, in op. cit., p. 25.

¹⁹¹ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 53.

¹⁹² S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L'Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d'une Identité Postcoloniale*, in op. cit., p. 25.

¹⁹³ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 53.

on the Association. Tellingly, these institutions bore a striking resemblance to those of the short-lived French Community – not least because they too held only advisory powers¹⁹⁴.

Moreover, several features of the Yaoundé Convention – most notably the absence of any political or economic conditionality attached to the disbursement of development aid – reflected the influence of Jacques Ferrandi and his French colleagues in shaping both the ethos and operations of DG VIII. The lack of conditionality was underpinned by a philosophy of allowing Associates to achieve “progress in their own way”¹⁹⁵, echoing the colonial doctrine of *évolution dans le respect des traditions* and evoking the logic of indirect rule¹⁹⁶. This approach presupposed a detailed understanding of each country's political landscape, socio-economic conditions, and institutional capacities. More concretely, it demanded that DG VIII *fonctionnaires* cultivate relationships with national elites and navigate local political cultures with sensitivity. As Véronique Dimier observes, “Ferrandi’s methods of distributing funds and controlling their utilization relied on personal ties, mutual obligations and trust in the African elite, the very ingredients of indirect rule”¹⁹⁷.

It is evident that, although the altered language of the Yaoundé Convention formally acknowledged the independence of the Associates, the underlying economic and relational dynamics – rooted in the colonial structures that had previously shaped Euro-African relations – remained largely intact. Yet this shift was not confined to the Convention’s phrasing alone; it was mirrored in broader transformations within the EEC’s self-representation during this period. According to Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission, the Yaoundé Convention represented “a historic step in the long evolution of relations between industrialised and developing nations”¹⁹⁸. Notably absent from this narrative was any acknowledgement that this so-called “long evolution” had occurred within the framework of European imperialism and colonialism. Indeed, colonialism was entirely elided from the President’s discourse. By framing Yaoundé as a definitive break with the past, Hallstein implicitly severed the historical continuity between colonialism and the European integration project, thereby presenting the

¹⁹⁴ M. Lister, *The European Community and the Developing World*, Avebury, Aldershot, 1988, p. 5.

¹⁹⁵ Rochereau, *Address to the parliamentary conference of the Association*, 8–11 December 1964, Dakar, AEUD: Archives of the EU delegation in Washington, USA, 448/3, quoted in: V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁹⁶ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁹⁸ AHCE Collection des discours des Commissaires « Walter Hallstein », *Discours à l’occasion de la signature de la Convention d’association avec les États africains et malgache*, Yaoundé, 20 juillet 1963, p. 1, quoted in: S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L’Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d’une Identité Postcoloniale*, in op. cit., p. 25.

EEC as unburdened by the colonial legacies of its Member States¹⁹⁹. With regard to the EEC's own colonial entanglements, namely the 1957 Association, Hallstein characterised the new agreement established at Yaoundé as a complete renewal of the previous system, adapted to meet the political and economic needs of newly-independent African states²⁰⁰. Yet here too, prior relations were not cast in the light of colonialism, but rather as an earlier stage in a supposedly linear and benign trajectory of Euro-African cooperation – one that merely required adjustment, rather than historical reckoning.

1.5 The disappearance of Eurafrica?

Colonialism was not the only concept subjected to this effort of rhetorical erasure; Eurafrica itself became the next casualty, increasingly regarded as too closely associated with earlier visions of European exploitation. Barely two months after the signing of the new Convention, Gaston Thorn – Luxembourg's representative and future President of the Commission – presented Yaoundé as a means to facilitate the establishment of “new links between Europe and Africa, without retaining the name Eurafrica, which is already suspected of having ulterior motives”²⁰¹. Indeed, Eurafrica progressively disappeared from the Community's public discourse. According to Hansen and Jonsson, the promises of equality embedded in the Eurafrican vision ensured that African independence did not result in a rupture of Euro-African relations; rather, it enabled their renewal through the revised Association framework. Once this continuity had been secured with the signing of the Yaoundé Convention, European actors could safely disavow their colonial past, relegating the notion of Eurafrica to the domain of discredited and unspoken ideas, and framing decolonisation as a definitive break with earlier forms of domination²⁰². As a result, the Association regime enshrined in Yaoundé was not presented as a continuation of the 1957 system. Instead, in Thorn's words before the European Parliament, it was held up as evidence that “for the Six, not only the era of colonisation, but also of economic domination is over”²⁰³.

¹⁹⁹ S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L'Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d'une Identité Postcoloniale*, in op. cit., p. 25.

²⁰⁰ Ibidem, pp. 25-26.

²⁰¹ Gaston Thorn, séance du 16 septembre 1963, *Assemblée parlementaire européenne, Débats. Comptes rendus* in extenso, vol. X/63, no 65, p. 12, quoted in: S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L'Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d'une Identité Postcoloniale*, in op. cit., p. 28.

²⁰² P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial Origins of the European Union*, in op. cit., pp. 16-18.

²⁰³ Gaston Thorn, séance du 16 septembre 1963 *Assemblée parlementaire européenne, Débats. Comptes rendus* in extenso, vol. X/63, no 65, p. 15, quoted in: S. Huber, *Dialogue Avec le Tiers Monde: L'Europe Communautaire à la Recherche d'une Identité Postcoloniale*, in op. cit., p. 26.

In light of this, Hansen and Jonsson understand Eurafrica's role through the lens of Frederic Jameson's concept of the "vanishing mediator." In this sense, Eurafrica functioned as a crucial intermediary, enabling the European Community to simultaneously incorporate and distance itself from Europe's colonial legacy. Hansen and Jonsson are not alone in spelling out the disappearance of Eurafrica. Although few studies on Eurafrica consider its fate following decolonisation, scholars focusing on later stages of European integration generally agree in according an ever diminishing role to Eurafrican ideals. Patel, for instance, explicitly asserts that after the signing of the Yaoundé Convention in 1963, "the Eurafrique tradition ceased to play any meaningful role in Europe's self-image and collective memory"²⁰⁴.

To an extent, this is true. After decolonisation and the subsequent normalisation of the Association policy, mentions of empire and Eurafrica disappeared from European official discourse, virtually forgotten. Despite recognising the profound ties that connect Europe and Africa, to this day European official documents never seem to acknowledge the colonial context in which these ties originated. This tendency has not gone completely unnoticed. Analysing the way in which the European Community presented itself as a normative civilian power throughout the years, Patrick Pasture has introduced the concept of European "colonial amnesia"²⁰⁵. This is reflected by most of European integration historiography. Historians have readily received this interpretation, depicting European integration and colonialism as antithetic processes for decades, and the history of Euro-African relations has frequently been overlooked. As result, the Lomé Conventions, the new framework that would regulate Euro-African relations from 1975 onwards, remain understudied from a historical point of view.

A small number of authors, however, have investigated the evolution of Euro-African relations during the later stages of European integration. In Francophone literature, the conference on Euro-African relations held in Paris in 2004 under the direction of Marie-Thérèse Bitsch and Gérard Bossuat²⁰⁶ is fundamental in this regard. Many of its contributors, such as Guia Migani²⁰⁷, and Jean Marie Palayret²⁰⁸, have dealt with how Paris' African policy was deployed

²⁰⁴ K. K. Patel, *Project Europe: A History*, op. cit., p. 250.

²⁰⁵ P. Pasture, *The EC/EU between the Art of Forgetting and the Palimpsest of Empire*, in «European Review», Vol. 26, issue 3, 2018, pp. 545-581.

²⁰⁶ M. T. Bitsch, and G. Bossuat, *L'Europe Unie Et L'Afrique: De L'idée D'Eurafrique à La Convention De Lomé I: Actes Du Colloque International De Paris, 1er Et 2 Avril 2004*, Bruxelles, Bruylant, 2005.

²⁰⁷ Among other works, see : G. Migani, *La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)*, in «Revue Française de civilisation Britannique», Vol. 18, issue 2, 2013, pp. 87-104.

²⁰⁸ J. M. Palayret, "Da Lomé a Cotonou: Morte e trasfigurazione della Convenzione CEE/ACP" In *Il Primato Sfuggente: L'Europa e l'intervento per lo sviluppo, 1957-2007*, edited by Elena Calandri, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 35-52.

through the European arena as well as bilaterally. Their further contributions were crucial for the conceptualisation of this research, but their works' outlook remains anchored to France and, in most cases, does not extend past 1975. In Anglophone literature, besides the aforementioned work by Dimier, a number of fundamental contributions that explore the issue of Euro-African relations from original points of view. On the one hand, Megan Brown has recently investigated the complexities of Algeria's involvement in European integration, reconstructing its inclusion as part of France's sovereign territory and its slow disentanglement from the EEC after 1962²⁰⁹. On the other hand, the aforementioned works by Giuliano Garavini²¹⁰ and Sara Lorenzini²¹¹ have shed light on how the Community reacted to the challenges posed by decolonisation and sought to exploit development discourse to reaffirm its role in the international arena. Many other authors have explored specific issues that pertain to Euro-African relations.

All these works are crucial to understand Euro-African relations in the context of the institutional evolution of the EEC and in the broader changing international system. Nevertheless, approaching the issue from different perspectives, they do not offer a complete account of how united Europe and newly-independent African countries developed their relations after the end of the 1960s. By postulating the disappearance of Eurafrica and the colonial aspirations tied to it, European integration historiography has generally shied away from investigating the effects that this colonial past had on the evolution of Euro-African relations and European integration more in general.

But did Eurafrica really disappear? In reality, even a superficial glance at European and African archives can reveal how it remained a powerful reference for both continents' representatives and statespersons implied in Euro-African relations. In 1971, during one of the sessions of the Association Joint Committee meeting, Chadian president Françoise Tombalbaye concluded his inaugural speech by invoking the realisation of "the Eurafrica in which we place our hopes"²¹². During the course of the 1970s and at least until 1978, the "Eurafrrique prix" was awarded every year to a European and an African statesperson by the influential periodical *France Eurafrrique*, which had been established in 1954. Winners included: the former President of the European

²⁰⁹ M. Brown, *The Seventh Member State: Algeria, France and the European Community*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 2022.

²¹⁰ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit.

²¹¹ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit.

²¹² *Discours d'ouverture de M. François Tombalbaye*, Réunion du 27 au 29 Octobre 1971, Fort-Lamy, Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU), ACP 215.

Parliament Georges Spénale, influential Ivorian politician Philippe Yacé and Senegalese President Léopold Sedar Senghor²¹³. It is interesting to note that in 1978 the prize was awarded to the soon-to-be President of the European Commission Gaston Thorn – the very same man who fifteen years earlier had lauded the Yaoundé Convention as a new beginning for Euro-African relations and had subsequently invited his European colleagues to abandon any reference to Eurafrica.

But one does not even need to enter an archive to see that the ‘ghost’ of Eurafrica continues to haunt Euro-African relations to this day. The von der Leyen Commission’s *Comprehensive Strategy towards Africa* quoted at the beginning of this dissertation makes copious references to Africa’s place as Europe’s “closest neighbour” and “twin continent”²¹⁴. Although this surely does not mean that the current European Commission secretly wants to establish a Eurafrican community, it appears as a clear sign that old ideas of natural complementarity and necessary commonality of the two continents still inform the way in which Europe sees Africa. While this does not constitute definitive proof that the EEC pursued Euro-African relations with explicitly neo-colonial intent, it is sufficient to demonstrate that Eurafrica – or at least a certain iteration of it – survived decolonisation. This, in turn, raises important questions about the aims and practices that shaped the European approach to Africa during the 1970s and 1980s. It is therefore worthwhile to challenge the assumption of Eurafrica’s early disappearance and to extend this line of inquiry into the more mature phases of the EEC.

²¹³ *La remise du prix Eurafrique 78 à Léopold-Sedar Senghor et Gaston Thorn: Deux artisans de l’Eurafrique*, in «France Eurafrique, La tribune libre des deux continents», Issue 287, December 1978, in : Centre de Documentation des Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS).

²¹⁴ European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa*, 09/03/2020.

Chapter 2

The first EEC enlargement and its impact on Africa: rethinking Euro-African relations, 1969-1973

We respect the achievements of France's *mission civilisatrice* in Africa; [...] Between us, the French and we know more about Africa than anyone else, and we ought to work together as closely as possible to achieve our common objectives.

(Visit of the Prime Minister to Paris, 19-21 May 1971, Africa, Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 13 May 1971, The National Archives (TNA), FCO 30/879)

It would be preferable for the Europeans to allow the Africans to talk calmly with each other [...] and not to interfere.

(Alioune Sissoko, Procès-Verbal de la Commission Paritaire de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association, 26-29 June 1973, Bruges, HAEU ACP 221, p. 14.)

We did not struggle as individual states to quit the claws and tentacles of European colonialism only to offer ourselves as a united Africa, by design and default, as a colony of a united Europe.

(Nzo Ekangaki, Speech by Secretary-General of the OAU, Lagos, 9 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707, p. 4.)

In January 1970, John Pinder, English longstanding supporter of European integration, celebrated the outcome of The Hague summit of December 1969 by declaring that “the Community’s unhappy Gaullist decade”²¹⁵ had come to an end. The sentiment was common among British supporters of European integration: during the 1960s, Britain had twice attempted and failed to join the Community because of Charles de Gaulle’s opposition. De Gaulle’s veto to Community enlargement would only be lifted with Pompidou’s arrival at the Élysée in April 1969. By the end of the year, the Six’s heads of state (or government) met in The Hague and agreed on “completing, consolidating and enlarging” the Community²¹⁶. The process

²¹⁵ J. Pinder, *Prospects for Europe after the Summit*, in «The World Today», Vol. 26, issue 1, 1970, pp. 5-18, p. 5.

²¹⁶ *The Hague Summit*, in «Bulletin of the European Communities», issue 1, 1970, p. 7.

that was set in motion in December 1969 would not only enlarge the EEC, but also determine the restructuration of the Community's external relations, especially with developing countries in Africa. Britain's adhesion, bringing within the Community the other major former colonial power of Europe, threatened to change the balance among the member states and to shift the priorities of the Communitarian development policy, forever altering the Association system that had been in place since 1957. Fearing such a development, France stood ready to defend the Association *acquis*.

For these reasons, the first enlargement of the Community was not solely a European matter. African countries observed Anglo-Communitarian developments with apprehension. On the one hand, the 'Associates', i. e. the states that were part of the Association system and that were mostly Francophone, were aware of the potential benefits that could come from the enlargement of the Community and of the Association itself. At the same time, they feared that sharing these benefits with more (and more powerful) Anglophone neighbours could result in a net loss. On the other hand, the 'Associables', Anglophone Commonwealth members who could join the Association, were generally wary of the EEC. Most of them had denounced the Association as a neo-colonial device for almost a decade, and criticised British attempts at joining the community in both 1961 and 1967. Despite this negative attitude towards the EEC, a few Anglophone countries had sought to establish closer links with the Community during the 1960s. Nigeria made overtures in 1963 and, although the resulting agreement was never ratified, by 1965 a limited commercial arrangement with the Community had been negotiated. Meanwhile, the East African states of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda concluded a trade agreement with the EEC in 1968²¹⁷. Thus, in December 1969, both Francophone and Anglophone African countries began to turn their attention to what was happening between Brussels and London.

Given this premise, it may seem surprising that less than four years later, in early 1973, the European Community and 46 African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) states entered into negotiations for a convention that would go on to shape Euro-African relations for the next 25 years. What had changed in Europe? Had France failed to uphold its imperial legacy within the Community, or had London and Paris reached a compromise to "achieve their common objectives" in Africa? If so, to what extent were these objectives neo-colonial in nature? On the

²¹⁷ G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l'Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961–1972)*, in: «Modern and Contemporary France», Vol. 26, issue 1, 2018, pp. 49-51.

other hand, how did Francophone and Anglophone African countries manage to approach negotiations with the EEC as a united front? And crucially, did they do so independently?

This chapter aims at answering these questions by reconstructing the Community's first enlargement and its impact on Africa from 1969 to 1973. It is divided in two main sections. The first section deals with the enlargement *per se*, the disputed role of the Commonwealth within an enlarged Community, and the slow composition of a Communitarian position vis-à-vis the future of Association. Initially, British failed attempts at joining the Community in the 1960s are reconstructed along with the UK's approach to decolonisation. Then, by delving into the negotiations for British accession, the chapter explores how European officials and their British counterparts envisaged the possible harmonisation of two very different post-imperial structures, i. e. the Association system and the Commonwealth. The second section, instead, devotes particular attention to the intra-African debate sparked by Community enlargement among Francophone and Anglophone African countries. In so doing, the chapter investigates African national and multilateral diplomatic actions, while also reconstructing French and British attempts at influencing African countries' decisions vis-à-vis their future relations with the EEC.

2.1 “The Community’s unhappy Gaullist decade”, Britain, and the Commonwealth: an overview

Since the Second World War, the United Kingdom's conception of its international role had been recalibrating in response to the shifting global order. While events such as the communist uprising in Greece forced a strained Britain to cede influence and allow for American intervention²¹⁸, the Labour government led by Clement Attlee remained determined to uphold British international prestige and power. Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, acutely aware of Britain's subordinate position vis-à-vis the United States and the Soviet Union, envisioned the country as the leader of a “Middle Kingdom”. This bloc would comprise the remnants of the British Empire, the Dominions reunited under the Commonwealth, and Western Europe. In Bevin's early conception, this geopolitical formation could counterbalance the two superpowers and establish itself as an independent global force – thus restoring Britain's rightful place on the international stage²¹⁹. The foundations of this vision were to be laid

²¹⁸ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p. 15.

²¹⁹ D. Marquand, *Britain since 1918: The Strange Career of British Democracy*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2008, pp. 125-127.

through Anglo-French imperial cooperation in Africa, toward which efforts were made in the immediate post-war years²²⁰. The idea of a Eurafrican geopolitical power, therefore, played a significant role in shaping Bevin's vision of Middle Kingdom: African colonies would supply raw materials and strategic resources not only for the benefit of Europe and Britain, but also as a critical asset in projecting influence within a bipolar world order²²¹. As Bevin had already written in 1938:

The great colonial powers of Europe should pool their colonial territories and link them up with a European Commonwealth instead of being limited British, French, Dutch or Belgian concessions as is now the case. Such a European Commonwealth, established on a European foundation, would give us greater security than we get by trying to maintain the old balance of power²²².

Bevin's ambitions, however, were ultimately thwarted by the intensification of East-West tensions in 1948—a year marked by the communist coup in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet withdrawal from the Allied Control Authority, and the imposition of the Berlin Blockade. These developments convinced London of the imperative to secure a sustained American presence in Europe²²³. The signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949, which established NATO, completed the architecture of the Western Bloc²²⁴. While the onset of the Cold War rendered Britain's aspiration to lead an independent third geopolitical force unfeasible, Britain nonetheless came to conceive of itself as the pivotal intersection of three overlapping spheres: the Commonwealth, Western Europe, and the Atlantic Community²²⁵.

This particular self-perceived position fostered a sense of exceptionalism within the British government: relations with the United States were to be conducted on the basis of equality and mutual understanding, setting Britain apart from the rest of Europe. Indeed, in October 1949, Bevin informed his Cabinet colleagues that, as Britain was renewing its special relationship with the US, its involvement in the nascent European integration project would necessarily remain limited²²⁶. This line of thinking would shape British attitudes towards European

²²⁰ P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Bringing Africa as a 'Dowry to Europe': European Integration and the Eurafrican Project, 1920–1960*, in op. cit., p. 450.

²²¹ Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique - Contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, op. cit., p. 27.

²²² D. Russell, *'The Jolly Old Empire': Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945–51*, in: A. May (eds.), *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to join the European Communities*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2001, p. 18.

²²³ Ibidem.

²²⁴ G. Laschi, *L'Europa e gli altri. Le relazioni esterne della Comunità dalle origini al dialogo Nord-Sud*, op. cit., p. 45.

²²⁵ D. Marquand, *Britain since 1918: The Strange Career of British Democracy*, op. cit., p. 144.

²²⁶ Ibidem, p. 145.

integration in the years that followed: throughout the 1950s, London remained largely aloof from the efforts of continental nations to draw the UK into their integration initiatives.

By 1961, however, London found itself in an increasingly awkward position, both economically and politically. For nearly a decade, the UK's Gross National Product (GNP) growth rate had remained modest, amounting to less than half that of France and under a third of West Germany's²²⁷. Contrary to the British government's expectations, this underwhelming performance had not been remedied by the creation of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), a regional grouping championed by the UK as an alternative to the EEC. Since EFTA's establishment in 1959, Western Europe had become divided between two competing economic blocs: the Six EEC members on one side, and the UK alongside Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland on the other. This rift generated scepticism and frustration in Washington, where the cohesion of Western Europe was seen as paramount. The Kennedy administration warned Harold Macmillan that continued British reluctance to engage with the EEC would come at the cost of American support and special consideration²²⁸. These mounting political and economic pressures ultimately compelled Macmillan to submit the UK's application for EEC membership in the summer of 1961.

The negotiations proved more difficult than initially anticipated. Although by the end of 1962 an agreement appeared to be within reach, Charles de Gaulle remained deeply sceptical²²⁹. In January 1963, the French President converted this scepticism into outright rejection: at a press conference, he underscored the fundamental differences between insular, globally oriented Britain and the six continental states that had embarked on the path of integration. On these grounds, he declared that France would not consent to British accession. By effectively vetoing the EEC's enlargement, de Gaulle brought the negotiations to an abrupt end²³⁰. Throughout the 1960s, it would become increasingly clear that, so long as he remained firmly in power, the United Kingdom would be denied entry into the Community.

Prior to De Gaulle's veto, however, the issue that had most troubled Anglo-Communitarian negotiations was the Commonwealth. At this point, one might wonder how the Commonwealth—a relatively loose association of countries united by their shared experience of former British rule—had continued to occupy such a central place in British foreign policy

²²⁷ Ibidem, p. 178.

²²⁸ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, op. cit., p. 119.

²²⁹ D. Marquand, *Britain since 1918: The Strange Career of British Democracy*, op. cit., p. 177.

²³⁰ D. W. Urwin, *The community of Europe: a history of European integration since 1945*, cit., pp. 120-124.

since the initial decline of the British Empire. The idea of a “Commonwealth of Nations” began to feature in British political discourse between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as the notions of “empire” and “colonies” became increasingly inadequate, particularly in reference to the more advanced settler communities in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa²³¹. By the 1930s, the British Commonwealth of Nations had received official sanction and recognition from both the governments of the Dominions and the United Kingdom. There remained, however, a degree of overlap between the Commonwealth and the Empire, with members of the former being described both as “autonomous Communities within the British Empire” and as “freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations”²³². During the Second World War, Commonwealth forces replenished British military ranks, rekindling imperial sympathies even among staunch anti-imperialists²³³. This reflected a broader and deeply rooted belief that Britain’s economic prosperity, international prestige, and global influence were derived, at least in part, from the Empire and its subsequent evolution into the Commonwealth²³⁴.

Thus, decolonisation in Africa presented Britain with a number of challenges. On the one hand, the prospect of admitting Black African members into the Commonwealth was a source of unease for many officials and ministers. There were fears that the organisation’s coherence and cohesion might be undermined, thereby diminishing the Commonwealth’s – and Britain’s – international stature²³⁵. On the other hand, encouraging soon-to-be-independent countries to join the Commonwealth was deemed essential for maintaining British influence in the region, particularly for strategic reasons. At a time when the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) – launched in Bandung in 1955 – was gaining momentum alongside anti-colonial ideology and Pan-Africanism²³⁶, it was imperative for Britain not to cede its sphere of influence in Africa to these emerging ideological calls²³⁷. In the end, when the Gold Coast attained independence as Ghana

²³¹ W. D. McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-1990*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 1991, p. 13.

²³² Ibidem, p. 14.

²³³ D. Russell, 'The Jolly Old Empire': *Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945-51*, in: A. May (eds.), *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to join the European Communities*, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

²³⁴ Ibidem, pp. 18-19.

²³⁵ F. Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation, 1945-1963*, Abingdon-On-Thames, Routledge, 2002, pp. 136-137.

²³⁶ D. Chakrabarty, *The Legacies of Bandung. Decolonization and the Politics of Culture*, in: C. J. Lee, (eds.), *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Movement and Its Political Afterlives*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 2010.

²³⁷ F. Gerits, *The Ideological Scramble for Africa: How the Pursuit of Anticolonial Modernity Shaped a Postcolonial Order, 1945-1966*, op. cit., pp. 105-107.

in 1957, it joined the Commonwealth as an independent member state, setting a precedent that would be followed by other African colonies in the early 1960s.

But the importance of the Commonwealth was not merely political: the underlying logic of what had once been known as 'Imperial Preference' was preserved under the rebranded notion of Commonwealth Preference²³⁸. Through this system, the UK was able to import foodstuffs and raw materials at significantly reduced customs duties, thereby artificially keeping domestic prices below global market levels. The preferential regime also ensured Britain retained privileged access to Commonwealth markets²³⁹. This had two key consequences. First, it resulted in a particularly high proportion of British trade being directed towards Commonwealth countries and vice versa²⁴⁰. Second, it contributed to shaping the economies of many developing countries, which became heavily export-oriented and specialised in the production of raw materials and agricultural goods²⁴¹. It is therefore evident why the Commonwealth represented both an economic and a political challenge during the negotiations with the EEC.

For their part, Commonwealth members responded to Britain's initial application to join the European Community with apprehension – a sentiment that gradually deepened into dissatisfaction as negotiations progressed throughout 1962²⁴². Their concerns intensified when it became apparent that Britain had accepted the Association framework as the most viable means of addressing the position of African Commonwealth countries and the remaining imperial territories within a European context. This arrangement would have guaranteed continued free access for goods produced overseas, not only to the British market but also to the European Common Market, thereby equalising the trading advantages already enjoyed by the Francophone Associates²⁴³.

For the African Commonwealth, however, the Association was objectionable on grounds that extended beyond purely economic concerns. Ghana and Nigeria, in particular, feared that joining the Association would undermine their ability to protect emerging industries from

²³⁸ W. Nicoll, *Britain and the Commonwealth in the 1950s*, in: A. May (eds.), *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to join the European Communities*, op. cit., p. 31.

²³⁹ Ibidem.

²⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 32.

²⁴¹ D. Russell, 'The Jolly Old Empire': *Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945-51*, in: op. cit., p. 26.

²⁴² A. May, 'Commonwealth or Europe?': *Macmillan's Dilemma, 1961-63*, in: op. cit., p. 93. See also: Aqui, L. (2017) *Macmillan, Nkrumah and the 1961 Application for European Economic Community Membership*, in «The International History Review», Vol. 39, issue 7, pp. 575-591.

²⁴³ F. Leikam, *A Matter of Preference: Commonwealth Africa, Britain and the Association System, 1957-75*, in: op. cit., p. 298.

European imports and impede efforts toward African economic integration by compelling them to favour Europe over neighbouring African states²⁴⁴. Consequently, the Association was widely viewed as a structurally neo-colonial arrangement and became the target of sharp criticism²⁴⁵. This sentiment was forcefully expressed by Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah when he informed Ghana's National Assembly of his government's decision: "we [the Government] are most decidedly and strongly opposed to any arrangement which uses the unification of Europe as a cloak for perpetuating colonial privileges in Africa"²⁴⁶.

In the following years, however, Anglophone African countries would undergo significant changes. Ghana and Nigeria both fell victim to military *coup d'états* in 1966. Initially, this did not prevent Nigeria from signing the limited trade agreement that it had been negotiating with the EEC since 1963, but any hope of ratification would disappear after relations between Nigeria and France deteriorated as a consequence of Paris' support to the secessionist claims of the Nigerian region of Biafra²⁴⁷. In the meantime Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda sought a separate trade agreement with the EEC and, after slow negotiations, concluded one in 1968, when a first agreement to liberalise trade between the EEC and the three East African countries was signed in Arusha²⁴⁸. Not comprising development aid, the Arusha Convention established a trade regime that was similar to the Yaoundé one²⁴⁹. In order not to disrupt the Associates' advantages, however, duty-free exports of products such as coffee were subject to quotas²⁵⁰. In return, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda had agreed to eliminate both tariff and non-tariff barriers on EEC exports, conceding to the Community's requests for reverse preferences²⁵¹.

²⁴⁴ *Statement to Parliament by the Right Hon. Prime Minister on Nigeria's Relationship with the European Economic Community*, Lagos, 24 September 1962, ANS VP 157. See also: F. Leikam, *A Matter of Preference: Commonwealth Africa, Britain and the Association System, 1957-75*, in: op. cit., pp. 298-299.

²⁴⁵ Massaga, *Understanding the African present political situation*, Note to Kwame Nkrumah, Accra, sine data, PRAAD RG 17/1/340. See also: G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l'Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961-1972)*, in op. cit., pp. 46-47.

²⁴⁶ *Parliamentary Debates of Ghana, First Series, Vol. 24, National Assembly, Official Report, Session 1961-62, 4 July-3 August 1961, Col. 8*, quoted in: F. Leikam, *A Matter of Preference: Commonwealth Africa, Britain and the Association System, 1957-75*, in: op. cit., p. 299. On Nkrumah's reaction to the British first Communitarian application, see also: Aqai, L. (2017) *Macmillan, Nkrumah and the 1961 Application for European Economic Community Membership*, in «The International History Review», Vol. 39, issue 7, pp. 575-591.

²⁴⁷ G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l'Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961-1972)*, in: op. cit., pp. 49-51.

²⁴⁸ F. Leikam, *A Matter of Preference: Commonwealth Africa, Britain and the Association System, 1957-75*, in: op. cit., p. 304.

²⁴⁹ G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l'Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961-1972)*, in op. cit., pp. 51-52.

²⁵⁰ F. Leikam, *A Matter of Preference: Commonwealth Africa, Britain and the Association System, 1957-75*, in: op. cit., p. 304.

²⁵¹ G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l'Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961-1972)*, in op. cit., pp. 51-52.

These developments seem to suggest that Anglophone Africa's attitude towards the EEC and the Association had slightly softened throughout the 1960s. It is true that by the beginning of the 1970s, countries like Malawi and Gambia were showing a more positive inclination towards the EEC than they had done in 1961²⁵². Nonetheless, many other still regarded the Association as "an instrument of neo-colonialism"²⁵³: a number of Anglophone African capitals, indeed, still ascribed to the line that had been drawn in the 1961-1963 negotiations, according to which "anything negotiated for the Eighteen [Associates] was bound to be a neo-Colonialist arrangement which was quite unsuitable for them"²⁵⁴.

This was then the context in which British officials negotiated the UK's entry into the Community in the early 1970s. On the one hand, London entered these negotiations knowing that it had to carefully conduct itself, striking a balance between defending its own interests and demonstrating to the Community that it was ready to embrace the *acquis communautaire*, somehow managing not to alienate the Associates in the process. On the other hand, within the Community, France was ready to defend this *acquis*, especially when it came to the Association. In the next section, the negotiations for British membership are reconstructed by highlighting the Commonwealth's role within them and the repercussions of enlargement on the Community's Association policy.

2.2 "Between us, we know more about Africa than anyone else": Britain, France, and Africa in the Community enlargement negotiations, 1970-1972

Initially, negotiations between Britain and the Community proceeded relatively smoothly. Thanks to Prime Minister Heath's personal commitment to a Communitarian future for the United Kingdom, negotiations were not hindered by demands to adapt existing EEC structures to suit British particularities, nor did London seek to mobilise other member states to pressure France on its behalf²⁵⁵. In this regard, Heath's approach prioritised the objective over the process: his aim – shaped by political and economic considerations, as well as by his own vision of Britain's place in the world – was to secure membership²⁵⁶. If this required Britain to initially conform to the institutional arrangements and policy frameworks established by the Six since

²⁵² Coumba N'Doffène Diouf, *Rapport de Mission à Monsieur le Président de la République Sénégalaise*, Dakar, 10 August 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

²⁵³ J. A. Robinson, *Letter to K. C. Christofas*, Cabinet Office, London, 28 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

²⁵⁴ *Uganda: EEC*, Letter from J. L. F. Buist to A. H. Brind, IG 205/49/01, 16 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/880.

²⁵⁵ D. Gowland, A. Turner and A. Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945: On the Sidelines*, op. cit., p. 73.

²⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 72-73.

the 1950s, so be it. There would be time to influence internal policies from within once membership was attained. Moreover, Heath was acutely aware that Britain was negotiating from a position of relative weakness – a consequence of years of wilful self-exclusion²⁵⁷.

Nonetheless, the challenge of integrating Britain's relations with the Commonwealth into the new Communitarian framework remained pressing. The Community's stance on this delicate matter was articulated in a Commission paper that updated the principles laid out during the 1961–63 negotiations to reflect the early 1970s context. As summarised by Sir James Marjoribanks, the UK's ambassador to the EEC, the paper underscored that, with the Yaoundé Convention set to expire in 1975, by August 1973 the enlarged Community should open negotiations both with the Associated states and with "those Commonwealth countries that were candidates for association"²⁵⁸. These included countries in Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean. The paper stressed the importance of ensuring uniform treatment for both Associates and Associables, while acknowledging the favourable conditions previously enjoyed by these states under the Yaoundé framework and the Commonwealth system, respectively. Although the exact content of the new Association could not yet be fully defined, it was expected to encompass trade, aid and technical assistance, freedom of establishment, management of capital movements, and shared institutions.²⁵⁹ Finally, the Commission remarked that the first enlargement of the EEC constituted an unprecedented opportunity for innovating the Community's aid and development policy²⁶⁰.

The Commission's approach broadly aligned with Britain's: as envisaged in both London and Brussels, developing Commonwealth countries would negotiate the new Association Convention alongside the eighteen existing Associates. While the Commission had acknowledged that negotiations should take into account the advantages these developing countries had previously enjoyed – whether under the Yaoundé system or the Commonwealth – it also emphasised the innovative potential of this new arrangement. In this context, the French were unsurprisingly uneasy. Although Paris had eventually acquiesced to the inclusion of developing Commonwealth countries in the post-enlargement Association, policymakers at the Quai d'Orsay remained intent on preserving the character of Yaoundé and safeguarding the privileged position Francophone countries held within it. This was seen as essential to uphold

²⁵⁷ Ibidem, pp. 73-74.

²⁵⁸ J. Marjoribanks, *Enlargement: Commonwealth*, Telegram from Brussels to FCO, 13 March 1970, TNA FCO 30/638.

²⁵⁹ Ibidem.

²⁶⁰ Ibidem.

the development commitments made by the Six to their former colonies in 1957, as well as “to maintain [...] French and European influence on the African continent”²⁶¹.

Thus, France approached negotiations for Community enlargement from a defensive standpoint, as the prospect of British membership threatened to radically alter a policy designed back in 1957 to uphold French and European interests in Africa. This policy had its roots in the Treaty of Rome and evolved through the two Yaoundé Conventions, which Paris viewed as a direct continuation of the Association framework established by the Treaty. That system had survived decolonisation virtually unscathed: through Yaoundé, the Association had adapted and progressed beyond the formal end of European colonial domination. Now, however, it was under threat – not only from Britain’s demands to accommodate Commonwealth countries, but also from other member states seeking to use the enlargement as an opportunity to recast what had been a largely French-driven policy. From Paris’ perspective, it was therefore imperative to guard against any form of denaturation of the Association system²⁶².

To this purpose, during the Community Foreign Ministers Council of May 1970, the French had pushed for a more detailed version of the Commission paper. The latter should have thus included reverse preferences, as well as a compensation system for the Eighteen «for any loss arising out of enlargement of their association to include the Commonwealth African countries»²⁶³. Eventually, while some minor changes were introduced, the final text did not include these pressing French points²⁶⁴. Indeed, other Member States did not want to enshrine these principles in such an early policy document. According to the Italian Permanent Representation, «[n]o-one could be expected to tie their hands now with regard to a negotiation which was to begin only in 1973»²⁶⁵. Instead of steering the Community towards Paris’ position, French uncooperative attitude had sparked an unexpected reaction among the Five:

It was no longer being assumed that Yaoundé III would automatically follow the pattern of Yaoundé II; and to this extent the French had started in motion a trend of thought which might not be in their interest²⁶⁶.

²⁶¹ P. O’Cornesse, *Note sur l’association des pays africains et malgache et l’élargissement de la Communauté*, Paris, 26 January 1971, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

²⁶² *Ibidem*, p. 2.

²⁶³ J. Marjoribanks, *Enlargement: Commonwealth*, Telegram from Brussels to FCO, 12 May 1970, TNA FCO 30/638.

²⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁶⁵ J. Mellon, *Enlargement: the Commonwealth paper*, Letter to Mr. Christofas, Mr. Furness, Mr. Hannay and Mr. Richards, Brussels, 4 May 1970, TNA FCO 30/638.

²⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

If France's pleas were not to be heard within the Communitarian framework, Paris could still hope to wield its influence among the Francophone African countries. Thus, while negotiations progressed, discourses about forthcoming EEC enlargement and the consequent association of Commonwealth countries were the centrepiece of Pompidou's presidential tour of former French colonies in Africa in February 1971. After visiting Mauritania, Pompidou moved on to address the publics of Senegal, Cameroon, Gabon and Ivory Coast²⁶⁷. A common thread of his speeches was France's fight against international inequality and underdevelopment, which he described as "one of the essential points of its mission and its natural vocation"²⁶⁸. If British diplomats hoped to turn such statements in their favour during the enlargement negotiations, taking them up "in support of our requests for the option of Association for developing countries in the Caribbean and the Pacific and Indian Oceans"²⁶⁹, other parts of Pompidou's statements in African capitals were more concerning.

When asked about the consequences of EEC enlargement to Britain, the French President had warned in different occasions that Anglophone African countries were "likely to pose serious problems for the Common Market enlargement talks"²⁷⁰. The problems in question were to originate from multiple factors. First, "the extension of preferential treatment to an increasingly large number of tropical producing countries would bring opposition and dissatisfaction"²⁷¹. Moreover, since the Anglophone African area included very economically and demographically powerful countries such as Nigeria and Ghana, "financial difficulties"²⁷² were likely to ensue if these countries were to be associated to the EEC alongside the Associates. Indeed, Pompidou feared that "British contribution to the European Development Fund would proportionally fall far short of the corresponding increase in population among African countries associated with the EEC"²⁷³.

²⁶⁷ P. Decraene, *Le voyage de M. Pompidou en Afrique Noire*, Le Monde, 3 Février 1971, Centre de Documentation des Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS).

²⁶⁸ *Extract from President Pompidou's speech at Nouakchott, 3 February 1971*, attached to *President Pompidou's visit to Africa*, Letter from M. E. M. Fitz Gerald, British Embassy in Paris, to W. J. Adams, EEID, FCO, 26 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁶⁹ *President Pompidou's visit to Africa*, Letter from M. E. M. Fitz Gerald, British Embassy in Paris, to W. J. Adams, EEID, FCO, 26 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁷⁰ Telegram from Alec Douglas-Home, Foreign Secretary, to British Embassies in Abidjan, Dakar, Yaoundé, Paris, Washington, UK Delegation to the EEC, Lagos and Accra, 9 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁷¹ *President Pompidou: the EEC and Africa*, Telegram from J. C. Tahourdin, British Ambassador in Senegal, to FCO, 8 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁷² *Ibidem*.

²⁷³ *Ibidem*.

These warnings did not come alone, however. At every stage of his trip, Pompidou reaffirmed “the natural complementarity of Europe and Africa”²⁷⁴ as well as France's unflinching support of the Associates. After invoking Eurafrican ideas of complementarity and mutual benefit, Pompidou reassured his African audiences that, in the negotiations with Britain, Paris would make sure that the eventual enlargement would not have negative repercussions on the Associates, because “France was the friend of the Francophone African states and would use all means available to ensure that Francophone Africa did not suffer”²⁷⁵. This diplomatic effort, however, needed to be upheld by the Associates as well, reminded Pompidou:

There is no doubt that this intervention will be the more effective if those countries fully conscious of the problem, can carry out on their own side a coherent and concerted action with the member states of the EEC²⁷⁶.

France was clearly trying to instigate the Associates, and among them the closest former French colonies, to join Paris in the fight that it was allegedly conducting on their behalf during the negotiations between the EEC and Britain. These calls generally fell on sympathetic ears. During Pompidou's visit to the Senegalese National Assembly, its president Mamadou Cissé Dia declared that Senegal favoured the enlargement of the Association to the Commonwealth states, but that measures should be undertaken to prevent the enlargement from hurting the Associates²⁷⁷. Senegal believed in the Association, Dia continued, to the point that it would welcome “the establishment of a framework agreement in the same spirit as the Treaty of Rome, which would inevitably bind the 24 [the Six and the eighteen Associates] in a global Eurafrican policy”²⁷⁸. This, concluded Dia, was exactly what Senghor envisaged for the future of Europe and Africa.

Indeed, these concerns were shared by the Associates. Just a few months before, in October 1970, the Secretariat of the *Coordination des États Africains et Malgache Associés à la Communauté Économique Européenne* had produced a report which described the possible consequences of enlargement on the Associated States, as well as on the very Association

²⁷⁴ *Thé sous la tente à Nouackhott pour le Président de la République Française* : « L'Afrique et l'Europe sont complémentaires », Le Soleil, 3 Février 1971, CDANS. It is interesting to note that the article goes on to perfectly describe the economic tenets of Eurafrica: « L'Afrique apporte ses matières premières, l'Europe lui rend des produits fabriqués et contribue parallèlement au développement technique de ce continent ».

²⁷⁵ Telegram FM Abidjan 101125Z from P. Murray, Ambassador to Ivory Coast, to FCO, 18 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁷⁶ Telegram FM Yaoundé 131125Z from A. A. Golds, Ambassador to Cameroon, to FCO, 10 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁷⁷ À l'Assemblée Nationale M. Cissé Dia : « Renforcez la solidarité eurafricaine », Le Soleil, Dakar, 7 Février 1971, ANS.

²⁷⁸ Ibidem.

system. The report expressed the same kind of reservations towards the Association of Commonwealth developing countries that France had voiced in Communitarian meetings. If translated into the subsequent accession of Commonwealth members to the Association, enlargement risked to deeply modify the commercial nature of the ties between the Associates and the EEC²⁷⁹: the Eighteen would have entered in direct competition with the Anglophone countries, seeing the importance of their preferential treatment in the Common Market greatly diminished²⁸⁰. On the other hand, they argued, “the UK market will not provide equivalent compensation for the associated states”²⁸¹, given the long-established trade patterns between Commonwealth Africa and Britain. From a financial point of view, the Associates hinted that they were expecting to receive the same amount of development aid through the EDF as before enlargement²⁸² - an idea that reverberated in Paris’ concern for a possible increase in its contribution to the development of its former colonies²⁸³. Finally, the Associates feared that the institutions established by the Yaoundé Convention could lose their significance if disregarded by Britain and, consequently, by Commonwealth members²⁸⁴.

These signals coming from both the African and the European continent reinforced the impression in London that negotiations were approaching a deadlock. As Macmillan had done in 1962, Heath decided to try to facilitate the talks, by arranging a personal visit to Pompidou in the spring of 1971²⁸⁵. Part of the purpose of the meeting was to convince the French President of the beneficial effect that enlargement would have on the relations between the EEC and Africa. According to the FCO, Heath’s should have persuaded Pompidou to adopt a positive stance towards Anglo-French cooperation in the African realm of European politics. The brief prepared for the meeting opened with an emphasis on the similarity of French and British interests in the African Continent, and went on with a quintessential *captatio benevolentiae*. As the text progressed, the intent to arouse a sense of colonial camaraderie in the old imperial rival became more and more evident:

²⁷⁹ Telegram FM Yaoundé 131125Z from A. A. Golds, Ambassador to Cameroon, to FCO, 10 February 1971, TNA FCO 30/879, p. 8.

²⁸⁰ Ibidem, p. 10.

²⁸¹ Ibidem.

²⁸² Ibidem, p. 23.

²⁸³ G. Migani, *Avant Lomé: la France, l’Afrique Anglophone et la CEE (1961–1972)*, in op. cit., p. 53.

²⁸⁴ Le Secrétariat de la Coordination des États Africains et Malgache Associés à la Communauté Économique Européenne, *Incidences pour les E.A.M.A. de l’Adhésion de la Grande Bretagne à la Communauté Économique Européenne*, EAMA doc. 1179/90, Bruxelles, 18 Novembre 1970, TNA FCO 30/856, pp. 23-24.

²⁸⁵ D. Gowland, A. Turner and A. Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945: On the Sidelines*, op. cit., p. 73.

We both wish to see the African countries develop as stable, pursuing moderate and sensible policies, and to prevent them from being drawn under the influence of the Russian and the Chinese. We are glad that French influence is still strong and were pleased that M. Pompidou's recent visit to West Africa was such a success. We respect the achievements of France's mission civilisatrice [underlined in the text] in Africa; we too have strong links with our former colonial territories there, which we believe serve the wider European and Western interest. Between us, the French and we know more about Africa than anyone else, and we ought to work together as closely as possible to achieve our common objectives²⁸⁶.

To this purpose, suggested the brief, the two countries could even give start to initiatives that lied outside the Communitarian framework, such as "Anglo-French discussion of cultural and language questions"²⁸⁷. This could be paralleled by a greater cooperation between London's and Paris' African departments, so as to coordinate their course of action in Euro-African relations.

The deliberate use of expressions such as *mission civilisatrice* and the euphemistic reference to British and French colonial experiences in Africa as shared knowledge reveal the extent to which the colonial mind-set remained entrenched in the former European metropolises. Despite the apparent rupture brought about by decolonisation, British and French 'private' discussions were marked by a clear continuity with the colonial era. This manifested in a strong emphasis on the importance of cooperation to defend and reinforce European influence in Africa: particularly in the context of the Cold War, it was deemed essential by both London and Paris to ensure that Africa remained stable and aligned with Western interests. Rather than competing, Britain and France ought to share their respective experiences with their former colonies and to work together in pursuit of their common objectives in Africa.

The meeting achieved its intended outcome, prompting France and Britain to finally reach an understanding on the future of Euro-African relations²⁸⁸. Bilateral meetings between the two countries' delegations were held regularly throughout the remainder of 1971, with the theme of Anglo-French cooperation in Africa within the EEC framework serving as a consistent thread. By the autumn of that year, the initiative was no longer solely British; the French began to advance the idea as well, demonstrating that Heath's arguments had resonated in Paris. In

²⁸⁶ *Visit of the Prime Minister to Paris, 19-21 May 1971, Africa*, Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, 13 May 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁸⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸⁸ K. Whiteman, *A History of the ACP-EU Relationship: The Origins and Spirit of Lomé*, in: A. Montoute and K. Virk (eds.), *The ACP Group and the EU Development Partnership: Beyond the North-South Debate*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, p. 36.

October, it was in fact the French Secretary of State for Cooperation, M. Bourges, who spoke “strongly in favour of Anglo-French political and economic co-operation in Africa when we [Britain] have entered the Community”²⁸⁹ during a visit to London. Once again, the enduring European presence and influence in Africa were not questioned or reconsidered, but rather assumed as a given:

[M. Bourges] envisaged a natural political axis linking Europe with Africa which he thought would do much to help stability and counteract the dangerous consequences of “hegemony” in the world. For historical and economic reasons France and the United Kingdom had a privileged position in Africa which we should work together to consolidate²⁹⁰.

The reference to a “natural political axis” between the two continents constitutes yet another piece of evidence of how the old Eurafrican ideas of natural complementarity and consequential political and economic interdependence had survived the 1960s virtually unscathed, despite their gradual disappearance from the public discourse. At the beginning of the next decade, they were still implicitly used to justify and bolster intra-European cooperation, as it had been in the early 20th Century.

The prospect of British membership, however, introduced a relatively new dimension to earlier conceptions of Eurafrica. From Coudenhove-Kalergi’s programmatic essays to Guy Mollet’s declarations, Eurafrica had never encompassed British Africa. The potential association of Anglophone African states to the enlarged Community was therefore bound to have significant repercussions for Euro-African relations. On the one hand, as noted by contemporary commentators following the evolution of the Association system, for the first time “an enlarged EEC will bring together all the European powers who were the suzerains of African countries, except Portugal and Spain”²⁹¹. On the other hand, the traditional divide between Anglophone and Francophone Africa was now, at least in part, to be bridged by channelling all these countries’ relations with their former metropolises through the European Community. While this development was noted in Europe, it certainly did not go unnoticed in Africa. In December 1971, as negotiations between Britain and the EEC neared their final stage, the Senegalese

²⁸⁹ *Meeting between Mr. Richard Wood and Monsieur Bourges at the ODA on 19 October (Morning Session)*, Letter from J. de C. Ling, West African Department of FCO, to M. Laidler, EEID of FCO, 22 October 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

²⁹¹ Sam Uba, *Africans eager to be good Europeans: Association with EEC promises to be more beneficial than Commonwealth preferences*, *The Times*, 30 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

Ambassador informed FCO officials that “President Senghor saw Africa and Europe coming much closer together as a result of British entry into the Community”²⁹².

As negotiations in Brussels progressed steadily, various options for future relations between the EEC and the developing Commonwealth countries began to take shape, ranging from participation in the renegotiation of Yaoundé to the conclusion of a simple commercial agreement²⁹³. At this stage, London began to shift its focus towards the Commonwealth Associates. Initially, Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home informed the African, Caribbean, and Pacific capitals of the possible policy paths they might pursue²⁹⁴. Meanwhile, by the autumn of 1971, officials at the FCO had initiated cross-departmental discussions on how best to guide the developing Commonwealth countries towards entering negotiations for a new Association Convention. There were concerns in London that, given their ideological stances, a number of Associates might refuse to negotiate alongside the Francophone countries. This was a troubling prospect, as British officials feared it could prompt African governments to reject the Association option outright²⁹⁵. It was therefore essential for British diplomatic missions abroad to communicate clear and accurate information on the matter. Commonwealth governments were advised not to rush their decisions, and to consider that “there would be tactical advantage to them in starting negotiations for full association even if they do not necessarily intend to carry them through”²⁹⁶, particularly as the talks in Brussels suggested that they would be able to maintain the *status quo* in their relations with Britain until a successor to Yaoundé II had been negotiated²⁹⁷.

Although Yaoundé was due to expire in 1975 and negotiations for a new Association Convention were not expected to commence until 1973, the urgency for London to begin addressing the issue in its diplomatic outreach stemmed from observing the Francophone countries’ readiness to declare their positions. As the Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs noted:

²⁹² Letter from J. de C. Ling, West African Department of FCO, to J. Wilson, Head of West African Department, 22 December 1971, TNA FCO 30/879.

²⁹³ Telegram from Alec Douglas-Home, Foreign Secretary, to Freetown, Accra, Lagos, Nairobi, Dar Es Salaam, Kampala, Zomba, Lusaka, Gaborone, Maseru, Mbabane, Kingston, Port of Spain, Bridgetown, Georgetown, Port Louis, Suva, Wellington, 6 July 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

²⁹⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁹⁵ J. L. F. Buist, *Uganda: EEC*, Letter to A. H. Brind, London, 16 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/880.

²⁹⁶ *Yaoundé: Alternatives Available to Commonwealth Africa Governments*, Minute from H. Smedley, Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, to J. A. Robinson, 4 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

²⁹⁷ *Yaoundé and the Commonwealth*, Minute from J. A. Robinson, EEID of FCO, to H. Smedley, Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 5 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

I get the impression that remarkably few Commonwealth Governments have seriously applied their minds as yet to the choice which is presented to them; [...] The Yaoundé Associated however have been quicker off the mark to defend their existing privileges. President Pompidou made clear during his visit early this year to Africa his intention of safeguarding the position of the existing Associates²⁹⁸.

Moreover, the enlargement negotiations had not resolved all outstanding questions concerning the future of Association: matters such as the British contribution to the EDF, or the extent to which the developing Commonwealth would opt to seek full association, remained unsettled²⁹⁹. Nevertheless, these issues would have to be deferred, as the Brussels talks were nearing their conclusion.

Together with Ireland and Denmark, Britain would sign the Accession Treaty in January 1972. Edward Heath had succeeded in finally bringing the United Kingdom into the European integration project – though not without bearing the cost of its earlier hesitations. The Prime Minister was obliged to accept the *acquis communautaire*, acquiescing to a number of structures and policies that were not favourable to London, such as the 'own resources' system and the disproportionately high share of the budget allocated to financing the CAP³⁰⁰. In this context, all Heath could do to ease Britain's adaptation to the new European reality was to secure a five-year transition period³⁰¹.

Matters concerning the Commonwealth, on the other hand, were treated slightly differently. The possible solutions that Commonwealth developing countries could have pursued were laid out in the Protocol no. 22 of the Accession Treaty, concerned with "relations between the European Economic Community and the Associated African and Malagasy States and also the independent developing Commonwealth countries situated in Africa, the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean"³⁰². The Protocol outlined the available options for developing Commonwealth countries in clear terms. First, they could pursue "participation in the Convention of Association which [...] will govern relations between the Community and the

²⁹⁸ Yaoundé: *Alternatives Available to Commonwealth Africa Governments*, Minute from H. Smedley, Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, to J. A. Robinson, EEID of FCO, 4 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

²⁹⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰⁰ D. Gowland, A. Turner and A. Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945: On the Sidelines*, op. cit., pp. 73-74.

³⁰¹ Ibidem, p. 73.

³⁰² *Documents concerning the accession to the European Communities of the Kingdom of Denmark, Ireland, the Kingdom of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, Official Journal of the European Communities, 27 March 1972, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:1972:073:FULL&from=EN> (last accessed 10 March 2024), p. 177.

Associated African and Malagasy States". Alternatively, they might opt for "the conclusion of one or more special conventions of association [...] comprising reciprocal rights and obligations, particularly in the field of trade". Lastly, the option remained open for "the conclusion of trade agreements with a view to facilitating and developing trade between the Community and those countries"³⁰³.

The Protocol further stated that, for practical reasons, Brussels wished for the Associates to decide as soon as possible which kind of agreement they wanted to pursue, and contained an excerpt aimed at safeguarding the Associates' interests, specifying that

The accession of the new Member States to the Community and the possible extension of the policy of association should not be the source of any weakening in the Community's relations with the Associated African and Malagasy States which are parties to the Convention of Association signed on 29 July 1969³⁰⁴.

Finally, the Protocol laid down the initial guidelines for the negotiation of Yaoundé II's successor. These were to take into account the *acquis* of the Association, the economic conditions of both the Commonwealth Associates and the existing Associates, and, last but not least, their own preferences and aspirations³⁰⁵. As such, Protocol 22 was intended to serve as the foundation for the negotiations that would eventually culminate in the Lomé Convention. Between January 1972 and the summer of 1973, however, a protracted debate over these options would unfold across Africa.

2.3 The slow emergence of an intra-African debate over discordant Western voices

If in Europe France and Britain had finally reached an *entente* during the negotiations for British enlargement, the same thing was not true for Associates and Associables in Africa. Throughout 1971, the Associates had taken their concerns within the Association common institutions, exploiting the sessions of the Association Parliamentary Conference and its Joint Committee to voice their doubts about the effects of enlargement on the Yaoundé system. Although the Associates' representatives generally remarked that, just as the Community, the Association could go through enlargement and thus evolve³⁰⁶, they rarely missed the opportunity to remind

³⁰³ Ibidem.

³⁰⁴ Ibidem, pp. 177-178.

³⁰⁵ Ibidem, p. 178.

³⁰⁶ *Allocution de M. El Hadj Ahmadou Ahidjo*, Septième Réunion Annuelle de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association, Yaoundé, 11 January 1971, HAEU ACP 198/1, p. 14.

their European counterparts that enlargement should have not compromised the commercial, financial, and political nature of the Yaoundé Convention, even after that France and Britain had apparently reached an understanding on the matter. The Senegalese representative André Guillabert, for example, noted during the June 1971 session of the Joint Committee that, although the signals coming from the Heath-Pompidou visit of May 1971 had been encouraging, the Association and the Commonwealth remained deeply different systems. He subsequently wondered whether the Associates' currently privileged relations with Europe could survive the extension of the Association regime to Commonwealth countries³⁰⁷.

The EEC, for its part, showed itself to be a sympathetic ear for the Associates' concerns. Jean-François Deniau, member of the European Commission tasked at the time with the supervision of both enlargement and development, would often sit in the Association institutions' meetings to provide information on the enlargement negotiations. On one such occasion, he admitted that "there is no doubt that the extension of the Association poses very serious problems"³⁰⁸, but he went on to underline the potential of having a stronger, enlarged Community and a subsequently stronger, enlarged Association³⁰⁹. Both member states' representatives and EEC officials would indeed respond to the Associates by ensuring them that, although the Association would probably welcome new members in the following years, the Community was going to safeguard its fundamental principles as well as the Associates' position within it³¹⁰. In the end, such reassurances were included in the aforementioned Protocol 22 of the Accession Treaty³¹¹. Thus, until January 1972, the Associates closely watched the Community's first enlargement³¹².

In the following months, they turned their attention to the slowly developing positions of Commonwealth Associates. Senegalese President Senghor, in particular, would be at the forefront of a series of diplomatic efforts aimed at convincing the Associates to accept the

³⁰⁷ *Proces-Verbal de la Commission Paritaire de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association*, Munich, 1-3 June 1971, HAEU ACP 213, pp. 4-5.

³⁰⁸ *Intervention de M. Deniau*, Commission Paritaire de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association, Munich, 2 June 1971, HAEU ACP 213, p.6.

³⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p.7.

³¹⁰ *Allocution de M. Yvon Bourges*, Commission Paritaire de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association, 2 June 1971, Munich, HAEU ACP 213, pp. 7-8.

³¹¹ Art. 2, Protocol No. 22 of the Treaty concerning the accession of the Kingdom of Denmark, Ireland, the Kingdom of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the European Economic Community and to the European Atomic Energy Community, 27 March 1972, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11972B/TXT&from=EN> (last accessed on 20 March 2024).

³¹² J. Fralon, *L'Association Eurafricaine survivra-t-elle à l'Élargissement de la Communauté ?*, Le Moniteur Africain, Vol. 539, 27 Janvier 1972, CDANS.

tenets of Association. At this stage, however, many actors were observing African Commonwealth's attitude towards Association. Throughout 1972, the Associates would be the object of different diplomatic campaigns aimed at influencing their choice over Euro-African relations, ranging from the diplomatic missions of Francophone African states to a number of official visits organised by the European Commission³¹³. But none of these campaigns would have been as constant as the one covertly waged by Britain. In London, indeed, policy-makers had been grappling for months with the question of how to inconspicuously steer the Associates towards the first option of Protocol 22, i. e. joining the Associates in negotiating the third iteration of the Yaoundé Convention³¹⁴. Since Britain could not risk to adopt a straightforward approach lest it be accused of wanting to meddle in its former colonies' foreign policy, the Foreign Office devised a subtler strategy that involved the recruitment of actors that were above neo-colonial suspicions.

The first of these actors was Arnold Smith, the Canadian diplomat who had served as Commonwealth Secretary-General since 1965. The whole Commonwealth Secretariat had been already involved in the effort to spread correct – and favourable – information about the Association within the developing Commonwealth³¹⁵, but by 1972 only Mauritius had formally clarified its position by requesting to join the Association³¹⁶. This had even prompted Deniau to declare that the absence of previous historical ties between Mauritius and the Six proved that the Association was not a continuation of European colonial ties with Africa, but rather the product of a free political choice of the Associates³¹⁷. Despite Mauritius' eagerness to serve as an example for the rest of the Associates³¹⁸, however, the rest of the Commonwealth candidates either remained silent on the matter or continued to criticise the Association. By the spring of 1972, it had become clear that, since Britain was due to officially join the EEC in a few months, the Associates needed to seriously address the question of how they would have soon

³¹³ *Association for Commonwealth Countries*, Letter from M. Laidler, EID, November 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

³¹⁴ *Yaoundé: Alternatives Available to Commonwealth Africa Governments*, Minute from H. Smedley, Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, to J. A. Robinson, EID, 4 November 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

³¹⁵ In the last months of 1971, the Commonwealth Secretariat had been busy with preparing a paper that could «underline the desirability of participation in the 1973 negotiations for the renewal of Yaoundé». See: *Association for Commonwealth Countries*, Letter from M. Laidler, EID, November 1971, TNA FCO 30/941.

³¹⁶ O. Akinrinade, *Associates and Associates: the Failure of Commonwealth Bridge-Building, 1971-3*, in «The Journal of Modern African Studies», Vol. 27, 2-1989, p. 178.

³¹⁷ Summary of Deniau's Press Conference of 18 May 1972, Annex I to the Note d'Information sur les problèmes actuels de l'Association, HAEU ACP 218, pp. 3-4.

³¹⁸ *Proces-Verbal de la Commission Paritaire de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association*, 24-26 October 1972, Ouagadougou, HAEU ACP 219, p. 10.

related with the enlarged Community. The Commonwealth Secretariat thus had to undertake more concrete efforts.

In April, Arnold Smith convened a meeting during which officials from all the Commonwealth Associates gathered in London to concertedly examine Protocol 22 options³¹⁹. Although the meeting did not produce definitive decisions, it resulted in some interesting outcomes. On the one hand, the Nigerian delegate's proposal for the creation of a permanent committee of developing Commonwealth representatives was accepted, giving birth to a body entrusted with an in-depth study of the political implications of the solutions offered by the EEC³²⁰. On the other hand, despite the fact that negotiations were due to begin more than a year later, the Associates declared themselves against reverse preferences since this early stage³²¹. Ultimately, the meeting was instrumental in setting an important feature of the ACP group formation process: the desire to strengthen the dialogue between the Francophone Associates and the Anglophone Commonwealth Associates. To this end, Arnold Smith was given mandate to initiate diplomatic contacts with the associated states in order to arrange a meeting between Associates and Associates to be held in the autumn³²².

Almost at the same time, the Associates' Ministers had expressed the same desire in a session of their coordinating committee held in April in Nouakchott³²³, where they had instructed their own secretary, Seydou Djim Sylla, to test the waters with regards to the possibility of a meeting with the Associates. Nevertheless, this task proved itself to be achingly difficult. In May, Sylla met a Commonwealth official at the Third session of the United Nation Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Santiago de Chile, where they agreed on proposing a meeting at officials' level for September³²⁴. President Senghor, however, later disavowed Sylla's proposal: during a visit to London in June, Senghor met Smith and argued that more time was

³¹⁹ Telegram No. 1837/45 from London to Paris, M. Angles, *Les Pays du Commonwealth et la Communauté élargie*, 7 Avril 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³²⁰ O. Akinrinade, *Associates and Associables: the Failure of Commonwealth Bridge-Building, 1971-3*, in op. cit., p. 185.

³²¹ F. Leikam, *A Matter of Preference: Commonwealth Africa, Britain and the Association System, 1957-75*, in: P. Winand, A. Benvenuti, M. Guderzo (eds.), *The External Relations of the European Union: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, op. cit., p. 305.

³²² Telegram No. 1837/45 from London to Paris, M. Angles, *Les Pays du Commonwealth et la Communauté élargie*, 7 Avril 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³²³ *Note d'Information sur les problèmes actuels de l'Association*, May 1972, HAEU ACP 218.

³²⁴ *Summary Record of the Sixth Meeting of Representatives of the countries listed in the Annex VI to the Treaty of Accession to the EC*, 20 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

needed before the two groups could meet. Moreover, the meeting should have been held among Ministers, rather than officials³²⁵.

This encounter would engender Senghor's suspiciousness of Smith. He knew that the Commonwealth Secretary was trying to push the Associables to join the negotiations for the new Association Convention while simultaneously encouraging them to reject the principle of reciprocity. For Senghor, this was unacceptable, as the loss of reverse preferences would have transformed the Association in nothing more than a free trade area. This, in turn, would have an even worse consequence: it would constitute a pretext for the EEC member states who did not espouse Eurafrican cooperation as much as France to dilute the Association, thereby ruining it³²⁶.

Since preventing this was of paramount importance, Senghor initiated his own diplomatic campaign, which bypassed any European intermediary. Firstly, he reminded the other Francophone Heads of State that, although it would have been difficult to prevent the Anglophones from joining the Association, it was imperative that all the Associates defended the positions they had agreed on in Nouakchott. Association enlargement could have been possible only on two conditions: the Associates' advantages had to be safeguarded, both in trade and in aid matters; the Associables had to recognise the Association *acquis* and concede reverse preferences³²⁷.

But Senghor pushed his campaign beyond the limits of Francophone Africa. During the summer, he entrusted a challenging diplomatic mission to Anglophone West Africa to his Foreign Minister, Coumba N'Doffène Diouf. His task was complex and layered. He had to show the representatives of Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, and Sierra Leone the beneficial effects that joining the Association would have had on African integration. He also had to explain that, should they choose to negotiate alongside the Associates, they should have joined them in demanding an adequate increase in the EDF. Most difficultly, he had to clarify that the Associates were very proud of the Association *acquis* and how important the reverse preferences were, since they constituted "the psychological cement of the Association"³²⁸. Finally, he had to convince the

³²⁵ Letter from President Senghor to President Bongo, Dakar, 7 July 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³²⁶ Ibidem.

³²⁷ Ibidem.

³²⁸ Coumba N'Doffène Diouf, *Rapport de Mission à Monsieur le Président de la République*, Dakar, 10 August 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

West African neighbours that the meeting between Associates and Associables should not be held in Europe nor let alone in London, but rather in Africa³²⁹.

This shows that, although the Associates had accepted that Yaoundé could be bettered through its enlargement and strengthening, Senghor was not ready to concede on what he perceived was the real significance of the Yaoundé Convention. The Association was the epitome of the special character of Euro-African relations. In this sense, reciprocity constituted the “psychological cement” of Euro-African relations because it set apart the Association from any other free trade arrangement that the EEC could conclude with other third countries. Moreover, since reciprocity entailed concessions from African states and gave the Association a contractual character, it demonstrated that Eurafrica could still be constructed as a transcontinental community in which African and European states were equal partners. Thus, in Senghor’s view, rejecting reciprocity meant that the Commonwealth countries had no intention of joining and thereby strengthening “the Eurafrican Association”³³⁰.

Unsurprisingly, Diouf did not succeed in all of his tasks. He concluded that Anglophone West African governments, especially Nigeria and Ghana, still held preconceptions about the EEC and were therefore reluctant to enter negotiations with it³³¹. Nevertheless, Diouf’s mission, along with Senghor’s extended contacts with other African leaders, are important insofar as they showcase the existence of an intra-African effort to debate and define what kind of relations Africa should have sought to establish with Europe. And this effort deliberately excluded Western intermediaries: since Senghor did not trust Arnold Smith to explain these matters to Commonwealth Africa, he had decided to increase his diplomatic efforts towards his Anglophone counterparts, starting to effectively relocate this debate to Africa itself. This was the sense of pushing to hold the meeting between Francophone and Anglophone countries in Africa, rather than in Europe.

Of course, intra-African diplomacy was not new. The previous decades in Africa had been marked by debates about Pan-Africanism, nationalism, and Global South solidarity. At the same time, however, as African territories had continued to gain independence, they had done so within the structures that European former metropolises had built: the Eurafrican Association and the Commonwealth. But the need to harmonise these two systems at the beginning of the

³²⁹ Ibidem.

³³⁰ Letter from President Senghor to President Pompidou, Dakar, 11 September 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³³¹ Coumba N’Doffène Diouf, *Rapport de Mission à Monsieur le Président de la République*, Dakar, 10 August 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

1970s meant that, for the first time, all of the newly-independent countries in Africa were called to decide how to structure their collective relations with Europe.

Senghor knew this, and was ready to deploy all his diplomatic weapons to bring about his vision of Eurafrica. By September 1972, the envisaged meeting between Associates and Associables had been postponed once again. Senghor addressed more letters to his fellow Associates, reiterating the need for the Associables to accept the Yaoundé structure and, within it, reciprocity³³². In the eyes of the French, this unflinching attitude risked to alienate the Associables, especially because in the meantime Arnold Smith had been pushing them in the opposite direction. Aiming at building a united front among the Commonwealth Associables in order to maximise their negotiating power, Smith was convincing more and more countries to reject the idea that they had to accept reciprocity in order to join the Associates in the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC³³³.

Smith's attitude was not troubling for France and the Associates alone: during the summer, British Foreign Minister Douglas-Home had begun to question Smith's involvement in the issue, sensing that his approach was not likely to convince the Associables to join the Yaoundé negotiations, but rather was beginning to be counterproductive³³⁴. Thus, he instructed the British embassy in Addis Ababa to seek collaboration with another possible intermediary: Robert Gardiner. Gardiner was a Ghanaian economist and had been the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) since 1962. In London's eyes, he was the perfect candidate to "encourage a more forthcoming and reasonable attitude on the part of Commonwealth African countries to Yaoundé Association"³³⁵. The ECA had already been involved in studying the possible implications of EEC enlargement on Euro-African relations³³⁶ and Gardiner, although not too optimistic about the possibility of a successful outcome³³⁷, seemed available to help, to the point that he declared himself willing to welcome a Foreign Office official within his staff³³⁸.

³³² H. T. Adam, *Note sur l'attitude du Commonwealth*, Paris, 19 Octobre 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³³³ *Summary Record of the Sixth Meeting of Representatives of the countries listed in Annex VI to the Treaty of Accession to the European Communities*, London, 20 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

³³⁴ A. Douglas-Home, *Yaoundé Association and Commonwealth Countries in Africa*, Telegram to Addis Ababa, 19 July 1972, TNA FCO 30/1265.

³³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³³⁶ The ECA had commissioned a study on these matters to Danish economist Kjeld Philip. Letter from K. K. Apeadu (ECA) to I. Buist (ODA FCO), 26 June 1972, TNA FCO 30/1265.

³³⁷ A. H. Campbell, *Yaoundé Association*, Telegram from Addis Ababa, 21 July 1972, TNA FCO 30/1265.

³³⁸ A. H. Campbell, *Yaoundé Association*, Telegram from Addis Ababa, 25 July 1972, TNA FCO 30/1265.

London's strategy, at this point, hinged on the assumption that Nigeria was most likely to reject the Community's offer to negotiate the next Association convention because of "largely emotional-political reasons"³³⁹. Given its exceptional economic and demographic weight, Nigeria's decision in such sense would have had a strong influence on the other Associates. In Maurice Foley's view, who the following year would become the Deputy Director General of the Commission's DG Development, this was to be prevented by "dressing up the Yaoundé III option in the trappings of a united Africa"³⁴⁰. This "dressing up" would involve opening negotiation to independent African states such as Liberia and Ethiopia, while at the same time insisting on how a future "Community of Europe and Africa" could undertake positive measures such as commodity agreements³⁴¹. This could be done with the help of Gardiner and ECA, who "had a useful role to play here"³⁴². During a visit in Lagos, Foley met with Gardiner, who reiterated his availability in such sense³⁴³. In October, James Adams, an official of the FCO's European Integration Department, would be sent to Addis Ababa "in order to help [ECA] in preparing factual material in connection with the options open to African Associates under the Accession Treaty"³⁴⁴. Once again, London had found a way to exert influence over its former colonies without being directly involved.

This, however, did not imply that Smith had interrupted his contacts with the Associates. He continued to discourage them from accepting Senghor's conditions, as he was convinced that "his role was to protect the Commonwealth associates against a French plot to maintain their influence in the Community's association policies, to the natural detriment of the Commonwealth associates"³⁴⁵. For this reason, he resented the constraints imposed by Protocol 22, believing they forced developing countries to choose among options that, in his view, all carried significant drawbacks. Smith firmly believed that Francophone and Commonwealth developing countries ought to unite and recognise the enhanced bargaining power they could wield collectively. If allowed to negotiate outside the framework of previous

³³⁹ *Visit of Mr. Maurice Foley*, Letter from K. A. East, British High Commissioner in Lagos, to FCO West African Department, 1 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

³⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

³⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

³⁴² *Discussion with Mr. Foley and Dr. Soper*, Letter from W. J. Adams, EID, to Mr. Robinson, EID, 14 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

³⁴³ *Visit of Mr. Maurice Foley*, Letter from K. A. East, British High Commissioner in Lagos, to FCO West African Department, 1 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

³⁴⁴ *Draft letter on Association options under the Treaty of Accession; Secondment of a British Official to the ECA*, W. J. Adams, EID, 19 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

³⁴⁵ *Conversation with Mr. N. Salter*, Minute from M. Laidler, EID, to Mr. Robinson, EID, 20 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

Conventions, they might have shaped a different kind of Association – one more attuned to their position in the international order and genuinely responsive to their developmental needs³⁴⁶. He was therefore convinced that the Associates needed to define their common objectives as swiftly as possible, with the aim of presenting a unified front in the negotiations, potentially in concert with the Associates.

To this end, Smith chose to express his views openly, outlining them at length in a letter circulated among the Commonwealth Associates in October 1972³⁴⁷. The letter specifically addressed the underlying political implications of the various options presented in Protocol 22. If handled appropriately, the negotiations could lead to a fair arrangement from which both Associates and Associates might benefit through improved access to European markets, development aid, and enhanced economic stability via viable commodity agreements. Ideally, this could be achieved without accepting neo-colonial constraints on their commercial and foreign policies. Conversely, the talks also carried the risk of resulting in an “exclusive and discriminatory arrangement”³⁴⁸. Such an outcome might give rise to an inward-looking bloc of European and African states, whose emergence could trigger a dangerous race among other wealthy nations to acquire and formalise exclusive spheres of interest in the developing world. The final result – likely to fall somewhere between these two extremes – depended largely on the negotiating posture adopted by the developing countries themselves. Smith cautioned that they risked underestimating their bargaining power vis-à-vis the EEC, within which sympathetic actors, such as Germany, the Netherlands, and Britain, could be found³⁴⁹.

Smith thus urged the Associates to establish a common position – one that could, ideally, be broadly endorsed by the Associates as well. Had they succeeded in doing so, they would have been able to enter negotiations with the Community without being compelled to accept, by default, the unfavourable framework laid out in Protocol 22³⁵⁰. He proceeded to criticise the apparent use of development aid as a *quid pro quo* for reverse preferences, and questioned the extent to which reciprocity could genuinely be considered a foundational principle of the Association³⁵¹. The letter concluded with a reminder that, although personal, Smith’s

³⁴⁶ O. Akinrinade, *Associates and Associates: the Failure of Commonwealth Bridge-Building, 1971-3*, in op. cit., pp. 182-184.

³⁴⁷ Circular letter from Arnold Smith to Foreign Ministers of 19 Commonwealth Associates (not including Mauritius), 12 October 1972, TNA FCO 30/1267.

³⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 1-2.

³⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

³⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

³⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

reflections were at least partly informed by his conversations with representatives of the Commonwealth Associates, many of whom had expressed a clear desire to negotiate an entirely new form of Association³⁵².

Unsurprisingly, the letter provoked a concerned response from the British Government, which was quick to clarify that Smith's views were entirely personal and did not in any way represent those of the British government³⁵³. The Foreign Office feared that Paris might interpret Smith's actions as a London-inspired manoeuvre aimed at altering the fundamental principles underpinning the Association, thus endangering the hard-won Anglo-French *entente*. Meanwhile, echoes of Smith's letter had begun to reach Francophone Africa. Although Senghor's diplomatic mission to Anglophone West Africa had already sidelined Smith during the summer, by autumn the Associates' frustration with his increasing activism had grown markedly³⁵⁴. Ultimately, perceiving the letter as an undue attempt to interfere with their position, the Associates officially withdrew recognition of Smith as a viable intermediary in October³⁵⁵.

At this point, the British Foreign Office began to reconsider the low-profile approach it had maintained throughout 1972. Following Smith's "ill-judged, if not positively ill-intentioned, initiatives", it became imperative for the British government to restrict the Secretariat's scope of action, especially given the impending meeting between Associates and Associates³⁵⁶. This meeting, which had already been postponed several times, was not held in November in Dakar as originally proposed by Senghor during the summer of 1972. Several attempts were made to reschedule the gathering before the end of that year. Ultimately, it became clear that such efforts could not proceed under the aegis of the Commonwealth Secretariat³⁵⁷. Consequently, London began exploring alternatives to steer the process initiated by Smith back onto the course envisaged by the Foreign Office. To this end, contacts with Robert Gardiner were intensified, in the hope that the meeting between Associates and Associates could take place under the auspices of ECA³⁵⁸.

Through this recollection of the events that took place in 1972, it is possible to consider how the EEC British enlargement impacted upon Africa. First, the Associates had ensured that their

³⁵² Ibidem, p. 7.

³⁵³ FCO Telegram to Accra *et alia*, 27 October 1972, TNA FCO 30/1267.

³⁵⁴ Letter from Senegalese Ambassador in France, André Guillaibert, to Jacques Foccart, 7 Dec 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³⁵⁵ H. T. Adam, *Note sur l'attitude du Commonwealth*, Paris, 19 Octobre 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

³⁵⁶ Minute from M. Le Quesne to J. A. Robinson, 30 October 1972, TNA FCO 30/1268.

³⁵⁷ Minute from Le Quesne to J. A. Robinson, 6 December 1972, TNA FCO 30/1268.

³⁵⁸ Minute from M. Le Quesne to J. A. Robinson, 30 October 1972, TNA FCO 30/1268.

interests were being safeguarded in the Community's negotiations with London. Once they had been adequately reassured by Protocol 22, they started to focus on Anglophone Africa. Throughout the year the contacts between the two groups intensified, especially thanks to Senghor's active diplomacy. Even though the two groupings held substantially different views, they shared the desire to engage with each other, arrange a meeting and discuss the future of Africa's relations with Europe. As we have seen, both parties realised that they could not dismiss an almost unique opportunity to jointly negotiate with their former metropolises. They were both conscious that, had they managed to present a united front during the negotiations, they could have maximised their gains: for Francophone countries, this meant building a larger coalition in support of the current Association, so as to make a stronger case for better terms of trade and a significant increase in the EDF. For Anglophone countries, on the other hand, this meant negotiating an entirely different kind of Association, free of neo-colonial devices such as reciprocity. The next and final section of the chapter explores how these diverging positions were reconciled throughout the first semester of 1973.

However, this recollection also shows that the African decision-making process in view of the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC was heavily subject to Western pressures. If France had begun exerting its influence on Francophone Africa since Pompidou's tour in 1971, ensuring that at least part of the Associates would think of Paris as the ultimate guardian of their interests in the Association framework, Commonwealth Africa had found itself subject to diverging and subtler pressures. Despite the fact that the British government had already established that Option One of Protocol 22 was its favourite solution, London could not act upon its interests in public way. Heath's policy of acquiescence to the Community's structures was reflected in the Association realm too: since Britain could not afford to jeopardise the difficultly attained *entente* with France, London would have maintained a low profile for the whole year, delegating its diplomatic campaign to the Commonwealth Secretariat. To its surprise, the Foreign Office had found a particularly opinionated voice in Arnold Smith, the Commonwealth Secretary General. When his attitude had risked upsetting the delicate balance that Britain had achieved within the Community enlargement process, London had scrambled to disavow Smith and find another actor who could guide the Associates towards London's preferred outcome. In an attempt to present the Yaoundé III option as a further step towards a united Africa, the FCO had enlisted ECA and its Secretary-General, Robert Gardiner, to act as a trusted source of information on the possible benefits of Association and, later, as a possible convenor of the long-

awaited meeting between Associates and Associables. During the first months of 1973, however, the debate among African countries would be gradually relocated to Africa.

2.4 “Allow the Africans to talk calmly with each other”: the African debate over the future of Euro-African relations

The first weeks of 1973 witnessed the reluctance of African Anglophone countries to meet within the Commonwealth framework. At least two meetings scheduled for January and February were cancelled³⁵⁹. Several African political figures, such as Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda or the Kenyan Foreign Minister Njoroge Mungai had expressed to Smith their need to work on a common Anglophone African position before discussing the issue more at large³⁶⁰. While the Commonwealth summits were being cancelled, however, an ECA and OAU ministerial meeting provided a first occasion for Associates and Associables to exchange views on the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC. Held in Accra in mid-February, the meeting was aimed at discussing the promotion of intra-African trade relations. Gardiner, however, was quick to clarify that the subject could not be separated from a more general debate on the future of Africa's relations with Europe³⁶¹. Before opening the conference, he insisted on how important it was for African countries to adopt a concerted approach vis-à-vis the EEC in order to protect Africa's cultural and economic independence, exhorting them to compromise in order to reach an “African consensus”³⁶². In other words, Gardiner was maintaining the promises he had made to British officials, exhorting African countries to renounce hard positions on EEC Association and pursue unity over ideological purity.

In Accra, however, he encountered a rather recalcitrant audience. Ghanaian press covered the ECA meeting with caustic articles which urged African governments not to be “lured by the dubious advantages of association with the so-called EEC”³⁶³. African unity in economic and political terms was desperately needed to attain development, but seeking it through the EEC could only result in further enveloping Africa in Europe's exploitative schemes. In this sense, the EEC's efforts to convince the Associables to join Yaoundé represented “neo-colonialism at

³⁵⁹ Minute by J. A. Robinson to EID, 28 December 1973, TNA FCO 30/1279.

³⁶⁰ O. Akinrinade, *Associates and Associables: the Failure of Commonwealth Bridge-Building, 1971-3*, in op. cit., p. 186.

³⁶¹ L. Therson-Cofie, *Towards economic cooperation: 'Let's learn from other nations'*, Daily Graphic, Accra, 12 February 1973, PRAAD.

³⁶² Ibidem.

³⁶³ K. Boison, *Ghana should say no the EEC*, Daily Graphic, Accra, 12 February 1973, PRAAD.

its most dangerous subtlety”³⁶⁴. This sentiment was not confined to the press alone. In his speech to the ECA ministerial meeting, Ghanaian Head of State Colonel Acheampong emphasised how the EEC reunited “almost all the industrialised countries that once had privileged access to Africa through their colonial possessions”³⁶⁵. This meant that African countries were “naturally sceptical about any arrangement that would appear to perpetuate this unhealthy relationship”³⁶⁶.

Nonetheless, for Acheampong and its Anglophone counterparts this did not necessarily mean that the Associates should refuse to negotiate with the EEC. Rather, Acheampong evoked the possibilities that could be unlocked if African states could jointly develop economic and political cooperation through the OAU. While he insisted that such a cooperation should be aimed at “correct[ing] the distortion caused by economic relations oriented principally towards Europe”³⁶⁷, he stressed the importance of African unity as a means to negotiate better conditions within the international economic system. By securing its economic independence through a united approach, Africa would have been able to attain unprecedented results in multilateral *fora* in which African problems were usually disregarded.

Acheampong’s speech captured the spirit of the time. Although the UNCTAD Third Session, held in Santiago in the late spring of 1972, had failed to deliver substantial measures for the reorganisation of the international economic system³⁶⁸, developing countries had managed to increase their representation and involvement in the forthcoming GATT Tokyo Round and in the multilateral efforts towards a reform of the international monetary system³⁶⁹. This was not lost on African leaders like Acheampong, who insisted on how the negotiations with the EEC would overlap with those of commodity agreements within UNCTAD, the next GATT round, and the negotiations within the International Monetary Fund (IMF). By acting through a concerted approach in all of these *fora*, he concluded, “African countries have every opportunity to make themselves heard as a group and even compel recognition of their peculiar problems if they were to act in concert and thus reap the benefits of a unified approach”³⁷⁰. In the realm of Euro-

³⁶⁴ *Graphic view: Africa and the EEC*, Daily Graphic, Accra, 20 February 1973, PRAAD.

³⁶⁵ *There is need for economic cooperation – declares Acheampong*, Daily Graphic, 21 February 1973, PRAAD.

³⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁶⁸ S. Dell, *An Appraisal of UNCTAD III*, in: «World Development», Vol. 1, issue 5, May 1973, pp. 1-13; V. Walker-Leigh, *Was UNCTAD III a Failure?*, in: «The World Today», Vol. 28, issue 9, September 1972, pp. 411-420.

³⁶⁹ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., 2012, pp. 140-141.

³⁷⁰ *There is need for economic cooperation – declares Acheampong*, Daily Graphic, Accra, 21 February 1973, PRAAD.

African relations, this meant that the Associables did need to enter negotiations with the EEC, but also that the Protocol 22 options should be disregarded in the pursue of a new kind of agreement³⁷¹. Although the Accra meeting did not result in the definition of a common negotiating position, it placed the issue of Association enlargement within the scope of ECA and OAU deliberations, thus marking the first official step of the slow composition of a common African front vis-à-vis the EEC, which continued in the following months³⁷².

UNCTAD III had also been an opportunity for the EEC to adopt a new posture in multilateral negotiations on development. Dutch politician Sicco Mansholt, who was at the time president of the Commission, sought to exploit the Community's participation in UNCTAD to present Brussels as the most valuable partner for the Global South within the industrialised North. In his interventions, he defended the Community's ongoing will to engage and respond to developing countries' demands, represented by the early adoption of the Generalised System of Preference (GSP), and its advocacy for more representation of the Global South within international economic institutions³⁷³. After the end of the UNCTAD session, the Commission enthusiastically reported to the Council that the EEC was "the centre of developing countries' hopes and fears"³⁷⁴ in light of the role that Brussels could play in the various negotiations that would take place in 1973. While this wording revealed a certain degree of wishful thinking on the part of the Commission, the Community's activism in Santiago did open up a new realm of possibilities for the Community's policy towards the Global South. Between the Commission and these new possibilities, however, stood some difficult political choices and the need to present the Association as a model, rather than a divisive vestige of the colonial era³⁷⁵.

A year later, the Commission presented its answer to this challenge. Drawing on the conclusions of the October 1972 Paris Summit, during which the Nine's heads of state had given momentum to the creation of a comprehensive common development policy, in the spring of 1973 Jean-François Deniau performed his last act as Development Commissioner by presenting a

³⁷¹ *Après la conférence d'Accra, la Grande Négociation Europe-Afrique est commencée*, Le Moniteur Africain, n. 599, 22 Mars 1973, ANS.

³⁷² *Report of the Administrative Secretary-General of the African Ministerial Conference on Trade, Development and Monetary problems (Consideration of the African Declaration on Co-operation, Development and Economic Independence)*, Council of Ministers, Twenty-First Ordinary Session, Addis Ababa, May 1973, African Union Archives (AUA) CM/509, <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/7798> (last accessed 03 May 2024).

³⁷³ *Déclaration du Président Sicco L. Mansholt*, Troisième CNUCED, Santiago du Chili, 19 May 1972, HAEU FMM 38. See also: G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

³⁷⁴ *Compte rendu de la visite du Président Mansholt à Santiago du Chili et à Lima*, Brussels, 23 Mai 1972, HAEU FMM 38.

³⁷⁵ Ibidem.

memorandum on the future of the Association. The document, which soon became known as the Deniau Memorandum, presented the Commission's appraisal of the possible new, enlarged, and strengthened Association. It summarised the main themes that had emerged in the previous years in the debate around Euro-African relations: the defence of the Associates' acquired advantages, the potential for innovation, the beneficial effect of an enlarged Association on intra-African cooperation. On the one hand, the memorandum remained relatively firm in defending the need for a minimal degree of reciprocity in Euro-African trade: the document specified that the Community did not link financial and technical cooperation to the granting of reverse preferences, but it insisted on nominal reciprocity as a way of upholding the Association contractual character as well as its validity within GATT rules³⁷⁶. On the other hand, however, it presented an innovative proposal: a scheme for the stabilisation of export revenues.

The section opened by referring to the need for industrialised countries to encourage development not only through aid, but also through "the stabilization and better utilization of export revenue from trade in primary commodities"³⁷⁷. Since multilateral commodity agreements had historically proven to be both difficult to strike and unsatisfactory, the Commission argued that it was the "Community's responsibility to [safeguard] the interests of the developing countries whose economy depends to a considerable extent on commodity exports"³⁷⁸. This was all the more important because the enlargement of the Association would have allowed powerful competitors of the Associates to enjoy their same preferential system, thereby reducing the significance of the trade advantages accrued to the Associates on the Common Market. The creation of an export revenue stabilisation scheme thus constituted a solution to two pressing problems for Brussels. Firstly, it allowed the EEC to honour its commitment not to erode the Associates' *acquis* while offering equally advantageous conditions to the Associates at the same time. Secondly, it provided a concrete - albeit partial - response to the African countries' longstanding denunciation of the erosion of their terms of trade and

³⁷⁶ «The Community does not ask its partners to be granted preferential treatment, but asks only that they should operate a duty-free entry system in accordance with the establishment of a free trade area». *Memorandum on the Future Relations between the Community, the Present Associates and the Countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian and Pacific Oceans Referenced to in the Protocol 22 of the Act of Accession*, Brussels, 21 March 1973, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1973)0500, p. 22.

³⁷⁷ *Memorandum on the Future Relations between the Community, the Present Associates and the Countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian and Pacific Oceans Referenced to in the Protocol 22 of the Act of Accession*, Brussels, 21 March 1973, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1973)0500, p. 24.

³⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

the extreme volatility of their export revenues³⁷⁹. In this sense, the Commission believed that such a scheme could help the EEC achieve what had been preconized by Mansholt after his experience in Santiago, namely turning the EEC into the main advocate of developing countries' plights among the industrialised countries.

The memorandum did not go unnoticed in Africa. *Le Moniteur Africain*, a Senegalese political-economic periodical, dedicated various articles to the analysis of the document, highlighting different aspects of it every week³⁸⁰. When presenting the trade system envisaged in the memorandum, the Senegalese journal did not shy away from defending reciprocity as it was presented by the Commission, i. e. as a means to ensure the contractual nature of Association, to foster free trade within Euro-African relations, and to make the Association compatible with GATT rules³⁸¹. At the same time, however, *Le Moniteur Africain* demonstrated extreme interest for the "original" scheme for export revenue stabilisation that was envisaged by the Commission³⁸², as well as for the explicit reference that the memorandum made to the beneficial impact of enlarged Association on African unity³⁸³. One of the articles even reported on Deniau's enthusiastic presentation of the memorandum, specifying that the Commissioner had invited other industrialised countries to follow the Community's example in establishing constructive cooperation with developing countries³⁸⁴.

But reports of the Memorandum were not entrusted to newspapers only. Continuing in its effort to provide information and guidance on the Community, ECA prepared a detailed summary of the memorandum, which was then circulated to all independent African countries. The summary described the new Association envisaged by the Commission in generally favourable terms. ECA underlined the innovative features presented by the memorandum, insisting on how the Community had abandoned its rigidity on reverse preferences and had proposed a new

³⁷⁹ Ibidem, pp. 26-27.

³⁸⁰ *Ce que propose la Commission Européenne au sujet du Renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé (Yaoundé III)*, *Le Moniteur Africain*, n. 601, Dakar, 5 Avril 1973, ANS ; *Le Memorandum de la Commission Européenne sur le renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé II – La Coopération Technique et Financière*, *Le Moniteur Africain*, n. 603, Dakar, 19 Avril 1973, ANS.

³⁸¹ *Ce que propose la Commission Européenne au sujet du Renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé (Yaoundé III)*, op. cit. *Le Moniteur Africain*, n. 601, Dakar, 5 Avril 1973, ANS.

³⁸² Ibidem.

³⁸³ *Le Memorandum de la Commission Européenne sur le renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé II – La Coopération Technique et Financière*, op. cit.

³⁸⁴ *M. J.-F. Deniau : La Commission propose avant tout un « modèle »*, *Le Moniteur Africain*, n. 603, Dakar, 19 Avril 1973, ANS.

mechanism to stabilise the revenues of raw material exports³⁸⁵. In so doing, ECA noted with satisfaction that the needs and demands expressed by the African countries in the previous months had been taken into consideration by the Commission.

The document, however, did not limit itself to summarise the memorandum, but highlighted some key areas where African countries might have wanted to concentrate their efforts before and during negotiations with the EEC. In an effort to quell the Associates' fears of neo-colonial entanglements with the Community, the document suggested there was no need to retain the wording of Association, which was considered problematic by many. Moreover, since the memorandum insisted on how Euro-African relations should have not hindered intra-African cooperation, the report urged African countries which were not listed in Protocol 22 as part of the Commonwealth Associates³⁸⁶ to decide whether they wanted to join the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC. African unity, however, was not understood in solely political terms: ECA underlined how during negotiations African countries should fight for a guarantee from the Community on its commitment to the promotion of intra-African trade, so that "it will be clearly underlined that the EEC does not want to bind Africa to Europe, but that it fully identifies with Africa's desire to diversify its external links"³⁸⁷.

Interestingly, ECA also suggested a more forward diplomatic approach: African countries should closely watch and try to shape the political debate that would take place between the Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament in the next few months. Since the three EEC organs would have to discuss the Deniau Memorandum so as to reach a common position before the negotiations,

it would be in the interests of African countries to influence the decisions of the Council and Parliament. The more the Council's negotiating mandate and the Parliament's comments take account of the views of the African countries, the more these countries will gain³⁸⁸.

This, remarked the report, was common practice among the other third countries that had negotiated agreements with the Community. A successful diplomatic effort in this sense would

³⁸⁵ *Remarques sur le Mémorandum de la Commission de la CEE concernant les relations futures entra le Communauté et les Pays en Voie de Développement qui lui sont ou lui seront associés, Document d'Information, Note Préliminaire du Secrétariat de la C.E.A., May 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707.*

³⁸⁶ These were: Ethiopia, Soudan, Liberia, Guinea, and Equatorial Guinea.

³⁸⁷ *Remarques sur le Mémorandum de la Commission de la CEE concernant les relations futures entra le Communauté et les Pays en Voie de Développement qui lui sont ou lui seront associés, Document d'Information, Note Préliminaire du Secrétariat de la C.E.A., May 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707, p. 20.*

³⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

have created more space for African countries to obtain meaningful results during the actual negotiations³⁸⁹.

Such a call for a more active African diplomacy towards the EEC fit into the context of the growing intra-African debate over the future of Euro-African relations. In May, all independent African countries met in Ivory Coast capital Abidjan under the auspices of OAU, ECA and the African Development Bank (ADB). Although the Conference nominally covered “trade, development and monetary” issues and was convened to implement the OAU decisions on the last UNCTAD, it also served as a further step towards the creation of a common African approach in multilateral negotiations and vis-à-vis the EEC³⁹⁰. During the Conference, the African Ministers were able to agree on a basic common platform. African participation in negotiations with industrialised countries should aim at fostering an increase in the African share of world trade. This could be done by negotiating better access to industrialised countries’ markets by demanding them to respect non-discrimination and non-reciprocity clauses. Moreover, it was essential to complement these measures with commodity prices stabilisation agreements³⁹¹.

With specific regards to the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC, the Conference report urged African countries to negotiate an agreement that would respect a number of conditions: non-reciprocal trade concessions, fair establishment rights for third countries, and a favourable revision of rules of origin to promote African industrial integration. Additionally, there was a call to revise payment and capital movement rules to support African monetary independence. Delegates stressed the importance of liberal market access for African products and fair pricing in EEC markets. Finally, African countries should ask for the “disassociation of EEC financial and technical aid from any particular form of relationship with EEC”³⁹². All of this would be necessary for the new agreement with the EEC to not hinder inter-African cooperation³⁹³.

This apparent consensus, however, disguised serious disagreements among the Ministers: not all the delegates had been favourable to the inclusion of the disassociation and non-reciprocity

³⁸⁹ Ibidem.

³⁹⁰ Baruti Wa N'Dwali, State Commissioner for Finance in the Republic of Zaire, *Report of the African Ministerial Conference on Trade, Development and Monetary problems*, Council of Ministers, Twenty-First Ordinary Session, Addis Ababa, May 1973, AUA CM/509, <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/7798> (last accessed 04 May 2024).

³⁹¹ Ibidem, pp. 7-8.

³⁹² Recommendations of the African Ministers Conference on Trade, Development and Monetary Problems, Abidjan, 9-13 May 1973, AUA CM/509, <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/7798> (last accessed 04 May 2024), p. 6.

³⁹³ Ibidem.

clauses in the final recommendations³⁹⁴. At least some of the Associates, indeed, were uneasy with such a stern denunciation of the fundamental tenets of Association. They feared that the Associables' reason to include the disassociation clause rested on the assumption that they could use their common negotiating power to maximize their results by negotiating a single aid agreement and then negotiate separate non-reciprocal agreements on trade, thus breaking up the Association³⁹⁵. Since the Francophone countries wanted to safeguard the special character of the Association, such a strategy would be unacceptable to them. Senegalese Finance Minister Babacar Ba had reopened the discussion on the two clauses, while Haute Volta (now Burkina Faso) and Mauritania had presented an amendment that eliminated the disassociation clause³⁹⁶.

Despite the disagreement, however, what prevailed in Abidjan was the desire to compromise and reconcile the different views of Associables and Associates. This attitude would have characterised the following months, as a final OAU ministerial meeting was scheduled for early July in Lagos. In the meantime, Brussels, Paris, and London were closely watching these developments. During the June session of the Association Joint Committee meeting, the forthcoming Euro-African negotiations were the main topic of discussion, as it had been decided that the opening conference of the negotiations would be held on 25-26 July in Brussels³⁹⁷. It is interesting to note that, whilst up to the end of 1972 the Association institutions had served as valuable *fora* for the Associates to defend their prerogatives, in June 1973 they seemed more interested in preserving the independence of the African deliberations, especially in this delicate final phase. During the discussion on the future of Association, the Malian representative Alioune Sissoko paid homage to the intra-African effort to reach a common position, referring to the "Pan-African meetings"³⁹⁸ that had taken place in the previous months, and underlined how pressure from European Member States risked to hinder

³⁹⁴ «Although some delegations expressed reservations regarding the principle of non-reciprocity, the Conference nevertheless stressed that the EEC itself did not insist on reciprocal preferences - a fact which, in its view, facilitates the African position in future negotiations». In: Baruti Wa N'Dwali, State Commissioner for Finance in the Republic of Zaire, *Report of the African Ministerial Conference on Trade, Development and Monetary problems*, Council of Ministers, Twenty-First Ordinary Session, Addis Ababa, May 1973, AUA CM/509, <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/7798> (last accessed 04 May 2024), p. 12.

³⁹⁵ *Conférence Africaine d'Abidjan : Volonté de Compromis mais, pour les EAMA, ni « non réciprocité », ni « disassociation »*, Le Moniteur Africain, N. 607, 17 Mai 1973, ANS.

³⁹⁶ Ibidem.

³⁹⁷ *Discours prononcé par Mme Irène Petry*, 28 June 1973, Association Joint Committee session of June 1973, HAEU ACP 221.

³⁹⁸ *Proces-Verbal de la Commission Paritaire de la Conférence Parlementaire de l'Association*, 26-29 June 1973, Bruges, HAEU ACP 221, p. 14.

the process. He thus called on the Europeans “to allow the Africans to talk calmly with each other at the Lagos Meeting and not to interfere”³⁹⁹.

The interference to which Sissoko referred was likely that of France and Britain. In those months, the two governments had been the most active within the Community as well as in bilateral relations with African countries. By July 1973, their positions had almost aligned completely: they both agreed that it was “in the interests of both the United Kingdom and France that the majority of the Commonwealth associables should opt for full association under Yaoundé III and that consequently the conditions should be attractive to them”⁴⁰⁰. One issue, however, continued to create friction between London and Paris: Nigeria’s still uncertain position. During Anglo-French talks on Africa held at the end of May 1973, the future of Association and the apparent African consensus on negotiations with the EEC were extensively discussed⁴⁰¹. Among other things, British and French officials discussed how to manage the now softened Nigerian attitude towards the EEC. French officials expressed their fear that Nigeria’s adhesion would be problematic for the EDF budget but that, at the same time, Lagos could become a powerful example of anti-EEC sentiment if it decided to remain out⁴⁰². For London, “French attitude to the Nigerian monster remains unsatisfactory”: the British believed that Paris was wary of a possible Nigerian adhesion to the Association because Lagos could constitute too strong a centre of political attraction for the other associates, thereby weakening French influence on the region⁴⁰³. An estranged Nigeria, however, would have constituted a far more dangerous pole of attraction. Thus, from those talks onwards, British diplomats had focused their efforts on creating “a climate of Franco-Nigerian confidence”⁴⁰⁴.

Once again, when Anglo-French talks related to their interests in Africa and how to further them through Communitarian action, the persistence of a colonial understanding of African politics was evident. In the same talk, British and French officials were at ease in dismissing African fears of neo-colonial entanglements – “many Africans seemed still to suffer from the curious illusion that we wished to return to Africa”⁴⁰⁵ said future British Ambassador to Nigeria Martin

³⁹⁹ Ibidem.

⁴⁰⁰ Letter from J. C. Ling to S. Y. Dawbarn, West African Department, 3 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707.

⁴⁰¹ *Anglo-French Talks on Africa, Third Session: EEC and Association*, Paris, 24 May 1973, TNC FCO 30/1707.

⁴⁰² Ibidem.

⁴⁰³ Letter from J. C. Ling to S. Y. Dawbarn, West African Department, 3 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707.

⁴⁰⁴ Letter from S. Y. Dawbarn to J. C. Ling, 5 July 1973, TNC FCO 30/1707.

⁴⁰⁵ *Anglo-French Talks on Africa, Second Session: South-West Africa*, Paris, 24 May 1973, TNC FCO 30/1707, p. 21.

Le Quesne – while debating whether Nigeria should be kept in or out depending on how much damage to French or British interests it would cause⁴⁰⁶.

But Paris and London were not the only ones to realise the importance of Nigeria, as African countries were even more aware of how Lagos could play a fundamental role in the forthcoming negotiations. It was not by chance that the final OAU Conference on Trade before the inauguration of Euro-African negotiations was held in the Nigerian capital. Starting from the common principles adopted in Abidjan, from 9 to 11 July all African Trade Ministers debated how to develop suitable protocols and establish effective mechanisms for the upcoming negotiations⁴⁰⁷. By the end of the conference, they had all agreed to participate in the negotiations and adopted some key decisions, which included the establishment of an Ad Hoc Secretariat to support the activities of the African Group engaged in negotiations with the Commission of the European Communities. More importantly, however, the ministers had designated a single African spokesperson who would advocate the African stance during the negotiations in Brussels⁴⁰⁸. Once again, it was no accident that the choice for spokesperson fell onto the representative of the Nigerian government, the Trade Minister Wenike Briggs.

Thus, by July 1973, African countries had managed to reach a consensus that had appeared unattainable just a few months before. Several factors had contributed to this, and European attempts at influencing the opinions of the two African groupings had surely played a part. Nonetheless, the process that started in Accra in February and came to an end in July in Lagos showed how African countries had been capable to reunite their diverging views on the EEC so as to seize the opportunity to jointly negotiate with Europe, thereby maximising their bargaining power. While throughout 1971 and 1972 they had been increasingly subject to discordant European attempts at steering their decision-making process, in 1973 African countries increasingly sought to shield themselves from European influence, as epitomised by the decision to hold the proceedings of the Lagos conference behind closed doors⁴⁰⁹. It was in this spirit that the Administrative Secretary of the OAU, Nzo Ekanagaki, opened the Lagos

⁴⁰⁶ *Anglo-French Talks on Africa, Third Session: EEC and Association*, Paris, 24 May 1973, TNC FCO 30/1707.

⁴⁰⁷ Negotiations between African countries and the European Economic Community (EEC), Progress Report by the Administrative Secretary General, June 1974, AUA CM 588 (XXIII)_E, https://archives.au.int/bitstream/handle/123456789/9258/CM%20588%20%28XXIII%29_E.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y (last accessed 7 May 2024), p. 4.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰⁹ *OAU Trade Ministers Meeting*, Lagos, Telegram from Lagos to UK Representation in Brussels, 10 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707.

conference by urging the African member states to adopt an assertive stance in Brussels⁴¹⁰. By acknowledging Africa's value and adopting a unified approach, African states should be able to negotiate fair terms for the future of Euro-African relations. Failing to do so would amount to nullify what had been achieved by decolonisation, as Ekangaki warned:

We did not struggle as individual states to quit the claws and tentacles of European colonialism only to offer ourselves as a united Africa, by design and default, as a colony of a united Europe⁴¹¹.

2.5 Enlarging the Community and bridging colonial divides in Africa: a history of troubled European diplomacy and African initiative

In the early 1970s, the prospect of enlargement, which would bring the other most important former imperial power within the Community, created the opportunity for innovation in the structure of the Association. While the Commission and the majority of the Member States had welcomed this chance, France felt that an important part of its legacy within the Community, the Association, was under threat. This had brought Paris to deploy its strategy on two fronts: on the one hand, the defence of the Association *acquis* had to be brought about through France's and Associates' concerted efforts within the Community and the Association institutions. On the other, Paris also knew that if France wanted to defend the special nature of Euro-African relations, British engagement with the Association was of paramount importance.

This was compatible with London's own strategy, which aimed at convincing the highest possible number of Associables to join the negotiations with the EEC for Yaoundé III so as to prevent its Communitarian membership from severing the economic links with its former colonies. Through regularly held Anglo-French talks on Africa, the last of which had taken place just in May 1973⁴¹², the two former colonial powers managed to build and develop a mutual understanding of what the future Association could look like, striking a compromise that hinged on the enlargement of the Association and the preservation of its fundamental tenets at the same time. Both countries had had to compromise, but, as it had been remarked by Heath to

⁴¹⁰ «Firstly we should know our strength and be convinced of our strong bargaining power and position. [...] We should rid ourselves of any complex. It is most unlikely that Europe would say 'No' to Africa, its raw materials and its market, when and because we ask for equitable and dignified trade terms.» *Speech by Secretary-General of the OAU, Lagos, 9 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707.*

⁴¹¹ *Speech by Secretary-General of the OAU, Lagos, 9 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707, pp. 4-5.*

⁴¹² *Anglo-French Talks on Africa, Third Session: EEC and Association, Paris, 24 May 1973, TNC FCO 30/1707.*

Pompidou during their official meeting in 1971, their common – colonial – knowledge of Africa and the interests they shared in that territory were enough to cement a common position.

Within the EEC itself, however, British enlargement had altered the equilibrium that France had been building since 1957. Members like West Germany and The Netherlands had seized the opportunity presented by the need to accommodate Commonwealth countries within the Association to push for a wider, more global development policy⁴¹³. On the institutional side, the nature of Mansholt's participation as a representative of the Community in the Santiago UNCTAD signalled a shift in this sense, marking the beginning of a long-term effort to reposition the EEC vis-à-vis the Global South. If this process had been set in motion by the negotiations for British enlargement, the EEC's participation in UNCTAD had marked an acceleration. Six months later, the October 1972 Paris summit of Community Heads of State sanctioned the support of Member States for the elaboration of a common development policy that could go beyond the areas defined by the EEC colonial heritage⁴¹⁴.

In the spring of 1973, the Deniau memorandum had welcomed that possibility, but specified that the Association was to remain the centrepiece of the Community's action vis-à-vis the Global South. On the one hand, this was a positive result for France, which had succeeded in striking a compromise that maintained Africa at the centre of the EEC's external action. On the other hand, Deniau's calls to other industrialised countries to follow the Community's example and adopt agreements crafted on the same model⁴¹⁵ demonstrate how the Community had taken Mansholt's call to present the EEC as a friend of the developing countries further. In the following years, instead of radically widening the scope of the Community's development policy, the EEC would have tried to play a more impactful role in the international system by presenting Euro-African relations as a model for North-South relations. The next chapter investigates how this attempt was brought about by Deniau's successor, Claude Cheysson.

The EEC enlargement, however, did not impact on Europe alone. Firstly, Africa was called into question because, besides striking their own compromise, France and Britain had also turned their diplomatic efforts towards their former colonies. If Paris had done so more openly through official visits and declarations of support within the Association institutions, London

⁴¹³ J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: A. Varsori (eds.), *Inside the European Community. Actors and Policies in the European Integration 1957-1972*, Baden-Baden, Bruxelles, Nomos / Bruylant, 2005.

⁴¹⁴ Ibidem.

⁴¹⁵ M. J.-F. Deniau : *La Commission propose avant tout un « modèle »*, Le Moniteur Africain, n. 603, 19 Avril 1973, ANS.

had adopted a more careful approach that rested on the involvement of external actors, such as Commonwealth Secretary-General Arnold Smith and, later, the ECA Secretary-General Robert Gardiner. This approach had created its own problems, but it had also provided a safe avenue for London to try and shape the Associates' attitude towards the EEC without being accused of interfering with the decisions of its former colonies.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact impact of these campaigns on African countries. If it is true that Associates and Associates eventually disavowed Smith as viable intermediary, it is also safe to say that Smith's more controversial suggestions, such as the need to reject Protocol 22 Options, had matured during his encounters with the Associates⁴¹⁶. Later, Robert Gardiner played a fundamental role in spreading favourable information about the EEC in Africa, also thanks to the secondment of a British official to ECA Secretariat. Therefore, surely Gardiner's efforts in this sense were encouraged and, to a certain extent, shaped by London. Maurice Foley's idea to use the ECA involvement to dress up the enlarged Association "under the trappings of African Unity"⁴¹⁷, which shows once again the extent to which former colonial powers were ready to use anti-colonial arguments to their advantage, worked to a certain extent, as it would have been difficult for African countries to disavow such a cause. Faced with the ideological strength of African rhetoric, European officials' response hinged on exploiting that very rhetoric to preserve European influence on the continent. This is yet another piece of evidence of how, more than a decade after formal independence, European diplomacy towards Africa was still informed by a colonial approach that legitimised European involvement in intra-African diplomacy. This strategy, however, would also backfire. Indeed, the progressive incorporation of Associates-Associates contacts within the ECA and OAU structures ensured an increasing independence in intra-African deliberations over the future of Euro-African relations, culminating in a consensus that would allow them to jointly conduct negotiations with the EEC in the following years. In this sense, the intra-African diplomatic efforts conducted in 1973 marked an important discontinuity with the previous years, during which relations between Francophone and Anglophone Africa were generally entrusted to European intermediaries.

⁴¹⁶ Circular letter from Arnold Smith to Foreign Ministers of 19 Commonwealth Associates (not including Mauritius), 12 October 1972, TNA FCO 30/1267, p. 7.

⁴¹⁷ *Visit of Mr. Maurice Foley*, Letter from K. A. East, British High Commissioner in Lagos, to FCO West African Department, 1 September 1972, TNA FCO 30/1266.

Indeed, African countries had demonstrated a strong desire to manage the intra-African dimension of the debate on Euro-African relations out of Europe's reach. Senegal's diplomatic mission to Anglophone West Africa had been an early sign of this tendency, but the series of ministerial meetings held under the aegis of OAU, ECA, and the ADB provide solid evidence of how, since the beginning of 1973 onwards, African countries appreciated the need to independently reach a common position in order to maximise their results in the forthcoming negotiations. In his speech in Lagos, Ekangaki remembered his audience that Africa had all the potential to constitute an equal as well crucial partner for Europe, and that "it [was] neither in the interest of Europe nor of Africa to explode the bridge across the Mediterranean"⁴¹⁸. Thus, coming together under the aegis of ECA and, later, the OAU, Francophone and Anglophone African countries had been able to assess their bargaining power and to overcome a division that was inherited by French and British colonial rule. The next chapter examines how the upheavals of the international system that occurred in 1973 bolstered the African countries' bid to reshape Euro-African relations.

2.6 Conclusions

This chapter assesses how the EEC first enlargement impacted upon Euro-African relations. In so doing, it analyses the diplomatic processes that constituted the prelude to the Lomé negotiations in both Africa and Europe. Within the EEC, France sought to preserve the preferential framework that had safeguarded its interests in Francophone Africa, reaffirming its influence within an enlarged Community. Britain, meanwhile, aimed to secure arrangements favourable to the Commonwealth Associates and to promote a more liberal approach to trade. These competing visions reflected the persistence of distinct colonial legacies within European diplomacy. Indeed, once negotiations for British accession to the EEC had set the broad parameters of the future of Euro-African relations, Paris and London sought to influence their respective former colonies through different channels. Yet, throughout 1972 and the first half of 1973, African states demonstrated a growing ability to act collectively and strategically. No longer content to be confined within the inherited boundaries of colonial spheres of influence, they recognised that the upcoming redefinition of their partnership with Europe offered a rare opportunity to assert their autonomy. The formation of a unified ACP position was therefore not a mere diplomatic exercise, but a conscious effort to overcome the divisions imposed by

⁴¹⁸ *Speech by Secretary-General of the OAU, Lagos, 9 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707, p. 5.*

colonial history and to articulate a shared agenda for equitable cooperation with the EEC. In this sense, the diplomatic processes that preceded the Lomé negotiations marked a decisive moment in the history of Euro-African relations, as they revealed the endurance of European ambitions to maintain influence in Africa, as well as the emergence of an African agency capable of confronting and redirecting those ambitions. The momentum generated during these years laid the groundwork for the subsequent negotiations, in which the ACP countries would confirm their role as autonomous actors able to challenge European dominance and to redefine the contours of Euro-African cooperation on their own terms.

Chapter 3

The making of Lomé: a Euro-African path to international justice?

If our negotiations succeed [...] we will have helped to transform the relations between developed countries and the Third World from a state of domination and dependence to one of interdependence.

(Namwisi Ma Kayi, *Déclaration commune des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique*, Bruxelles, 18 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77, p. 4.)

It is clear that it is not within the power of the Community alone to ensure the satisfactory functioning of the world commodities market [...]. But we have to act now, and while we cannot do everything on our own in this vital area, we intend to make a decisive contribution to the overall solution, which will take time, by setting an example and creating a model.

(V. Garès, *Conférence de Kingston – de la part du Ministre*, Telegram from Kingston to Paris, 26 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78, p. 2.)

Naturally, it is easier to appear charitable than to do justice.

(*Extraits du discours prononcé par le Colonel Acheampong, Chef de l'Etat Ghanéen, à la séance d'ouverture de la septième session du Conseil des Ministres des A.C.P. à Accra*, Accra, 13 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.)

On the 5th of October 1973, Mr Giovanni Bersani presented the first draft of the 1973 report on the activities of the Association between the EEC and the Associated African countries. The report opened laconically, declaring that “1973 [...] is unlikely to include any events of great importance to relations between the EEC and the third world”⁴¹⁹. On that day, Mr Bersani did not know that the world was standing at the threshold of a turning point in 20th century history and that, therefore, his work on the report was far from over. The following day, a Syrian-Egyptian attack on Israel would set in motion a process that would radically alter the

⁴¹⁹ Giovanni Bersani, *Draft report on the Ninth Annual Report on the activities of the Association Council*, 05 October 1973, HAEU ACP 243, p. 3.

international equilibrium. By the end of the year, the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) would agree on cutting general oil production, establishing an embargo on the countries who were supporting Israel in the conflict, and substantially raising the price of oil. These decisions sparked panic and enthusiasm both, depending on the regions and the actors concerned, to the point that contemporary scholarship on the subject have understood these events as both ‘the oil shock’⁴²⁰ and ‘the oil revolution’⁴²¹.

Within the EEC, however, shock prevailed. By January 1974, Mr Bersani presented an updated version of the 1973 report, which reflected the magnitude of the events that followed the outbreak of the Fourth Arab-Israeli war. In just three months, a number of processes that had been slowly gaining traction had suddenly accelerated, determining an upheaval of the international system. Industrialised countries, especially in Europe, had found themselves weakened when their dependency on oil imports and other commodities was starkly revealed by the OAPEC decision to use their vast share of the oil market as a weapon. Oil-producing countries, on the other hand, had found the right *casus belli* to trigger a series of measures that would have been difficult to introduce otherwise⁴²². The outbreak of the war allowed them to use the power that their position in the international energy market granted them. Thanks to this sudden alteration in the international economic equilibrium, developing countries that did not enjoy the status of oil exporters, although badly hit by the increase in the price of oil, saw this upheaval as a chance to substantiate their demands to redefine the international economic system. This was possible because of what Kissinger would later describe as the “unholy alliance” that had been cementing between OPEC members and developing countries that relied on oil imports⁴²³. Thanks to initiative of Algerian president Houari Boumediène, who sat at the intersection between OAPEC, the Group of 77 (G77), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), this alliance would translate in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) call for the establishment of New International Economic Order (NIEO) in 1974.

⁴²⁰ Among the most important works on the 1973 oil shock, see: N. Ferguson, C. Maier, E. Manela, and Sargent, D. J. (ed.), *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, Cambridge, Belknap, 2011; Bini, E., Garavini, G., Romero, F. (ed.) *Oil Shock: The 1973 Crisis and Its Economic Legacy*, London/New York, I. B. Tauris, 2016.

⁴²¹ Among the most important works that characterised the 1973 oil shock as a ‘revolution’, see: C. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017; G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019.

⁴²² C. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization*, op. cit., pp. 263-264; G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., pp. 221-227.

⁴²³ G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., p. 240.

This has important consequences for the history that is being recounted here. Negotiations between the EEC and 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries had formally begun at the end of July 1973, but the diplomatic works were barely under way when the context in which they were taking place was sharply revolutionised by the 1973 oil crisis. Yet, existing literature tends to gloss over the impact of the oil crisis on Euro-African negotiations, noting that it reinforced Europe's appreciation of its close ties with Africa⁴²⁴ and that, by early 1975, the Lomé Convention had redefined the terms of Euro-African relations and reshaped the Community's image in relation to the Global South⁴²⁵. While historians recognise that the Lomé Convention was presented by the Community as a new model for North-South relations⁴²⁶, little is known about how African countries responded to these global shifts during negotiations with the Community.

This chapter examines the diplomatic process that led to the first Lomé Convention (1973-1975), investigating how the 1973 oil shock and its broader geopolitical repercussions influenced EEC-ACP negotiations. How did the oil shock shape the Community's strategy towards Africa? Did the Community truly devise an innovative framework for North-South relations or was it compelled to adopt the discourse of NIEO? Conversely, how did the oil revolution affect African countries' approach to the EEC? In addressing these questions, the chapter evaluates African agency in the negotiations, exploring whether the shifting international context strengthened their bargaining position and allowed them to capitalise on the Community's vulnerabilities.

3.1 A difficult eve: the opening conference of Brussels, 25-26 July 1973

In 1969, enlargement had forced the Community (and France) to question the framework in which Euro-African relations were conducted up to that point. This necessity, coupled with the search for a more active role of the Community in the international arena, had already pushed the EEC to rethink its stance vis-à-vis developing countries. Despite nearly four years of internal debate, when the EEC launched negotiations with 46 ACP countries at the end of July 1973, it had yet to reconcile the tension between pursuing a global development policy and maintaining

⁴²⁴ J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: op. cit., pp. 381-382.

⁴²⁵ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., pp. 191-192.

⁴²⁶ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 145-147.

a regional approach centred on Eurafrica. Ultimately, the French had had to recognise that the balance within the Community had shifted after enlargement. This, however, did not mean that Paris had given up on the Association. By the summer of 1973, France was still determined to preserve the special economic and political character of Yaoundé Association, while Britain and other member states such as the Federal Republic of Germany and The Netherlands were trying to normalise Euro-African relations, making them a part of a larger Community approach towards developing countries⁴²⁷.

These dilemmas were not confined to European states alone, as African countries became increasingly involved in this debate in the years leading up to the negotiations. In its attempt to defend the Association *acquis*, France had enlisted the help of Francophone African countries, while Britain had worked tirelessly to convince the Anglophone ones to join the negotiations. This enabled Francophone and Anglophone countries to explore, for the first time, the prospect of jointly negotiating with Europe – an endeavour that, over the course of 1973, culminated in their decision to enter negotiations with the EEC as a unified African bloc. European diplomats, however, were certain that the unity displayed by African countries was, at best, fragile and, at worst, just a façade that concealed serious disagreements not only between Francophone and Anglophone countries, but also within the two groupings⁴²⁸.

This was the context in which, on Wednesday 25 July 1973, the representatives of the EEC and more than 40 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries met in Brussels to open the negotiations for the successor of the Yaoundé Convention, at least theoretically. In reality, negotiations did not technically begin with the 25-26 July meeting, which was to serve as a preliminary conference between the interested parties. This expedient was designed in order to respond to French unmovable demands that only the countries who had chosen to adhere to the Association formula could join the actual negotiations⁴²⁹. Although this was just a technicality, it demonstrates the extent to which the Community's position was still undefined on the eve of negotiations.

The main disagreements within the Community centred on three issues: the preservation of Yaoundé-style reciprocity – or, in other terms, the configuration of a Euro-African free trade area

⁴²⁷ J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, op. cit., pp. 372-373.

⁴²⁸ *Conférence de Lagos entre Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Lagos to Paris, 11 July 1973, AN 19900489/42.

⁴²⁹ *Relations avec les E.A.M.A et les Pays Associables du Commonwealth – Conférence d'Ouverture des 25 et 26 Juillet*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 20 July 1973, AN 19900489/42.

based on reverse preferences; the inclusion of an export earnings stabilisation mechanism in the new Convention; and the amount of financial aid destined to the next European Development Fund (EDF). These divergences played out in the drafting of the Community's opening statement of the Brussels conference, especially that of reciprocity. Flanked by Belgium and seemingly invigorated by the Associates' defence of the Yaoundé system, France upheld the line expressed in the Deniau Memorandum. The document, presented by the former Development Commissioner Jean-François Deniau in the spring of 1973, was supposed to provide guidelines for Communitarian action during the negotiations. It clarified that, to ensure the Association's compatibility with GATT, its trade regime should refer to GATT Article XXIV, which provided an exception to the most-favoured-nation principle for customs unions and free trade areas. Alternatively, the trade system could be based on article XXV, which permitted an "exceptional and temporary derogation regime subject to close scrutiny by the contracting parties"⁴³⁰. The memorandum indicated that the solution provided by Article XXIV offered "clear advantages": the creation of Euro-African free trade area based on Article XXIV allowed for the permanent removal of trade barriers and ensured full freedom in commercial relations within between the Community and African countries. The "exceptional and temporary derogation" offered by Article XXV, on the other hand, would have been subject to an annual review and, thus, potential challenges from third parties⁴³¹.

Britain, however, did not feel at ease with the free-trade area solution. In June 1973, British Foreign Minister Douglas-Home had brought forth a number of reasons, that ranged from technical to psychological, for which Britain preferred to seek a yearly waiver under Article XXV of GATT. Similarly, Hans Apel, the German State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had conveyed Germany's concerns about the idea of establishing a Euro-African free trade area. His explanation, however, was more straightforward: "To speak of a free trade area [...] would be to run into difficulties with the United States"⁴³². The US, indeed, had voiced its reservations about the EEC preferential trade agreements with African countries, given the negative impact

⁴³⁰ *Memorandum on the Future Relations between the Community, the Present Associates and the Countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian and Pacific Oceans Referenced to in the Protocol 22 of the Act of Accession*, Brussels, 21 March 1973, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1973)0500, pp. 17-18.

⁴³¹ Ibidem. See also : J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: op. cit.

⁴³² E. Burin Des Rozières, *Conseil du 25 Juin : Relations avec les EAMA et les Pays Associables du Commonwealth*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 27 June 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

that they could have on American exports⁴³³. In April 1973, the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, William J. Casey, made this position clear in a statement to Congress, cautioning that the US would not extend generalised trade preferences to countries that entered into discriminatory trade agreements with the EEC. Although the US supported the stability that such agreements might bring to regions like Africa and the Mediterranean, Casey underscored that reverse preferences – whereby developing countries favoured European goods – were unacceptable. He warned that this could lead to closed trading blocs, which ran counter to the principles of free and fair global trade⁴³⁴.

For all these reasons, on the eve of the opening conference, Britain and Germany – supported by the Dutch and Danish delegations – fought to present a draft speech that did not mention reciprocity or free trade areas and included only remarks on the Community's willingness to allow free entry to most ACP products into the European market⁴³⁵. This determined a gridlock within the Community; however, a compromise gradually emerged thanks to the new Commissioner for Development, Claude Cheysson⁴³⁶.

Like his predecessor Jean-François Deniau, Cheysson was a French *fonctionnaire* accustomed to international diplomacy. However, while Deniau's career had been intertwined with the European integration process since before the Treaty of Rome, the path that led Cheysson to the European Commission was more unusual. During the 1950s, he accrued knowledge and experience of the late stages of the French empire, first serving as an agent of the *Union Française* in Indochina and, later, taking part in independence negotiations of North African states like Tunisia and Morocco. After his support for Algerian independence had led him to abandon the diplomatic service, his career continued in Africa, where in 1957 he became the Secretary General of the Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa South of the Sahara

⁴³³ *Entretiens Franco-Britanniques*, Paris, 10 May 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77. See also: Drieghe, L. (2019) *The first Lomé Convention between the EEC and ACP group revisited: bringing geopolitics back in*, in: «Journal of European Integration», Vol. 42, issue 6, pp. 783–798.

⁴³⁴ *Casey Bars Preferences if E.E.C. Links Result in Discrimination*, 5 April 1973, New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/1973/04/06/archives/poorer-nations-cautioned-by-us-on-trade-accords-casey-bars.html>), last accessed 14/10/2024).

⁴³⁵ P. Peltier, *Note pour M. l'Ambassadeur, COREPER du 12 Juillet – Point 33 – « Yaoundé III »*, Brussels, 11 July 1973, AN 19900489/42, p. 7.

⁴³⁶ *Ibidem*. See also: E. Burin Des Roziers, *Conseil du 25 Juin : Relations avec les EAMA et les Pays Associables du Commonwealth*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 27 June 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

(CCTA). In the 1960s, he worked in Algeria and Indonesia promoting cooperation with France in the energy sector and serving as a key facilitator of French presence in both countries⁴³⁷.

Throughout these experiences, Cheysson had acquired a complex view of relations between former *metropoles* and newly-independent countries. While he had obtained what Sara Lorenzini defines “impeccable anticolonial credentials”⁴³⁸ thanks to his advocacy for independence and for his strenuous commitment to Africanise the CCTA, he had also developed a comprehensive understanding of how French interests may be best served after formal decolonisation. He believed that France should support newly independent nations through technical assistance, aid, and economic partnerships, engaging local elites in these processes. In his view such an approach, coupled with diplomacy based on strong personal ties with African leaders, was the only way to cultivate and maintain influence in the post-colonial era⁴³⁹.

Such an ambivalence explains the vastly divergent pictures that different scholars have painted of him: on the one hand, Sara Lorenzini highlights Cheysson’s willingness to support African countries and, more in general, Third World initiatives and demands; on the other, Thomas Deltombe considers him one of the first theoreticians of French neo-colonialism⁴⁴⁰. Cheysson’s tenure within the Commission from 1973 to 1981 would be characterised by this ambiguity, to the point that in the history that is recounted here he is casted in different roles: advocate of African countries’ interests⁴⁴¹ as well as passionate Europeanist convinced of the Community’s potential on the world stage; symbol of a new approach that could find a compromise between French and British visions of Euro-African relations⁴⁴², and, yet, lynchpin of a reimagined French influence over Euro-African relations. As Michael Palliser, Britain’s Permanent

⁴³⁷ *A la Commission de Bruxelles, M. Claude Cheysson succède à M. Jean-François Deniau*, Le Moniteur Africain, n. 604, 26 Avril 1973, ANS. See also: S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrica into Europe's Grand Design*, in: «Contemporary European History», 2024, pp. 1-15.

⁴³⁸ S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrica into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit., p. 8.

⁴³⁹ T. Borrel, A. Boukari-Yabara, B. Collombat, T. Deltombe and N. Y. Kisukidi, *L'empire qui ne veut pas mourir : une histoire de la Françafrique*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2021, pp. 100-104.

⁴⁴⁰ T. Deltombe, *Michel Poniowski et Claude Cheysson, deux théoriciens du néocolonialisme français (1954-1955)*, in: T. Borrel, A. Boukari-Yabara, B. Collombat, T. Deltombe and N. Y. Kisukidi, *L'empire qui ne veut pas mourir : une histoire de la Françafrique*, op. cit., pp. 209-214.

⁴⁴¹ In July 1974, the Senegalese newspaper Le Soleil reported that Cheysson was “known for his frankness and his commitment to greater fairness in international trade”. *M. Cheysson: « La nouvelle Association démarrera le 1er Février »*, Le Soleil, 31 Juillet 1974, ANS.

⁴⁴² S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrica into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit.

Representative to the EEC, would remark, diplomats working with him were “well aware of Cheysson’s capacity for adapting his music to the audience”⁴⁴³.

Just a few weeks earlier, Cheysson and Maurice Foley – the new British Director General of DGVIII – had visited Ethiopia, where, among others, they met with Robert Gardiner and Nzo Ekganki. On the occasion, Ekganki emphasised his role in convincing all the Associates to negotiate with the EEC and reiterated that the idea of a free trade area was unacceptable to the African countries. However, he also hinted to Cheysson and Foley that they might be willing to accept similar arrangements, as long as they were not explicitly referred to as such⁴⁴⁴. Cheysson saw this as a solution that could foster compromise in Europe as well, and proposed it to the Nine in June 1973⁴⁴⁵. Such an episode shows how Cheysson was capable of exploiting his diplomatic connections in Africa to advance and preserve European influence over the continent.

One month and a lengthy diplomatic process later, European Council President Ivar Nørgaard opened the negotiations in Brussels with a carefully crafted statement that balanced a range of competing perspectives. In line with French wishes, the speech detailed the three options outlined in Protocol 22 – joining the Associates in negotiating Yaoundé III, negotiating a separate agreement along the lines of the Arusha Convention that tied the EEC to Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, or simply striking a commercial agreement. Nørgaard emphasised that any country choosing the first option would be expected to respect the Association *acquis* – an outcome viewed as a significant win for Paris⁴⁴⁶. However, the issue of the future Convention’s trade regime remained more contentious. Heeding to British fear that African countries would immediately divide themselves on this sensitive matter of reciprocity and to German anxiety over possible American displeasure, Nørgaard did not mention reciprocity or free trade areas. On the contrary, he explicitly acknowledged that member states had yet to reach a consensus on a preferred trade regime and indicated the Community’s openness to inputs from the ACP countries on the matter⁴⁴⁷. Nonetheless, he did insist on the need for the new trade system to

⁴⁴³ Letter from M. Palliser to J. A. Robinson, *Cheysson’s views on the forthcoming Protocol 22 Negotiations*, 2 October 1973, TNA FCO 30/1708.

⁴⁴⁴ Letter from R. B. Dorman, British Embassy in Ethiopia, to W. J. Adams, 21 June 1973, TNA FCO 30/1707.

⁴⁴⁵ E. Burin Des Roziers, *Conseil du 25 Juin : Relations avec les EAMA et les Pays Associables du Commonwealth*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 27 June 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁴⁶ E. Burin Des Roziers, *Relations avec les EAMA, les Pays Associables du Commonwealth et certains autres Pays Africains*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 26 July 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁴⁷ *Statement by the President of the Council of the European Communities*, Brussels, 25 July 1973, HAEU CM6-ACP00004/10.

be contractually grounded, so as to ensure its stability and prevent third countries from challenging it, particularly in relation to GATT provisions⁴⁴⁸. These technical details concealed very concrete interests: for France and the associated Francophone countries, the insistence on the need for the new Convention to be compatible with GATT was essential to preserve the special character of Euro-African relations, as, without it, preferential trade arrangements could likely be extended to other developing nations outside the negotiations⁴⁴⁹.

While Nørgaard's address treaded a fine line between the member states' differing positions, African delegations were caught by surprise by its vagueness. In the next days, both Anglophone and Francophone African newspapers remarked that the inaugural conference of Brussels had failed to shed light on one of the most important issues that the forthcoming negotiations would address. In Accra, the *Daily Graphic* noted that the Community had started "its first major confrontation with more than 40 developing states in Brussels [...] with no agreement on the key issue at stake – trade"⁴⁵⁰. In Dakar, it was noted that the Community was to blame for this lack of clarity⁴⁵¹. In Brussels, however, this prompted the ACP to request the suspension of the session so that their delegations could consider the Community's unexpected admissions⁴⁵².

The following day, the EEC inaugural statement was followed by those of the developing countries' spokespersons, who represented the three groupings. The Caribbean delegation (Barbados, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago) was headed by the Guyanese Foreign Minister Shridath Ramphal, while the Fijian Prime Minister Kamisese Mara represented the Pacific insular countries of Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. After the agreement they had reached in Lagos just two weeks earlier⁴⁵³, African countries had designated a single spokesperson as well, the Nigerian Federal Commissioner for Trade, Wenike Briggs. The choice had fallen on him to ensure that Nigeria, the largest and most sceptical of the Anglophone Associates, would have a greater stake in the negotiations. Briggs represented the most heterogeneous group, which comprised the 18 original Associates, the new Yaoundé signatory Mauritius, the African Commonwealth Associates, and the African states that were not part of either of the two post-colonial groupings, e. g. Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia, and Equatorial Guinea. This meant that almost every member of the OAU was present at the Brussels conference, as also four North African

⁴⁴⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁴⁹ *Conseil des Communautés Européennes (Sessions des 23 et 24 juillet 1973)*, Paris, 19 July 1973, AN 19900489/42.

⁴⁵⁰ *EEC disagrees on pact with Africa*, *Daily Graphic*, 26 July 1973, PRAAD.

⁴⁵¹ *L'Europe n'a pas divisé l'Afrique*, in «*Le Moniteur Africain*», n. 617, 02 August 1973, ANS.

⁴⁵² E. Burin Des Roziers, *Réactions avec les EAMA, les Pays Associés du Commonwealth et certains autres Pays Africains*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 26 July 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁵³ See Chapter 2, pp. 101-102.

countries – Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco – had been invited, albeit only in quality of observers.

Wenike Briggs opened his address by remarking the historical character of the occasion, insofar as it demonstrated that “it is possible for developed and developing countries to meet on the basis of equality to discuss matters which are of mutual interest to both sides”⁴⁵⁴. He then stressed the importance of a unified African approach to the continent's issues, commending the constructive role of the OAU. As he continued, Briggs described Africa's "strong economic, trade, and cultural relations" with the EEC as a foundation on which, through cooperation, they might build "a rational organisation of inter-dependence"⁴⁵⁵. The rest of the speech was to be less conciliatory: Briggs made it clear that African countries were questioning the traditional dynamics between developed and developing nations, as they had not promoted African development. Already in the summer of 1973, then, echoes of what would later become forceful calls for a New International Economic Order were present in the common African approach vis-à-vis the Community.

According to Briggs, indeed, these negotiations presented an opportunity for the EEC to "adopt special measures" better suited to the needs of African developing countries⁴⁵⁶. The first was, plainly, «[t]he principle of non-reciprocity in trade and tariff concessions given by the EEC»⁴⁵⁷. Since preferential treatment for Africa was based on the responsibilities of developed countries towards developing ones, reciprocal concessions were inconsistent with Africa's developmental status compared to Europe. Another key point of Briggs' speech was the rejection of any EEC financial and technical aid that was conditional on a specific form of Association. African countries also demanded free access to the Common Market for ACP agricultural products, "whether or not they are subject to the Common Agricultural Policy"⁴⁵⁸. Additionally, the African representative sought guarantees of "equitable, stable, and remunerative prices" for African exports, so as to stabilise and increase their earnings. Finally, Briggs emphasised that any agreement with the EEC must not hinder intra-African cooperation in any way – a reminder that Europe must no longer be a source of division in Africa⁴⁵⁹.

⁴⁵⁴ Statement by Mr. Wenike Briggs, Commissioner of Trade of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and Spokesman for the African Group, Brussels, 26 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697, p. 1.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibidem, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 3.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 4.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibidem, pp. 4-5.

To emphasise the unity among the ACP, Briggs' speech would have been echoed by those of his Pacific and Caribbean colleagues, but it would have been the latter to impress the European audience⁴⁶⁰. Ramphal delivered a powerful speech, which did not shy away from recalling the long colonial experience to which his region had been subject. As the Africans had before him, Ramphal acknowledged the historic potential of forming cross-regional relations with former colonial powers. In this sense, the progress of European integration could pave the way for similar developments in former European colonies⁴⁶¹. However, this solidarity extended beyond the Caribbean. Ramphal underscored the alignment between the Caribbean and African positions in the negotiations, stating that "we identify ourselves fully in the presentation just made for Africa by our good friend, the Commissioner of Trade from Nigeria"⁴⁶². Indeed, the Caribbean delegation made clear that they, too, rejected reciprocity as an underlying principle of the negotiation process, since

Reciprocity between those who are unequal in economic strength is a contradiction in economic terms. In contemporary international economic relations, Aristotle's dictum that 'justice requires equality between equals but proportionality between unequals' must surely mean that, as between those who are unequal in economic strength, equity itself demands non-reciprocity.⁴⁶³

The remainder of Ramphal's speech echoed the themes outlined by Briggs: aid must not be conditional on any specific type of agreement, and it should never be used to impose arrangements that would otherwise be deemed unjust, regressive, or ineffective – a clear rejection by the Caribbean delegation of any form of neo-colonial interference⁴⁶⁴. Ramphal, however, added another key issue for the Caribbean: sugar. For the Caribbean and other sugar-producing Commonwealth nations, it was essential to secure a stable arrangement to ensure the reliability of their sugar exports. Accordingly, they requested that the Community guarantee long-term access to the Common Market for at least 1.4 million tonnes of sugar "at fair and remunerative negotiated prices"⁴⁶⁵.

⁴⁶⁰ E. Burin Des Roziers, *Rérelations avec les Etats Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 28 July 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁶¹ Statement by Mr. Shridath S. Ramphal, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana on behalf of the Delegation of Caribbean Countries, Brussels, 26 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697, p. 1.

⁴⁶² *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

Taking advantage of the unsureness demonstrated by the Community the day before, the ACP delegations managed to maintain a united front in presenting their negotiating platforms, which were purposefully similar. Moreover, their speeches posed a significant challenge to the Community's proposal, which was grounded in the options outlined by Protocol 22. The African delegation deliberately avoided mentioning Protocol 22. Instead, the ACP presented their own conditions, stressing their demand for a new, comprehensive agreement encompassing economic, technical, and financial cooperation. This framework, they argued, should be shaped by the principles outlined by African Heads of State and Government in recent months, rather than by the existing Association *acquis*. While acknowledging that their negotiating position diverged from the EEC's vision, they voiced their hope that the Community would use these negotiations as an opportunity to demonstrate a true commitment to the development of third countries⁴⁶⁶.

While British Foreign Minister Alec Douglas-Home observed with satisfaction the display of unity that Associables and Associates demonstrated during the conference⁴⁶⁷, French dispatches did not share his enthusiastic tone. The French Permanent Representative, Burin de Rozières, promptly reported on the disappointing turn of events at the conference, informing his colleagues in Paris that the three speakers had firmly rejected any notion of reciprocity. None had mentioned the Association, nor had they expressed a preference among the three proposed formulas, implying a tacit agreement to negotiate on the basis of an unofficial fourth option. Even more perplexing for the French delegates was that these statements had been prepared with the approval of the Associates' representatives. While the Associates had assured Burin de Rozières and Deniau – who attended as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs – that they had attempted to insert references to the Association *acquis*, the French delegates remained unconvinced. A laconic remark underscored the frustration building within the French delegation as they witnessed this fundamental shift in Euro-African relations: “All three orators spoke English”⁴⁶⁸.

Faced with the challenging attitude of the ACP countries, the Nine continued to struggle with reaching consensus among themselves. Throughout September and early October, the Community was mired in an impasse over the definition of the Commission's mandate to

⁴⁶⁶ Ibidem, p. 10.

⁴⁶⁷ Telegram no. 854 from Douglas-Home to Lagos et al., 02 August 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697.

⁴⁶⁸ E. Burin Des Rozières, *Rélations avec les Etats Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 28 July 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

negotiate on behalf of the member states – a crucial step that needed to be resolved before the formal negotiations could commence in mid-October. Over time, France's growing isolation became increasingly evident as its rigid stance on reciprocity and the Protocol 22 options failed to gain support from other member states, fuelling a sense of frustration within its diplomatic circles⁴⁶⁹. The export stabilisation mechanism remained a contentious topic as well.

While the Nine debated these issues, at the beginning of October the trade ministers of Associates and Associables convened in Dar Es Salaam, aiming to present a unified stance before the European Community at the upcoming meeting on 17 October. Their discussions revisited key points of their negotiating platform, such as the right of establishment, the application of rules of origin, and provisions for technical and financial assistance from the EEC. Additionally, they addressed the critical need for greater access for African products to European markets and sought to tackle the ongoing issue of deteriorating terms of trade for certain raw materials – reiterating how significant commodity agreements were for their developing economies. The African states also emphasised their desire to participate actively in the administration and management of the European Development Fund, underscoring their commitment to have a more central role in managing financial assistance⁴⁷⁰.

The issue of reciprocity, the most divisive topic, was intentionally absent from the Dar Es Salaam agenda, especially as the EEC itself was divided on it. African ministers considered it wise to defer any discussion on such a sensitive matter until they had clearer insight into the Community's official stance⁴⁷¹. However, what could not be deferred was the debate on key logistical matters essential to the negotiation process. Foremost among these was the establishment of a coordinating secretariat for the African delegations – a decision that, while appearing purely logistical, carried significant political implications. Initially, the Anglophone countries, encouraged by OAU Secretary General Nzo Ekangaki, advocated for placing the secretariat in Addis Ababa under the OAU's auspices. In the end, however, the Francophone delegates prevailed, obtaining that the secretariat would instead be based in Brussels and

⁴⁶⁹ M. Palliser, *Discussion on Draft Mandate*, Telegram from Brussels to London, 22 September 1973, TNA FCO 30/1698; M. Palliser, *Discussion on the Protocol 22 Mandate*, Telegram from Brussels to London, 11 September 1973, TNA FCO 30/1698; E. Burin Des Roziers, *Négociations avec les Etats Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 29 September 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77; E. Burin Des Roziers, *Conseil des 15 et 16 Octobre + Négociations avec les Pays Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 10 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁷⁰ *Un seul représentant pour les Etats africains aux négociations avec la CEE*, Le Soleil, 02 October 1973, ANS.

⁴⁷¹ *Dar Es Salaam : Les anglophones prêts à confier à l'OAU la direction des négociations avec l'Europe*, Le Soleil, 04 October 1973, ANS; Telegram from French Ambassador to Senegal, La Chevalerie, to Paris, Dakar, 11 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

staffed by officials with experience in Association structures. It was also agreed that the presidency of the African group would rotate rather than remain exclusively with Nigeria; Babacar Ba, Senegalese Finance Minister, was designated as the next chair⁴⁷².

The Dar Es Salaam meeting was generally regarded as a success. By its conclusion, the Senegalese newspaper *Le Soleil* enthusiastically reported that the conference represented a further step toward unity⁴⁷³. Francophone countries had succeeded in securing a greater role in steering the negotiations, while Anglophone countries effectively upheld the core elements of Briggs' statement to the Community from July – including the call to negotiate a new kind of agreement with the EEC and the aspiration to participate actively in the administration of the EDF. These unified positions were then synthesised into a report that began circulating among European diplomats as well. Reflecting the French tendency to downplay African displays of unity, the French Ambassador to Tanzania described the document disparagingly, calling it a “verbose mixture of commonplaces, elementary truths and exaggerated demands” and dismissing it as “a catalogue of Africa’s maximum ambitions”⁴⁷⁴. Little did he know that, in the following months, shifting international dynamics began to lend tangible support to these so-called “maximum ambitions,” pushing them at the forefront of the Community’s preoccupations.

3.2 Embracing change within the Community: negotiating against shock and revolution on the background

In the early afternoon of October 6 1973, coordinated Syrian and Egyptian attacks on Israel gave start to the Fourth Arab-Israeli War, which would become known as the Yom Kippur War. In the middle of October, when the Israeli forces had started to push back after having been initially caught by surprise, OPEC announced an increase in oil price. While this decision was already scheduled, the next day members of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries announced that they would cut their oil production by 5% every month until the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab territories occupied since the 1967 Six Days War⁴⁷⁵. Within two more days, after a significant demonstration of US unwavering support to

⁴⁷² *Dar Es Salaam : Les Etats africains resserrent leurs rangs*, *Le Soleil*, 04 October 1973, ANS; Telegram from French Ambassador in Senegal, La Chevalerie, to Paris, Dakar, 11 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁷³ *Dar Es Salaam a été un pas vers l'unité*, *Le Soleil*, 05 October 1973, ANS.

⁴⁷⁴ J. Desparmet, *Association des Etats africains à la CEE*, Telegram from Dar Es Salaam to Paris, 10 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77.

⁴⁷⁵ G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., p. 218.

Israel, Arab states complemented the production cut with the imposition of a general embargo on oil shipments to the United States and other countries who supported Israel, such as The Netherlands.

By the end of October, the military confrontation was over. Israel had regained ground, but OAPEC members – which included Syria and Egypt – were not ready to depose the oil weapon. At the beginning of November, a further 25% cut of overall oil production was enforced by all OAPEC members, except for Iraq. At the same time, OAPEC divided its clients into three categories: friendly countries who would see their oil shipments remain at the regular level; neutral countries who would bear the brunt of the productions cut while still receiving oil; and embargoed countries⁴⁷⁶. EEC members ranged from the embargoed – The Netherlands – to the friendly – France and Britain. The way in which the embargo effectively worked, however, meant that all countries dependent on oil imports suffered its consequences. Since Non-Arab OPEC members did not adhere to the embargo, international oil companies formally respected the embargo, but factually circumvented it by redirecting non-Arab oil supplies to embargoed nations. They then distributed the reduced supply rather evenly, resulting in a 16-18% reduction in oil imports for all countries who imported oil from OAPEC, regardless of their status⁴⁷⁷. In December, a further increase in the price of oil was mandated by Arab producers. Between September and the end of the year, the price of an oil barrel had almost quadrupled, going from \$3,01 to \$11,65⁴⁷⁸.

Although the war lasted only 20 days, its impact would be long-lasting. Aside from constituting another bloody page of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Yom Kippur War had important consequences for the whole international system, as it served as a perfect trigger to unleash pressures that had been building for a while. Specifically, it provided oil producers with a justification to quickly raise prices to heights that would have been difficult to reach otherwise. Such an outcome, however, could not be explained with the recrudescence of the Arab-Israeli conflict alone. The OAPEC reaction also stemmed from the gradual emergence and slow affirmation of critical analyses of the international economic system over the previous years.

⁴⁷⁶ G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., p. 218; A. Gfeller, *A European voice in the Arab world: France, the superpowers and the Middle East, 1970–74*, in: «Cold War History», Vol. 11, No. 4, 2011, pp. 659-676, p. 665.

⁴⁷⁷ D. Painter, *Oil and Geopolitics: The Oil Crises of the 1970s and the Cold War*, in: «Historical Social Research», Vol. 39, No. 4, 2014, pp. 186-206, pp. 190-191.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibidem.

In the 1940s, Argentinian economist Raúl Prebisch had started to argue that the theory of comparative advantage could not be applied to commercial relations between industrialised (the centre) and agricultural (the periphery) countries. His analyses exposed how technological progress in the centre corresponded to higher wages for the workers of industrialised countries, while analogous technological progress in the production and extraction of commodities in the periphery usually led to a fall in commodity prices. In practice, this meant that commodity prices tended to fall over time, forcing peripheral, non-industrialised countries to export more and more commodities to be able to import the necessary manufactured goods. By the end of the decade, Prebisch had produced an elaborate thesis on the deterioration of terms of trade, whose rationale informed the spirit of the newly-founded Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)⁴⁷⁹. Never just a theoretician, Prebisch would go on to play an extraordinarily active role in the international economic system, serving as the president of the ECLA and, later, as the first Secretary-General of the UNCTAD.

Since then, numerous economic theorists had expanded on what became known as the “theory of unequal exchange” between the world’s centres and peripheries, leading to the development of “dependency theory”, a body of thought that described and analysed the ways in which unequal exchange between the core and the periphery had allowed the core to extract wealth at the expense of the periphery. Between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, this intellectual strand gained significant traction, with several influential works articulating the idea that the international economic system and its resulting division of labour were underpinned by structural inequalities rooted in the imperial past. Among these were Arghiri Emmanuel’s *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade* (1969), Johan Galtung’s *Structural Theory of Imperialism* (1971), Walter Rodney’s *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972), and Immanuel Wallerstein’s *The Modern World-System* (1974). These contributions helped to shape a growing body of thought that not only developed further during this period but also influenced how newly-independent countries perceived their position within the international system, emphasising their shared economic challenges in a structurally imbalanced global

⁴⁷⁹ R. Prebisch, *The Economic Development of Latin America and its Principal Problems*, Santiago, Naciones Unidas Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL), 1950. See also: Dosman, E. (2008) *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986*, Montreal, McGill-Queen’s University Press; Love, J. (1980) Raúl Prebisch and the Origins of the Doctrine of Unequal Exchange, in: «Latin American Research Review», Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 45-72.

order. Christopher Dietrich, who is among the firsts to have substantiated the idea of an “oil revolution”, summarises this body of thought as “the economic culture of decolonisation”⁴⁸⁰.

This vivacity, however, was not confined to intellectual debates. Players in both the industrialised North and the developing South were aware of these theories and of the challenges they posed to the status quo⁴⁸¹. Thus, the oil shock was understood as a revolution by oil producers and other developing countries because for the first time it put into practice the idea that commodity-producing, peripheral countries could remedy the structural inequality that permeated their exchanges with the centre. While oil-producing nations were uniquely positioned to exploit their advantage due to the nature of oil, its critical role in Western industrial systems, and its geographically concentrated supply, non-oil producing developing countries were ready to look at the example set by OAPEC as a positive one.

This was all the more true for the African countries that had just entered into negotiations with the EEC. In the previous years, the theory of unequal exchange had subtly found its place within Euro-African relations as well. Within the Yaoundé joint institutions, Francophone African representatives frequently denounced the deterioration of their terms of trade with the Community, and in the years leading up to the British enlargement they repeatedly called for a more active Communitarian role in regulating global commodity markets⁴⁸². In their eyes, enlargement had only rendered this responsibility more pressing. Against this backdrop, the negotiations between the EEC and ACP countries, which officially commenced on 17 October 1973 – the very day OAPEC members agreed on the first round of production cuts – were poised to become even more contentious than anticipated. In those days, reports on the negotiations with the EEC were surrounded by articles voicing African support for the Arab cause and for OAPEC’s decisions in both Anglophone and Francophone African newspapers⁴⁸³.

Initially, however, the ongoing tumults in the international system had little impact on the EEC-ACP negotiations, especially on the Communitarian side. While the Community had managed to

⁴⁸⁰ C. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017.

⁴⁸¹ Ibidem, pp. 256-270.

⁴⁸² Discours de M. Ngo’O Mebe, vice-président de la Commission Paritaire CEE-EAMA à l’occasion de la séance solennelle d’ouverture de la réunion de Fort-Lamy, 27 octobre 1971, HAEU ACP 215; Discours de M. Ngo’O Mebe, président de la Commission Paritaire CEE-EAMA à l’occasion de la séance solennelle d’ouverture de la réunion de Luxembourg, 29 Mai 1972, HAEU ACP 218.

⁴⁸³ *Messages de soutien pour les pays arabes*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 8 October 1973, ANS; *Pétrole – Réduction de 5% des exportations arabes*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 18 October 1973, ANS; *L’arme du pétrole est efficace*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 6 November 1973, ANS; *Arabs, Africans natural allies... Against imperialism*, Daily Graphic, 28 January 1974, NP 1/117 PRAAD.

reach consensus on its position vis-à-vis the recrudescence in the Arab-Israeli conflict⁴⁸⁴, the same could not be said for the EEC-ACP negotiations. On 17 October, the first day of official negotiations, EC Council President Nørgaard was once again forced to admit that “the Community has not yet been able to form a definitive idea of the other aspects of the new Convention's commercial regime, and we will obviously have to return to this subject”⁴⁸⁵. A similar admission was made regarding the proposed export stabilisation scheme. This meant that this delicate issue was once again presented to ACP countries as an open question, inviting them to answer it with their own policy considerations and aspirations⁴⁸⁶. This implied that the Commission's mandate on this point remained essentially exploratory, because no satisfactory compromise could be found between those in favour (Benelux countries, Denmark, Ireland, France and, recently, Britain) and those against (Germany and, especially, The Netherlands). Italian delegates, who otherwise had shown a favourable disposition towards the scheme, seemed to be lacking directions on the subject⁴⁸⁷.

Unsurprisingly, this further admission of the Community's irresolution was met with frustration by the African delegates, who had hoped that the Nine could offer them a clarification on fundamental issues such as the commercial regime and the stabilisation scheme. Yet, the ACP response, delivered by Zaire's Finance Minister Namwisi Ma Kayi, also constituted the first example of how the shifting international climate would come to shape the negotiations. Ma Kayi stressed that the negotiations should focus on creating fairer and more effective frameworks to replace the traditional, imbalanced structures that had long shaped relations between developed and developing countries. Especially in a moment of heightened tensions between the North and the South of the world, the negotiations presented a unique opportunity to transform these dynamics:

This crisis has arisen primarily between developed countries and developing nations, which can no longer be satisfied with promises while concrete actions are endlessly delayed. [...] If our negotiations succeed, [...], Europe and the developing world, on whose behalf we speak,

⁴⁸⁴ D. Painter, *Oil and Geopolitics: The Oil Crises of the 1970s and the Cold War*, in: op. cit., pp. 191-192; A. Gfeller, *A European voice in the Arab world: France, the superpowers and the Middle East, 1970–74*, in: op. cit., p. 665.

⁴⁸⁵ Déclaration du Président du Conseil des Communautés Européennes, M. Ivar Nørgaard, Bruxelles, 17 October 1973, AN 19900489/44, p. 6.

⁴⁸⁶ Comité Interministeriel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Allocution de la Présidence*, Paris, 11 October 1973, AN 19900489/44, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁸⁷ E. Burin Des Roziers, *Négociations avec les Etats Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 19 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77; Note de la Direction des Affaires Economiques et Financières du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Convention de Yaoundé (Politique d'association de la Communauté)*, Paris, 18 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77, pp. 5-6.

will have made an invaluable contribution to resolving this crisis. Indeed, we will have helped to transform the relations between developed countries and the Third World from a state of domination and dependence to one of interdependence.⁴⁸⁸

Ma Kayi reiterated the premises and the conditions of ACP participation that were exposed by the three groups in July, but this time the connection between the African stance vis-à-vis the EEC and the aforementioned “economic culture of decolonisation”⁴⁸⁹ was more explicit. In this sense, Ma Kayi’s speech anticipated some key themes of the NIEO discourse – something that would happen more and more as the negotiations progressed between the end of 1973 and the first months of 1974.

By November, negotiations were officially underway, with a first phase spanning the last months of 1973 and a second phase taking place between January and February 1974. In these early phases, negotiations regarded mostly the trade regime and financial and technical cooperation and proceeded slowly, especially because the Commission still operated under a limited mandate. The ACP, on the other hand, managed to maintain a cohesive position, which soon allowed them to establish that the primary objective of the new Convention’s trade regime would be to increase the volume of ACP exports to the EEC at remunerative prices. This was essential, claimed the ACP, because the preferential treatment previously granted to Associated states’ products had been undermined by two key factors: the reduction of the Common External Tariff (CET) and the implementation of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP)⁴⁹⁰. Similarly, it was agreed that financial and technical cooperation should focus on enhancing the economic and social development of ACP countries, while supporting their economic independence and efforts toward regional integration⁴⁹¹.

These early phases of negotiations deliberately avoided the contentious issue of reciprocity. This absence can be attributed to ongoing disagreements within the Community, as France continued to hope that eventual divisions between the Associates and the Associables might

⁴⁸⁸ Déclaration commune des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique, Bruxelles, 18 October 1973, AMAE 1089INVA/77, p. 4.

⁴⁸⁹ C. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization*, op. cit.

⁴⁹⁰ Déclaration du porte-parole des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique lors de la 2^{ème} réunion avec la CEE, Bruxelles, 21 November 1973, AN 19900489/44, p. 3; *Note d’information : Négociations avec les Pays Associés et Associables*, Bruxelles, 29 November 1973, AN 19900489/44, pp. 2-3; Réponse des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique à la Communication de la CEE relative à leur déclaration sur les échanges commerciaux et la coopération financière et technique, Bruxelles, 29 November 1973, AN 19900489/44, p. 2.

⁴⁹¹ *Déclaration de M. Khron*, Négociations CEE – Afrique – Caraïbes – Pacifique, Bruxelles, 14 December 1973, AN 19900489/44, p. 3.

help preserve the reverse preferences system⁴⁹². Given this stalemate, discussions touched upon more technical questions such as rules of origin or the ACP's request for access to the European market for agricultural products that competed with those protected by the CAP. Another issue that was not explored in these initial phases was that of export stabilisation scheme, allegedly because the Community was waiting on ACP countries to examine the issue. In reality, its absence from the negotiations agenda once again revealed the lack of consensus within the Community⁴⁹³. Notably, even in discussions about increasing ACP exports to the EEC, the phrase "remunerative prices" – frequently used by ACP delegates as well as Cheysson during the negotiations – quickly became contentious. By the end of 1973, representatives from other member states had asked the Commission to discontinue its use⁴⁹⁴.

The second phase of negotiations began in January much as the first phase had ended in December: with ACP delegates demanding that the Commission articulate a clear position⁴⁹⁵. The African delegates wanted to obtain clear responses from the Community and to accelerate the pace of the negotiations⁴⁹⁶. The Community was indeed working on building internal consensus, but many of the deliberations which the Council of Ministers was able to take were not what the ACP delegates had hoped. On the rules of origin, the Community was unwilling to relax its regulations and meet ACP demands that all goods processed in any of the negotiating states be classified as "originating products". Similarly, the Community reiterated that products that were protected by CAP could not be allowed freely into the EEC. Finally, the Commission indicated that heeding to ACP requests to participate in the management of the European Development Fund would be problematic⁴⁹⁷. During the opening session of the second phase of negotiations, the spokesperson for the Community, DGVIII Director-General Hans Broder Krohn, reminded ACP countries that "it is important to bear in mind that the basic principles of Community policies cannot be significantly altered"⁴⁹⁸.

⁴⁹² *Protocol 22 Negotiations*, Letter from M. D. Butler to Anthony Duff, London, 30 January 1974, TNA FCO 30/2129.

⁴⁹³ Déclaration du porte-parole des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique lors de la 5^{ème} réunion du Comité de Négociation, Bruxelles, 14 December 1973, AN 19900489/44, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁹⁴ *Note d'information: Négociations avec les Pays Associés et Associables*, Bruxelles, 6 December 1973, AN 19900489/44, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁹⁵ Déclaration du porte-parole des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique lors de la 5^{ème} réunion du Comité de Négociation, Bruxelles, 14 December 1973, AN 19900489/44, pp. 1-2; Déclaration du porte-parole des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique lors de la 6^{ème} réunion du Comité de Négociation, Bruxelles, 23 January 1974, AN 19900489/44, pp. 1-2

⁴⁹⁶ *The future development of the Protocol 22 Negotiations*, Letter from W. J. Adams to M. D. Butler (FCO), Brussels, 10 January 1974, TNA FCO 30/2129.

⁴⁹⁷ *Déclaration de M. le Directeur General Khron*, Négociations CEE – Afrique – Caraïbes – Pacifique, Bruxelles, 23 January 1974, AN 19900489/44, pp. 3-7bis.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

As a result, negotiations continued at a sluggish pace, as ACP countries expressed regret over the Community's reluctance to achieve meaningful compromise and to clarify its stance on unresolved issues. These now included the ACP demand for transparency regarding the amount of funds that would be allocated for the next EDF, a sensitive matter made even more contentious by the growing economic strain that the oil crisis was placing on Western Europe – and consequently on the EEC budget⁴⁹⁹. African disappointment with the slow progress of the negotiations alarmed Douglas-Home, who feared that the slow pace could provoke impatience and potentially fracture the unity between Associates and Associables, thus rendering ineffective London's painstaking diplomatic strategy that hinged on African cohesion in the negotiations⁵⁰⁰. The French, on the other hand, dismissed the ACP delegates' pessimistic tone, deeming it nothing more than a tactical manoeuvre⁵⁰¹.

Tactical manoeuvre or not, growing ACP frustration prompted Cheysson – and the Commission, more in general – to pressure the Nine, requesting more detailed directives so as to better address the concerns of the ACP states. Here, it is possible to see how the upheaval in the international economic system was seeping into the EEC-ACP negotiation rooms. In presenting the Commission's case to the member states, Cheysson illustrated how the new international scenario had affected the ACP countries and how their priorities had varied in accordance. A limited number of them, according to Cheysson, had genuinely benefited from the crisis, because the prices of commodities they produced had risen and would seemingly remain high, in the absence of effective substitutes. These countries, therefore, would not be particularly interested in aid, but rather in serious assistance from the Community in developing their industries and their technological capabilities⁵⁰². A second group, which had instead bore the brunt of the oil crisis without reaping any of the benefits of rising commodity prices, would be primarily interested in financial aid. Finally, a third group, temporarily enjoying higher export revenues due to surging prices of commodities like groundnuts, cocoa, coffee, or copper, recognised the fleeting nature of this upswing. Consequently, their primary objective in

⁴⁹⁹ Déclaration du porte-parole des Groupes Africain, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique lors de la 7^{ème} réunion du Comité de Négociation, Bruxelles, 6 February 1974, AN 19900489/44, pp. 1-3; *Protocol 22 Negotiations*, Letter from M. D. Butler to Anthony Duff, London, 30 January 1974, TNA FCO 30/2129 ; *The future development of the Protocol 22 Negotiations*, Letter from M. D. Butler to W. J. Adams, London, 31 January 1974, TNA FCO 30/2129.

⁵⁰⁰ A. Douglas-Home, *Protocol 22 Negotiations*, Telegram from London to Bridgetown, Yaoundé, Kinshasa, Abidjan, Dakar, Lomé, Tananarive, Mogadishu et al., 15 February 1974, TNA FCO 30/2130.

⁵⁰¹ Ph. Petit, *Note d'information : Négociations entre la CEE et les Etats Associés et Associables – Réunion des plénipotentiaires du 6 février 1974*, Bruxelles, 12 February 1974, AN 19900489/44, p. 7.

⁵⁰² E. Burin des Rozières, *Négociations CEE/ACP : Communication de M. Cheysson au Comité des Représentants Permanents*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 8 March 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

negotiations with the Community was to ensure the establishment of a robust export revenue stabilisation system⁵⁰³.

In the charged context of early 1974, Cheysson exhorted the Nine to lend a sympathetic ear to ACP evolving concerns. According to him, this also meant placing unprecedented emphasis on an otherwise secondary theme within negotiations: industrial cooperation. The Commission proposed the Nine to include provisions to encourage Community private investment in African states and to promote the transfer and development of appropriate technologies and management techniques⁵⁰⁴. This was not the first time industrialisation had featured in the Community's relations with Africa. Surveys on industrial development in Francophone Africa had been undertaken under both Yaoundé I and II, but these initiatives were stifled by fears that supporting import-substitution industrialisation in former colonies would threaten European firms' privileged access to African markets⁵⁰⁵. The Commission nonetheless argued that the opportunity to highlight this issue in the negotiations was worth considering because "at a time when relations between developing countries and industrialised countries must be adapted, the present negotiations offer a real opportunity for the Community and its partners to embark resolutely on the path of genuine industrial cooperation"⁵⁰⁶.

In the eyes of the Commission, this initiative would enable the Community to align itself with and appropriate the ongoing developing-countries-led discourse on the need to reshape relations between the industrialised North and the Global South. In so doing, the Community could promote ACP industrialisation through an increased involvement of European firms⁵⁰⁷, and simultaneously present itself as a champion of "a better international division of labour," signalling its commitment to addressing global economic disparities and fostering a more

⁵⁰³ Ibidem.

⁵⁰⁴ M. Palliser, *Protocol 22 Negotiations: Commission proposal for supplementary negotiating directives*, Telegram from Brussels to London, 26 February 1974, TNA FCO 30/2130.

⁵⁰⁵ M. Rempe, *Entangled Industrialization. The EEC and industrial development in Francophone West Africa*, in: C. Grabas and A. Nützenadel (eds.), *Industrial Policy in Europe after 1945: Wealth, Power and Economic Development in the Cold War*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 244-246.

⁵⁰⁶ Communication de la Commission au Conseil relative au déroulement des négociations avec les Etats d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique (A.C.P.), Brussels, February 1974, AN 19900489/44, p.3. See also: G. Migani, *The EEC and the challenge of the ACP states' industrialization, 1972-1975*, in: C. Grabas and A. Nützenadel (eds.), *Industrial Policy in Europe after 1945: Wealth, Power and Economic Development in the Cold War*, op. cit., pp. 265-267.

⁵⁰⁷ O. Van Den Bossche, *European Private Sector and African Firms in EU-ACP Development Cooperation (1975-2000)*, in: V. Dimier and S. Stockwell (eds.) *The Business of Development in Post-Colonial Africa*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, pp. 307-309.

equitable framework for cooperation⁵⁰⁸. A similar spin was applied to the issue of export revenue stabilisation, which in the changing international context acquired even more saliency, given “the recent evolution of the world market” of raw materials⁵⁰⁹. These efforts, noted the Commission, were essential if the Community wanted the negotiations to lead to “privileged relations” with the ACP states and, more generally, with the developing world⁵¹⁰. Already in early 1974, therefore, the Community was devising ways to appropriate the keywords of the “economic culture of decolonisation” and turn the international upheaval caused by the oil shock to its advantage.

It is no coincidence that, while negotiations continued in the early months of 1974, the Community and its member states were caught up in two opposing currents sweeping across the international system. On the one hand, since OAPEC's decision to wield ‘the oil weapon’ against Israel’s supporters, the United States had been formulating its response. By the end of 1973, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had concluded that the most effective way to counter the challenge posed by oil-producing nations was to unite Western oil-consuming countries under American leadership, effectively creating a “consumer cartel” capable of exerting significant influence in the international economic system. To this end, US President Richard Nixon extended an invitation to Western European countries and Japan to attend an Energy Conference in Washington on 11 February⁵¹¹. This proposal, happening in a context of tepid transatlantic relations after Kissinger’s failed attempts to regain Western Europe enthusiasm with the 1973 “Year of Europe” initiative⁵¹², was met with caution by EEC member states. Nonetheless, US veiled threats of resorting to bilateral initiatives with OPEC countries and to diminish American involvement in European security compelled most of European states to follow the US’s lead during the Washington Conference⁵¹³, despite fears of arousing developing countries’ mistrust and anger. In Accra, indeed, the main Ghanaian daily newspaper

⁵⁰⁸ Recommandation de décision du Conseil et des représentants des gouvernements des Etats membres réunis au sein du Conseil complétant les directives de négociations avec les Etats ACP, Brussels, February 1974, AN 19900489/44, p. 5.

⁵⁰⁹ Communication de la Commission au Conseil relative au déroulement des négociations avec les Etats d’Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique (A.C.P.), Brussels, February 1974, AN 19900489/44, p. 14.

⁵¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 2.

⁵¹¹ H. Türk, *The oil crisis of 1973 as a challenge to multilateral energy cooperation among Western industrialized countries*, in: «Historical Social Research», Vol. 39, issue 4, 2014, pp. 209-230, pp. 218-219; G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., pp. 231-234.

⁵¹² For a detailed account of the “Year of Europe” initiative, see among others: Hamilton, K. (2006) *Britain, France, and America’s Year of Europe, 1973*, in: «Diplomacy & Statecraft», Vol. 17, issue no. 4, pp. 871–95.

⁵¹³ H. Türk, *The oil crisis of 1973 as a challenge to multilateral energy cooperation among Western industrialized countries*, op. cit., p. 220.

commented on the Washington Conference by defining it a “call on oil consuming countries to unite to continue with their free-wheeling exploitation”⁵¹⁴.

The Conference concluded with a final communiqué that referred to cooperation among consumer countries. The communiqué was signed by all parties except for France, which could not accept a solution that hinged on isolating oil producers⁵¹⁵. Washington’s strategy, indeed, was incompatible with the Arab-friendly policy pursued by France. After the success France had obtained with the Nine’s Joint Declaration on Middle East of November 1973⁵¹⁶, this divergence in the management of the oil crisis would create a split within the Community. In January, Paris had proposed an initiative that could reunite oil producers, oil importing developing countries, and industrialised countries. This had prompted a more daring proposal by Algeria. Under the leadership of Algerian president Houari Boumédiène, who sat at the intersection between OPEC, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the Group of 77 (G77), Algeria exploited France’s overture to propose an initiative that would encompass problems concerning “all types of raw materials”⁵¹⁷ and not just those relating to energy. In so doing, Boumédiène’s proposal explicitly linked OPEC’s struggle with that of developing countries – something that was not lost on African countries like Ghana, Senegal, and Liberia, who quickly voiced their support for the Algerian proposal⁵¹⁸. What Kissinger would later define “the unholy alliance” between OPEC and oil-importing developing countries, strongly sought by oil producing countries, was taking shape.

In a few months, that proposal would give way to the Sixth UN General Assembly Special Session on raw materials and development. The Special Session gave resonance to a collection of demands articulated by developing countries across various regions, driven by their shared perception that the international economic and institutional system was inherently skewed in favour of industrialised nations. This conviction emerged after witnessing the failure of modernisation theories that had gained prominence in the 1950s and early 1960s and having espoused dependency theories that pointed at the unequal exchange between the North and the South. Essentially, thus, the Sixth Special Session centred around demands of redistribution of wealth from the industrialised North to the developing South. Adom Getachew suggests that

⁵¹⁴ *Economic Trends*, Daily Graphic, Accra, 11 February 1974, PRAAD NP 1/117.

⁵¹⁵ G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., pp. 233-234.

⁵¹⁶ A. Gfeller, *A European voice in the Arab world: France, the superpowers and the Middle East, 1970–74*, in: op. cit., p. 665

⁵¹⁷ *Letter dated 30 January from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the UN addressed to the Secretary-General*, quoted in: G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., p. 242.

⁵¹⁸ *Economic Trends*, Daily Graphic, Accra, 11 February 1974, PRAAD NP 1/117.

for leaders such as Tanzania's Nyerere and Jamaica's Manley – two countries that were at the time involved in the EEC-ACP negotiations – this redistribution was to be attained through an “international class war”⁵¹⁹. In this sense, the international system born out of colonialism and imperialism had casted post-colonial states in the role of poor workers and farmers who sustained the industrialisation and the affluent conditions that industrialised countries enjoyed. Much like workers and farmers had secured rights and redistributive measures within industrialised nations, developing countries were now calling for a restructuring of the international division of labour based on redistribution⁵²⁰.

At the end of debates that covered the better part of April 1974, the Sixth UNGA Special Session concluded in early May with a declaration calling for the establishment of a New International Economic Order. Among its key points was the insistence on a sovereign right for states to control their natural resources, including their extraction and distribution. It also sought the creation of state-led cartels to manage and stabilise commodity prices at more favourable levels for the producers. Further demands included tighter regulation of multinational corporations and the transfer of technology from industrialised to developing countries without restrictive conditions. Additionally, it called for nonreciprocal trade preferences to benefit southern economies and advocated for debt relief for certain obligations owed by these nations to the North⁵²¹. As seen above, some of these themes had already been present in the EEC-ACP negotiations. During the rest of 1974 and the early weeks of 1975, negotiations would constitute a laboratory for crafting this restructuration on a smaller scale.

3.3 Euro-African relations as a laboratory for NIEO: ACP ideological strength vs Communitarian impasse

International implications would have to wait, however, as the Community was more divided than ever because of domestic political upheavals within several member states. Since early April, Pompidou's death had plunged France in an unexpected electoral campaign that would last until late May. On the other side of the Channel, Britain was led by a Labour minority government since the general election of February had resulted in a hung parliament. The new Labour government addressed Euro-African relations for the first time during the Council of

⁵¹⁹ A. Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2019, pp. 157-160.

⁵²⁰ Ibidem.

⁵²¹ N. Gilman, *The New International Economic Order: A Reintroduction*, in: «Humanity», Vol. 6, issue 1, 2015, pp. 1-16.

Ministers session of April. While the member states were generally ready to agree with Cheysson's proposals for a new negotiating mandate, during the session, the British announced that their government "had undertaken a review of the community's relations with all Commonwealth countries [...] and all developing countries"⁵²². This was coherent with the electoral manifesto of the Labour Party, that had campaigned on the promise to renegotiate the terms of British Communitarian membership, but it constituted a serious hindrance to the evolution of negotiations. Despite Cheysson's earnest appeal for reconsideration, the British insisted that they could not approve any new mandate for the Commission until the review was complete. This decision effectively halted the Community's ability to proceed, leading to a month-long suspension of negotiations. While most delegations regretted the impasse, the Germans – then holding the Council presidency – appeared somewhat relieved. The pause conveniently deferred discussions on the increasingly contentious export revenue stabilisation scheme, a source of growing unease in Bonn, where Communitarian efforts to regulate international markets were met with resistance⁵²³.

Despite the fact that Britain eventually lifted its reserve on the Commission mandate, the following months were characterised by a general ineffectiveness of the Community vis-à-vis the ACP negotiations. This situation sparked worried reactions in Anglophone Africa: in early April, Olu Sanu, the Nigerian Ambassador to the EEC, rushed to get a clearer account of the new British position. In so doing, he informed the Foreign Office that insistence on reviewing British stance vis-à-vis the negotiations with ACP countries was leading African countries to believe that the Labour government was "more interested in Asia than Africa" – an impression that was causing considerable unease among his colleagues⁵²⁴.

French officials in Brussels, for their part, were concerned about this development as well, fearing it would significantly prolong the negotiations and cause the entire issue to lose momentum. Moreover, in its effort to renegotiate the terms of British membership, the Labour government seemed determined to raise again the issue of a global development policy for the Community – something that Paris thought had been settled at this point of the negotiations. When the topic was raised again by the British during the spring, the French reminded their partners that the Association held a more profound meaning to the Community than a simple

⁵²² E. Burin des Roziers, *Conseil des Ministres des 1^{er} et 2 Avril - Négociations avec les Etats Associés et Associables*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 4 April 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵²³ E. Burin des Roziers, *Suspension des Négociations CEE/ACP*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 5 April 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵²⁴ W. J. Adams, UKREP, *Call on the Nigerian Ambassador*, Letter to R. Q. Braithwaite, EID, 3 April 1974, TNA FCO30/2119.

development aid policy, since it “responded to an essentially political aspiration and not simply a humanitarian concern”⁵²⁵. Nonetheless, Britain’s insistence on the question rallied the other known supporters of a more universal development policy – Germany and The Netherlands. If this was a regrettable development, what truly worried Paris was that this cleavage was now spreading to the Commission, which Sir Christopher Soames, External Relations Commissioner, was trying to sway towards a more globalist position⁵²⁶. Although his attempts had been kept at bay by the French President of the Commission, François-Xavier Ortoli, this was yet another alarm bell that compelled Paris to reassess its role in the negotiations.

This effort was particularly important in light of the peculiar conjuncture in which France found itself. The May 1974 elections ushered in a new President, the young and dynamic former Minister of Finance, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, along with a government led by Jacques Chirac. This fresh leadership, already busy with managing the domestic consequences of the oil crisis and many other dossiers in the European arena, such as the idea of creating a Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD)⁵²⁷, was on the cusp of facing its first major test within the Community. Indeed, France’s presidency of the European Council was set to begin in July, spanning the second half of 1974. Thus, it fell on Burin des Roziers, French Permanent Representative to the Community, to remind the new ministers the importance of using the Council’s presidency to push Euro-African negotiations forward, lest they fell victim of Communitarian torpor or, worse, a British-led effort to dissolve the Association into a global development aid policy⁵²⁸. Burin des Roziers warned that, should British efforts succeed, financial aid destined to African countries would be dispersed into a much less effective global policy. Similarly, the export revenue stabilisation scheme, the most innovative feature of the new Convention, was threatened by German insistence on narrowing the scope of the mechanism, rendering it a mere accessory to EDF. Finally, while France could be ready to abandon its requests for reverse preferences, it was imperative that the commercial regime of the new Convention could be presented as a free trade area, so as to be compatible with GATT. Failing to do so would expose the new Association

⁵²⁵ E. Burin des Roziers, *Conseil des Ministres des 7 Mai - Négociations A.C.P.*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 4 May 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵²⁶ W. J. Adams, *Commission meeting of Wednesday, 5 June: Dcisions on Protocol 22 and on the Aid Framework for the Development Council*, Letter to R. Q. Braithwaite, 6 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2145; E. Burin des Roziers, *Désaccord au sein de la Commission au sujet de la Politique d’Association et de la Politique d’Aide au Tiers Monde en General*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 8 June 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵²⁷ For detailed accounts of the Europe-Arab Dialogue, see, among others: A. Gfeller, *A European voice in the Arab world: France, the superpowers and the Middle East, 1970–74*, op. cit.

⁵²⁸ E. Burin des Roziers, *Le Politique d’Association remise en cause*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 8 June 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

to a yearly renegotiation of a waiver, which would bring to a further erosion of the special preferences accorded to African countries. This would certainly please the US, historically hostile to the closed nature of Association⁵²⁹. Burin des Roziers reminded his new government that “what is at stake is the existence of a set of close and privileged relations with a defined region of the globe”⁵³⁰. This was yet another occasion in which French officials clarified that, despite the economic nature of Association, the Euro-African link had clear political implications that were worth defending in the Communitarian arena.

In response to Burin des Roziers’ exhortation, officials in the Quai d’Orsay quickly elaborated a declaration that the new Minister of Cooperation, Pierre Abelin, would deliver to his Communitarian colleagues during the following Council session. France’s intent to safeguard its Europeanised sphere of influence in Africa becomes even more apparent here. Abelin reiterated all the themes that France usually employed to defend the Association, but, given the gravity of the situation, he was more explicit than usual in highlighting the political value of Euro-African relations. Thus, he reminded that the Association had constituted “a guarantee of commercial stability, an element of development and a basis for political security” for African countries that otherwise would have chosen more radical paths⁵³¹. For the Community, on the other hand, the Association remained a crucial aspect of its external policy, and protecting it meant defending the Community’s interests and “asserting our influence in regions of the world where we have long exercised it”⁵³². Although this did not necessarily reflect the reality for the Associates – who had long been highlighting the Association’s shortcomings, such as the erosion of preferences – Abelin’s speech was crafted to emphasise the historical and political significance that the Association still held for some within the Community.

The impasse, however, was not broken by France. Negotiations regained momentum at the end of spring 1974 thanks instead to ACP countries, at this point emboldened by the calls for a NIEO. At the end of May, Olu Sanu, Nigeria’s Ambassador to the EEC and ACP spokesperson on the matter, exposed ACP views on the export stabilisation mechanism. He explained that ACP

⁵²⁹ On the matter, see: Palayret, J. (2006) *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme : CEE et ACP dans les Négociations De La Convention De Lomé, 1970-75*, in: A. Varsori (eds.) *Inside the European Community. Actors and Policies in the European Integration 1957-1972*, Baden-Baden, Bruxelles, Nomos/Bruylant, 2005, pp.369-398; Franczak, M. (2022) *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, pp. 39-41, 54-57.

⁵³⁰ E. Burin des Roziers, *Le Politique d’Association remise en cause*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 8 June 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78, p. 3.

⁵³¹ *Projet d’une Déclaration générale sur l’Association*, *Projet d’intervention pour M. Abelin pour le Conseil du 13 Juin 1974*, Paris, 13 June 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵³² *Ibidem*.

countries wanted the negotiations to contribute to the creation of a “new international economic order based on interdependence and fairness”⁵³³. Sanu reiterated that the ACP saw the export earnings stabilisation mechanism as a tool to guarantee a steady increase in their export revenues and secure fair prices for their products. This, they argued, required addressing the ongoing decline in their terms of trade by linking export prices more closely to the cost of imported goods and services from developed countries – an idea Senghor had championed since early 1974⁵³⁴. Moreover, the mechanism should protect their economies from revenue losses caused by fluctuations in production and consumption. Lastly, they sought a fair distribution of the financial burden associated with freight rates, emphasising the need for a mechanism that would genuinely support their economic stability and growth⁵³⁵. To address these issues, the ACP proposed to the Community to create a system based on jointly-agreed prices and quantities for each commodity. The prices should have been negotiated by the EEC and the ACP on the basis of the evolution of the commodity markets and production costs, as well as import price trends for ACP countries. Should either the prices or the quantities of a certain commodity fall below the agreed levels, the Community would automatically provide a compensation to each country for each commodity, thus guaranteeing a basic earning for each of the ACP countries⁵³⁶.

A few days later, the connection between Euro-African negotiations and NIEO was made even more explicit during the ACP ministerial meeting in Dakar. Senegalese President Senghor inaugurated the meeting by lauding the unity ACP countries had demonstrated in those first months of negotiations. After explicitly referring to the Sixth UN Special Session, he linked the issue of the stabilisation of export earnings to terms of trade deterioration, reminding the audience how he had first envisioned the possibility of indexing raw materials’ prices to those of manufactured products during the Club of Rome meeting in Salzburg in February 1974⁵³⁷. He then emphasised the importance of serious provisions for industrial cooperation in the new Convention, as this would be the first step towards the creation of a new international division

⁵³³ Déclaration du porte-parole du Groupe ACP (Comité plénier de Négociation ACP/CEE du 24 mai, 1974, Bruxelles, 24 May 1974, AN 19900489/46, p. 2.

⁵³⁴ Statement by the President of the Republic, Conference of the Group of 41, Dakar, 4 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119, pp. 11-12.

⁵³⁵ E. Burin des Rozières, *Négociations ACP – Stabilisation des Recettes d’Exportation*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 29 May 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78; Déclaration du porte-parole du Groupe ACP (Comité plénier de Négociation ACP/CEE du 24 mai, 1974, Bruxelles, 24 May 1974, AN 19900489/46.

⁵³⁶ Ibidem.

⁵³⁷ Statement by the President of the Republic, Conference of the Group of 41, Dakar, 4 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119, pp. 11-12.

of labour. Finally, he exhorted the Ministers to acknowledge ACP countries' real bargaining power:

Everyone can sense that a new international order is on its way, but there is some uncertainty as to the significance and scope of the changes to come. When we attend our meeting with Europe, which will soon have to state more clearly what her intentions are, we shall not be going with empty hands. That is the first certainty. Our material resources are varied and extensive, though still largely unexploited and even unexplored. Our human and cultural resources, in spite of myriad trials, still pulsate with vigour and are dead set on the road to development.

The second certainty is that [...] we need to remain united – in thought as well as in action. As we speak on behalf of the poorest and most humiliated countries, we must be conscious that we bear sterling testimony for the whole of the Third World⁵³⁸.

Senghor's speech highlights how the unique context shaped by the 1973 oil shock enhanced the legitimacy of African countries' demands during negotiations with the EEC. The example set by OPEC empowered African countries to leverage their commodities as a significant bargaining tool. Moreover, their call for participation in EDF management was bolstered by similar demands for greater Third World involvement in international organisations – a central aspect of the legal framework underpinning the NIEO⁵³⁹. Senghor, however, did not shy away from challenging the resurgence of globalist tendencies within the Community, and he defended the Association by underlining how an interregional system was the best-equipped to foster the concrete changes that would create a new international economic order⁵⁴⁰. In his vision, the road to global justice still ran through Eurafrica, but this did not lead him to underestimate the potential of linking Euro-African negotiations with NIEO. This approach, espoused by other Francophone leaders, helped preserve African unity.

Moreover, the links with the broader calls for NIEO allowed the ACP to prioritise issues that had previously been secondary in the negotiations, such as industrial cooperation. In Dakar, they explicitly demanded that EEC-ACP industrial cooperation should not only include the transfer of technology and techniques, but might also require the Community to adapt the structure of its own industrial production. This underscored their determination to negotiate a

⁵³⁸ Ibidem, pp. 15-16.

⁵³⁹ A. Anghie, *Legal Aspects of the New International Economic Order*, in: «Humanity», Vol. 6, issue 1, 2015, pp. 145-158.

⁵⁴⁰ Statement by the President of the Republic, Conference of the Group of 41, Dakar, 4 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119, pp. 1-5.

genuine restructuring of the international division of labour with Europe. The only concession to EEC demands made during the Dakar meeting regarded the trade regime: ACP ministers agreed not to discriminate against individual member states of the Community and to extend most-favoured-nation status to the Community as a whole, with allowances for exceptions designed to protect their trade relationships with other developing countries⁵⁴¹. This allowed Associates and Associables to definitively settle their divergences on reciprocity. In the eyes of Francophone countries, explained Senegalese Finance Minister Babacar Ba, this solution amounted to a form of reciprocity, because even though it did not fully reciprocate the preferential treatment the Community granted to ACP products, “it would nevertheless amount to giving the European countries a preferential position”⁵⁴².

Overall, the Dakar ministerial conference bears evidence of how, by the summer of 1974, ACP countries felt more empowered in their dealings with the EEC than a year before. Moreover, having displayed a united and coherent approach in front of a Community fraught with disagreements for almost a year, the ACP ministers felt legitimated to send a very straightforward signal to the EEC, because it was “essential for us to know whether Europe understands the problems of ACP countries and is willing to make fundamental concessions, or whether we are merely engaged in a costly cosmetic exercise in Brussels”⁵⁴³. Thus, at the end of the Dakar meeting, ACP ministers, keen on accelerating the pace of negotiations, proposed to hold the next EEC/ACP ministerial meeting at the end of July in Kingston, Jamaica⁵⁴⁴. In Dakar, the press reported enthusiastically that the meeting held in town had marked “a turning point in the relaunch of the Eurafrican negotiations”⁵⁴⁵.

⁵⁴¹ Draft summary of Conclusions of the Third Session of the Council of Ministers of the African Group for Negotiations with the EEC, Dakar, 6 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119.

⁵⁴² D. Dunnet, *Protocol 22 Negotiations*, Letter from British Embassy in Dakar to R. Q. Braithwaite, FCO, 12 July 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119.

⁵⁴³ Statement introducing the Report of the ACP/EEC Committee of Ambassadors and Plenipotentiaries to be given by the Chairman of the Committee to the Third Session of the Council of Ministers of the African Group for Negotiations with the EEC, Dakar, 4 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119.

⁵⁴⁴ *Négociations avec les ACP*, Annex IV, Réunion de travail de M. le Président de la Commission avec le Comité des Représentants Permanents en vue de la prochaine session du Conseil : jeudi 20 juin, Bruxelles, 18 June 1974, HAEU EN-474.

⁵⁴⁵ Sidi Abd Allal Sy, *La relance des négociations eurafricaines*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 17 June 1974, ANS.

3.4 Creating a model: Kingston and the presentation of a new Communitarian approach to the Global South

The invite for the Kingston meeting plunged the Nine into intensive deliberations about a new negotiating mandate for the Commission. This mandate was to outline the Nine's positions on key unresolved matters, including the trade regime, the export revenue stabilisation mechanism and the sugar issue, and the proposed funding level for the next European Development Fund. At the same time, although somewhat begrudgingly, British diplomats reached out to their homologues in Paris, reviving the tradition inaugurated in 1972 of holding bilateral Anglo-French talks on the matter⁵⁴⁶. While the usual disagreements between the former imperial powers persisted, the French supported Britain's attempt to reach a viable compromise before the EEC/ACP ministerial meeting in late July, so that Kingston could settle the unresolved questions and bring the negotiations closer to a satisfactory conclusion⁵⁴⁷.

In the meantime, another kind of bilateral talks were being scheduled. Babacar Ba, Senegalese Minister of Finances, had recently been designated as the President of ACP Council of Ministers. For the French, this would be an unrepeatable occasion to influence the forthcoming Kingston conference: the fact that both the European and ACP Councils of ministers were now headed by Francophone countries constituted the perfect conditions to steer the negotiations in a more favourable direction⁵⁴⁸. Thus, a meeting between Ba and the new French Foreign Minister, Jean Sauvagnargues, was arranged for mid-July⁵⁴⁹. As in 1972, discussions between French and Francophone African officials aimed to influence the Associates' position, in the hope of swaying the entire ACP group's approach. This involved reminding Ba that the ACP would benefit from focusing the Kingston conference on the three major unresolved issues – trade, export stabilisation, and aid – while avoiding minor topics and overly radical stances. Such caution was necessary to prevent certain Community member states from exploiting the seemingly intractable deadlock to advocate for a global EEC development policy⁵⁵⁰. Lastly, the Associates

⁵⁴⁶ Commenting on the bilateral talks with the French, the Economic Counsellor stationed in the British embassy in Paris, David J. E. Ratford, wrote to his colleagues in the FCO's European Integration Department: "I find discussions with the French on reciprocity tedious in the extreme (a sentiment which others will no doubt share). However, this is what we are paid for." Letter from D. J. E. Ratford to P. S. Fairweather, Paris, 27 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119.

⁵⁴⁷ J. P. Brunet, *Circulaire du Service de Coopération Economique*, Paris, 19 June 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁴⁸ E. Burin des Rozières, *L'Afrique Francophone et la Négociation CEE-ACP*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 2 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁴⁹ L. de la Barre de Nanteuil, *Circulaire du Service de Coopération Economique*, Paris, 5 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78; E. Burin des Rozières, *Entrevue entre Votre Excellence et M. Babacar Ba*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 01 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78; M. Babacar Ba : « Nous allons activer les négociations A.C.P.-C.E.E », *Le Soleil*, Dakar, 17 July 1974, ANS.

⁵⁵⁰ J. P. Brunet, *Renouvellement et Elargissement de la Convention de Yaoundé*, *Circulaire du Service de Coopération Economique*, Paris, 17 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

were encouraged to dissuade the Associables, particularly the Caribbean delegations, from resolving the sugar question through a separate agreement at Kingston. While this strategy aligned with France's desire to retain sugar as a bargaining chip, it was framed to the Associates as a way to ensure that the export revenue stabilisation mechanism remained a shared priority throughout the negotiations⁵⁵¹.

As the Kingston Conference approached, the Nine scrambled to attain a common position. The sense of urgency was heightened by the apparent absence of any compromise on aid levels and export stabilisation. While the exact amount of the next EDF was impossible to foresee at this point, the Commission reiterated that the next EDF would need to adhere to the directives of Protocol 22. This meant ensuring that the Associates received at least the same amount of aid as before the enlargement, while also allocating sufficient new funds to provide the Associables with equivalent support. In principle, there was general agreement between Member States and the Commission, but achieving this target posed a significant challenge given the strain the oil crisis placed on the Nine's budgets – particularly if plans to create a global development fund were also pursued⁵⁵². For France, adhering to the Protocol 22 directives required endowing EDF with at least 3.6 billion European Units of Account (EUA). This amount was unsurprisingly deemed excessive by those advocating for the creation of a global development fund, such as Britain and Germany, who were unwilling to commit to more than 3,2 billion EUA⁵⁵³.

Meanwhile, the export revenue stabilisation mechanism constituted at this point the most divisive topic, leading to intense debates among the Foreign Ministers of the Nine just ahead of the Kingston ministerial conference. Three distinct proposals were under discussion: the Commission's plan, strongly backed by France, which drew on the Deniau Memorandum and called for automatic resource transfers; an Italian proposal centred on mutual obligations, where the EEC would guarantee prices in exchange for the ACP ensuring specific commodity quantities; and a minimalist approach from the German and Dutch delegations, which framed the mechanism as a mere supplement to financial aid⁵⁵⁴. This reflected a cleavage between

⁵⁵¹ *Conférence de Kingston – Entretien avec Babacar Ba*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 13 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁵² *Etat des négociations entre la CEE et les ACP*, Note de la Direction des Affaires Economiques et Financières du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 16 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78; *Protocol 22 : Ministerial Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, 25-26 July 1974*, FCO Brief, sine data, TNA FCO 30/2146.

⁵⁵³ *Protocol 22 : Ministerial Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, 25-26 July 1974 – Annex A: Size of the European Development Fund*, FCO Brief, sine data, TNA FCO 30/2146.

⁵⁵⁴ *Entrevue avec le bureau des ACP*, 13 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78; E. Burin des Roziers, *Negotiations CEE-ACP – Régime des échanges et stabilisation des recettes d'exportation*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 13 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

governments willing to attempt to regulate international markets – like France – and those that were “not inclined to commit to a system that deviates from market laws” like the Federal German Republic and The Netherlands⁵⁵⁵. Britain, for its part, was perfectly aware that, in order to obtain a separate agreement for sugar, it needed to appease the French by giving them satisfaction over the broader issue of commodity stabilisation. London was in favour of presenting “a proposal for a modest and soundly based commodity scheme” at Kingston, because this was “the best way to combat the extravagant ideas that the ACP countries have floated”⁵⁵⁶. The best option to do this, according to FCO officials, was to support the Commission’s proposal based on a reviewed version of the 1973 Deniau Memorandum.

In the end, French and British backing for the Commission’s proposal enabled the Nine to approach the Kingston conference with a concrete plan for the export stabilisation mechanism. Following a minimal compromise on the sugar question, discussions in Kingston focused primarily on presenting and debating the proposed stabilisation scheme⁵⁵⁷. The Community’s proposal outlined the establishment of a special fund, which would be activated upon an ACP country request if the price of a given commodity dropped below the average of previous years. In this regard, the Nine emphasised the mechanism’s automatic nature. Upon activation, the Commission would assess the request based on several criteria, including trends in the requesting country’s export earnings for the commodity, its price fluctuations, the country’s level of development, and its overall circumstances – paying particular attention to least-developed, landlocked, or insular countries⁵⁵⁸. The proposal also indicated the possible use of the financial transfers, which should be funnelled towards the promotion of the country’s development and economic diversification. Finally, it stipulated that the transfers would, in principle, be refundable: should prices – and consequently export earnings – recover, the transferred amounts would be repaid to replenish the fund.

In presenting it, the Nine specified that “it is not within the power of the Community alone to ensure the satisfactory functioning of the world commodities market”, but that, nonetheless, “we need to act now, and while we can’t do everything on our own in this vital area, we intend

⁵⁵⁵ *Etat des négociations entre la CEE et les ACP*, Note de la Direction des Affaires Economiques et Financières du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 16 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁵⁶ *Protocol 22: Ministerial Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, 25-26 July 1974 – Annex C: Commodity Stabilisation and Sugar*, FCO Brief, sine data, TNA FCO 30/2146.

⁵⁵⁷ E. Burin des Rozières, *Déroulement de la Conférence de Kingston*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 30 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁵⁸ *Conférence de Kingston – Relevé de conclusions*, Note du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 5 August 1974, AN 19900489/45.

to make a decisive contribution to the overall solution, [...], by setting an example, by creating a 'model'"⁵⁵⁹. This marked the emergence of a theme that would come to define the Community's approach to the Global South: while the imbalance in the international economic system could not be resolved by the Community alone, its unique relationship with the member states' former colonies could serve as a foundation for reimagining relations between industrialised and developing countries, thereby providing a concrete example of more equitable and just global relations.

Although the general ACP reaction was favourable, some aspects of the Community's proposal were deemed underwhelming. Several ACP ministers demanded a bolder action from the Community, arguing that it needed to tackle the issue of deteriorating terms of trade more directly and calling for the indexation of raw materials prices. This was essential because the mechanism should aim not only to stabilise commodity prices but also to raise them⁵⁶⁰. Moreover, the ACP strongly opposed the Community's suggestions that financial transfers be allocated to specific purposes and treated as refundable⁵⁶¹. At their insistence, the draft approved at the conclusion of the Kingston Conference on the mechanism reflected these concerns. The resolution omitted any reference to the principle of refunding financial transfers or specifying their intended use. Instead, it acknowledged the issue of deteriorating terms of trade and introduced new, less stringent eligibility criteria for activating the mechanism⁵⁶². Besides this victory, the ACP could also celebrate the fact that the Community had had to seriously consider their proposals on industrial cooperation. These posited that technology transfer, unrestricted access to research outcomes, and initiatives to foster industrial and scientific development could serve as foundation for the creation of a new international division of labour. Although the resolution approved on industrial cooperation was modest, and the Europeans considered the ACP's demands overly ambitious, the Kingston conference nonetheless secured the inclusion of a dedicated section on industrial cooperation in the forthcoming Convention⁵⁶³.

⁵⁵⁹ V. Garès, *Conférence de Kingston – de la part du Ministre*, Telegram from Kingston to Paris, 26 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78, p. 2.

⁵⁶⁰ A.C.P. – C.E.E. : *Les Points d'achoppement de la négociations d'association*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 19 July 1974, ANS.

⁵⁶¹ E. Burin des Roziers, *Déroulement de la Conférence de Kingston*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 30 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78, p. 5.

⁵⁶² *Conférence de Kingston – Relevé de conclusions*, Note du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 5 August 1974, AN 19900489/45; *L'Accord ACP-CEE conclu à Kingston*, Le Soleil, 29 July 1974, ANS.

⁵⁶³ Ibidem.

Kingston also marked the approval of the general principles of the new Convention's trade regime⁵⁶⁴. In mid-July, the Nine had reached a compromise on the longstanding issue of reciprocity. The solution crafted in October 1973 – avoiding references to reciprocity or a free trade area but instead emphasising the need for a contractual arrangement between the EEC and the ACP – was accepted as a suitable foundation for the Community's position. This stance was further clarified by affirming the Community's commitment to promote trade with the ACP by offering free access to virtually all ACP products. Eventually, the Community was forced to accept the ACP argument that no reciprocity could exist between industrialised and developing countries: the Community explicitly stated that "given their state of development, the ACP states will not be obliged to accept any corresponding obligation"⁵⁶⁵. Essentially, this meant that the Community could grant the ACP better conditions than those defined by the GSP, thus beginning to address the long-lamented problem of preference erosion⁵⁶⁶.

In this way, reverse preferences were definitively set aside, except in their most minimal form represented by the most-favoured-nation clause. Nonetheless, the French could find reassurance in the fact that this arrangement could be presented as compatible with GATT rules. This conviction was reinforced when, a few days later, Cheysson visited Washington, where he was assured that the Americans approved the non-reciprocal nature of the forthcoming Convention and that Washington would not question it within GATT⁵⁶⁷. If considered along the concessions the EEC was ready to make on agricultural products protected by CAP – the Community offered a full duty-free access for over 98% of ACP agricultural exports⁵⁶⁸ – the Community's offer was considered satisfactory by the ACP ministers⁵⁶⁹.

Thus, over the course of 25 and 26 July, exactly a year after the opening conference of Brussels, EEC and ACP ministers managed to tackle the majority of the outstanding issues. With the general principles of the trade regime and the stabilisation mechanism settled, the matter of

⁵⁶⁴ *General Principles of the Trade Arrangements*, Kingston, 25 July 1974, TNA FCO 30/2145.

⁵⁶⁵ E. Burin des Roziers, *Négociations CEE-ACP – Régime des échanges et stabilisation des recettes d'exportation*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 13 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁶⁶ Entrevue avec le bureau des ACP, 13 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78 ; M. Palliser, *Protocol 22: Trade Regime*, Telegram from Brussels to London, 11 July 1974, TNA FCO 30/2145.

⁵⁶⁷ F. La Gorce, *Sejour de M. Cheysson à Washington*, Telegram from Washington to Paris, 2 August 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁶⁸ E. Burin des Roziers, *Négociations CEE-ACP – Fin de la 4eme Phase et Préparation de la Conférence de Kingston*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 20 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁶⁹ Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Conférence de Kingston – Relevé de conclusions*, Paris, 5 August 1974, AN 19900489/45; *L'Accord ACP-CEE conclu à Kingston*, Le Soleil, 29 July 1974, ANS.

funding for the next EDF was explored as well. While it was agreed that precise amounts would only be determined in the later stages of negotiations, a clear disparity emerged between the Community's available resources and the ACP Ministers' expectations, as they proposed a figure of 8 billion EUA. Since the Community's envisaged figure of 3 billion was not publicly discussed during the Conference, however, Kingston could be generally regarded as a success. The Conference's outcome was in line with British expectations of adopting "decisions of principle which break the back of negotiations"⁵⁷⁰ and, although London had not managed to secure a definitive settlement on sugar, it could celebrate the fact that Kingston had definitely set the negotiations on a path that conduced to a new kind of agreement and excluded reciprocity. The French, for their part, could take satisfaction in the approval of the export earnings stabilisation mechanism, whose criteria had been modified by the ACP in a more permissive way than the original compromise among the Nine allowed. This outcome was even more welcome since it was achieved without committing to a specific agreement on sugar⁵⁷¹.

Across both Anglophone and Francophone African capitals, reactions were similarly favourable. Ghanaian and Nigerian ministers acknowledged that the Conference had allowed negotiations to make substantial progress, especially because of the concessions the Community had made in terms of non-reciprocity⁵⁷². Francophone countries equally welcomed the fact that the new Convention was shaping to be more favourable to their exports, especially for the provisions that concerned rules of origin and agricultural products covered by the CAP⁵⁷³. On the other hand, upon returning to Dakar, Babacar Ba commented on the results attained in Jamaica by underlining that the issue of the trade regime had been settled by agreeing on "reciprocal but non-symmetrical" trade provisions⁵⁷⁴.

While this showed the extent to which reciprocity still constituted a cleavage between Francophone and Anglophone countries, things differed when it came to the export revenue stabilisation mechanism. Although countries that were more active in the mining sector than in the agricultural one, such as Mauritania, were already advocating for the inclusion of mining

⁵⁷⁰ *Protocol 22: Ministerial Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, 25-26 July 1974*, FCO Brief, sine data, TNA FCO 30/2146.

⁵⁷¹ *Conférence de Kingston*, Note d'information du Ministère de la Coopération, Paris, 30 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁷² Roger, *Conférence Ministérielle de Kingston entre les Neuf et les ACP*, Telegram from Lagos to Paris, 5 August 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78; Deciry, *Conférence de Kingston*, 19 August 1974, Telegram from Accra to Paris, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁷³ *OCAM : négociations des Quarante-quatre avec la CEE*, Dépeche d'Information, Bangui, 8 August 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁷⁴ D. Diedhiou, *Nos négociations progressent (declare M. Babacar Ba de retour de la réunion des ACP-CEE de Kingston)*, Le Soleil, 5 August 1974, ANS; Boyer, Telegram from Dakar to Paris, 5 August 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

products in the list of commodities covered by the mechanism⁵⁷⁵, the preliminary agreement reached in Kingston was welcomed with enthusiasm by all African countries. The Associates, reunited in the Central African Republic's capital in early August, celebrated the mechanism's inclusion in the new Convention by declaring it "an important victory for our countries, which have consistently denounced the scandalous deterioration of terms of trade in all international forums". While they knew that the mechanism would be limited in scope, they also hoped that "the developed world will follow the example set by the Europe of the Nine to achieve a solution on a broader scale"⁵⁷⁶.

3.5 "It is easier to appear charitable than to do justice": Lomé and a new approach to North-South relations?

Over the following months, negotiations between the Commission and the ACP ambassadors resumed. As the autumn progressed, it became evident that the new Convention would not be ready without a considerable delay over the original schedule, which posited that the new Convention needed to be signed before the end of 1974, so that the new provisions could be effective before the expiration of the Yaoundé and Arusha agreements. Once again, the delay was being caused by persisting divergences among the Nine. At this point, disagreements centred on the technicalities of the stabilisation mechanism. Regarding the latter, the vast majority of member states had come to support the Commission's proposal to calculate financial transfers automatically using a mathematical formula based on the extent of each commodity's price drop. Germany, on the other hand, maintained its opposition to an automatic system throughout the autumn of 1974, demanding the amount of the transfers to be determined on a case-by-case basis, according to both quantitative and qualitative criteria⁵⁷⁷. This strategy responded to two preoccupations that animated the German government: limiting the financial burden and preventing the introduction of a compensation system that was directly tied to prices' natural fluctuation. The French commented that such a solution would

⁵⁷⁵ H. Gauthier, *Conférence de Kingston*, Telegram from Nouakchott to Paris, 31 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁷⁶ *OCAM : négociations des Quarante-quatre avec la CEE*, Dépêche d'Information, Bangui, 8 August 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78, p. 4.

⁵⁷⁷ Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Négociations avec les pays associés et associables d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique (A.C.P.)*, Conseil des Communautés Européennes – Session des 14 et 15 Octobre 1974, Paris, 11 October 1974, AN 19900489/46; E. Burin des Roziers, *Conseil des Ministres du 17 septembre – Négociations CEE-ACP*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 13 September 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

“shock their traditional economic liberalism”⁵⁷⁸. Shock or not, however, the alternative proposed by the Germans was hardly feasible, as a case-by-case approach would require the involvement of ACP countries in the decision-making process. This, in turn, would lend weight to ACP demands for participation in the management of the EDF – something the Nine were not prepared to concede⁵⁷⁹.

As autumn turned into winter, the next EDF became another pressing source of disagreement within the EEC. The Commission had earlier raised the prospect of “budgetisation”, meaning that the EDF would be financed through the Community’s own resources rather than direct contributions from member states. The proposal was met with mixed reactions. Britain and the other new members generally supported it, as their terms of entry into the Community allowed for a gradual adjustment of their budget contributions⁵⁸⁰. Financing the EDF through Community resources would thus reduce their financial burden – at least for the upcoming Convention. Italy, on the other hand, advocated for parity between internal and external investments: using the Community’s own resources to finance the EDF would skew this balance and reduce the possibility of Communitarian investments in Italy’s own disadvantaged areas⁵⁸¹. Germany, meanwhile, remained relatively indifferent to the debate, having already stated it would not commit more than 2.5 billion Deutsche Marks regardless of the financing method⁵⁸². In France, opinions varied among ministries⁵⁸³, but a general scepticism ultimately prevailed. Budgetisation was viewed with suspicion, as it would expand the Commission’s influence over the Association and bolster the position of those advocating for a global development aid policy⁵⁸⁴. Moreover, budgetisation posed the additional problem of having to redefine the value of European Units of Account, which were still based on the 1971 gold parities. While the update of EUA value was already on the Community’s agenda, doing so before the end of the

⁵⁷⁸ Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Négociations avec les pays associés et associables d’Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique (A.C.P.)*, Conseil des Communautés Européennes – Session des 14 et 15 Octobre 1974, Paris, 11 October 1974, AN 19900489/46, p. 4.

⁵⁷⁹ E. Burin des Roziers, *Négociations CEE-ACP – Conseil du 15 octobre*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 12 October 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁸⁰ *Council of Ministers’ Meeting: 2/3 December 1974, Provisional Agenda Item No 10 – Protocol 22*, FCO Brief, sine data, TNA FCO 30/2138; *Protocol 22 : Ministerial Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, 25-26 July 1974*, FCO Brief, sine data, TNA FCO 30/2146.

⁵⁸¹ E. Burin des Roziers, *Conseil du 12 novembre, Négociations avec les ACP – Problème lié à la détermination du montant de l’aide*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 13 November 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁸² Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Négociations avec les pays A.C.P., Problèmes relatifs à l’aide financière*, Paris, 9 November 1974, AN 19900489/46, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁸³ Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Position des Departements sur la Budgetisation*, Paris, sine data, AN 19900489/45.

⁵⁸⁴ Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, *Négociations avec les pays A.C.P., Problèmes relatifs à l’aide financière*, Paris, 9 November 1974, AN 19900489/46.

negotiations would have further slowed their pace⁵⁸⁵. Abandoning the prospect of budgetisation, however, implied finding a compromise on member states' individual contributions – an exercise that promised to present its own difficulties.

Given this context, the last months of negotiations were particularly difficult. By the beginning of December, a draft text of the new Convention was ready, but uncertainty still loomed over a number of essential points. In previous months, the ACP had expressed frustration over the Community's internal divisions while remaining willing to make concessions. At this stage, ACP countries adopted a more assertive stance. In mid-December, they criticised the draft text by reiterating a number of points that, in the words of French representatives, "call into question all that constituted the specificity of the close and coherent association established by the Yaoundé Convention"⁵⁸⁶.

Anglophone Associates pushed for eliminating the references to the old Association and to any sort of reciprocal commitment in the Convention. They called for the rejection of both the term "Association" and any reference to its "permanent vocation" in the agreement. Moreover, they also opposed the idea of holding consultations with the EEC in international forums such as UNCTAD, with the Nigerian ambassador explicitly stating that "important" African nations could not afford to appear as if they were "conniving with a group of European countries"⁵⁸⁷. While the Associates privately reassured the French that they would defend the Yaoundé spirit⁵⁸⁸, Associates and Associables were united in their resolution to confront the Community on technical issues regarding trade, export stabilisation, and aid. By the end of 1974, the ACP countries made it clear that they were not prepared to accept several key aspects of the Community's proposals. They firmly rejected the idea of refunding the financial transfers allocated through the stabilisation mechanism and opposed the limited list of commodities suggested by the EEC. Similarly, they dismissed the offer of 3 billion EUA for the next EDF, maintaining their demands for participation in its management. The ACP also expressed dissatisfaction with the Community's offer on agricultural products and found the proposals

⁵⁸⁵ E. Burin des Roziers, *Préparation du Conseil du 12 novembre – Négociations avec les ACP – Problèmes liés à la détermination du montant de l'aide*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 5 November 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁸⁶ E. Burin des Roziers, *Négociations CEE/ACP – Fin de la négociation au niveau des plénipotentiaires*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 11 December 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁸⁷ W. J. Adams, UKREP, *Protocol 22 Negotiations: Conversation with the Nigerian Ambassador*, Letter to R. Q. Braithwaite, EID, 11 December 1974, TNA FCO30/2138.

⁵⁸⁸ D. La Chevalerie, *Négociations entre les Pays des ACP et la Communauté Economique Européenne*, Telegram from French Embassy in Senegal to MAEF, 17 December 1974, MAE 1089INVA/78.

regarding sugar inadequate⁵⁸⁹. Finally, the Anglophones prevailed over the Francophones, as ultimately the ACP proposed to substitute the term “Association” with “Cooperation Convention”⁵⁹⁰.

This sparked serious preoccupation in the Quai d’Orsay, which called on to French ambassadors in Francophone countries to persuade their host governments to defend the Association *acquis* and push for a swift conclusion of the negotiations⁵⁹¹. The Foreign Office in London, on the other hand, was caught up in the general renegotiation of British Communitarian membership. While Britain also sought a swift conclusion to the negotiations, the uncertainty weakened its credibility vis-à-vis the Associables, which now feared the possibility of concluding a complex agreement with a Community which Britain may soon leave⁵⁹². In response to ACP growing dissatisfaction, the Commission intensified its diplomatic efforts as well, as exemplified by Krohn’s visit to Senegal in early January. In Dakar, Krohn publicly conveyed the urgency of concluding the negotiations by paying homage to Eurafrica⁵⁹³. In private meetings, however, he pressured Ba into holding an additional EEC/ACP ministerial meeting in Brussels – instead of Nairobi – for mid-January⁵⁹⁴.

The mid-January EEC/ACP Ministerial meeting allowed the parties to settle the majority of the outstanding issues, but by the end of three days of bargaining it became apparent that a definitive agreement could not be achieved before the existing Conventions expired on 31 January. On the occasion, ACP solidarity ultimately prevailed when the group declared they would not accept a deal due to the Caribbean countries’ dissatisfaction with the price that Britain proposed to pay for sugar supplies in 1975⁵⁹⁵. In reality, this issue was being debated in separate negotiations between Caribbean countries and Britain, but London had tried to link those negotiations with the long-term sugar agreement that was being negotiated within the

⁵⁸⁹ ACP Group for Negotiations with the EEC, *Results of the 5th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers*, Dakar, Senegal, 18-19 December 1974, TNA FCO 30/2138.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

⁵⁹¹ L. de la Barre de Nanteuil, *Circulaire du Service de Coopération Economique*, Paris, 12 December 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁹² R. Q. Braithwaite, EID, *Protocol 22: The Link with Renegotiation*, Letter to Callaghan’s Private Secretary, 10 December 1974, TNA FCO30/2138.

⁵⁹³ Malal N’Diaye, M. Krohn (C.E.E.) : « *Nous allons aboutir à un accord Europe-A.C.P.* », *Le Soleil*, Dakar, 4 January 1975, ANS.

⁵⁹⁴ D. La Chevalerie, *Négociations entre la Communauté Economique Européenne et les Pays des ACP. Date de la Conférence des Ministres de la CEE et des Ministres des ACP*, Telegram from French Embassy in Senegal to MAEF, 4 January 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁵⁹⁵ M. Palliser, *Joint EEC/ACP Ministerial Meeting*, Telegram from London to Brussels, 17 January 1974, TNA FCO 30/2630; E. Burin des Roziers, *Conférence Ministérielle CEE/ACP des 13, 14 et 15 Janvier*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 18 January 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

ACP-EEC talks. Instead of facilitating agreement on the two fronts, however, the overlap between the negotiations had caused a double gridlock⁵⁹⁶. This development was met with dismay in Paris, where the Quai d'Orsay lamented the Francophone Associates' lack of influence during the negotiations, which, at their most critical stage, seemed to be entirely driven by the Anglophone countries⁵⁹⁷. In the end, a final meeting between ACP and EEC ministers was scheduled for the end of the month⁵⁹⁸. As the deadline set by the expiration of the Yaoundé and Arusha conventions approached, the pace of negotiations became increasingly frenetic.

The eighteen-months long negotiations between the Community and ACP countries finally came to an end on 1 February 1975. The new agreement was based on a number of balanced compromises. The trade regime granted free access to all ACP products into Communitarian market, except for a small part of the CAP-covered agricultural products. Although this marked the definitive non-reciprocal nature of the agreement, ACP countries committed not to discriminate among Community members and to grant most-favoured-nation clause to all of them.

The final rounds of talks of January had also settled the lingering questions about the export stabilisation mechanism, which soon became known with the acronym "STABEX". The final compromise on STABEX stipulated that the system would *de facto* have a financial ceiling, as it was endowed with 375 million EUA. It was confirmed that ACP countries could request activation of the mechanism if their export revenues for a specific commodity dropped below the average of their exports to the Community for that commodity over the preceding four years. The amount of the transfer would be mathematically based on the loss of export earnings suffered by the ACP country, but the Community would evaluate the demands on the basis of the available funds. In principle, the financial transfers would be refundable: should the commodity prices – and the quantity exported to the Community – rise above the referenced average, ACP countries would contribute to the reconstitution of the STABEX fund. This principle, however, did not apply to least-developed, insular, and land-locked ACP countries. Thus configured, the system reflected an acceptable compromise between the supporters of a

⁵⁹⁶ M. Palliser, *Joint EEC/ACP Ministerial Meeting: Final meeting between ACP Bureau and the Community*, Telegram from London to Brussels, 17 January 1974, TNA FCO 30/2630; *Steering Brief for Protocol 22 Negotiations: EEC/ACP Joint Ministerial Meeting 30-31 January 1975*, Attached to Minute from H. J. Arbuthnott, EID, to R. J. O'Neill, Cabinet Office, 24 January 1975, TNA FCO 30/2630, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁹⁷ L. de la Barre de Nanteuil, *Négociations CEE/ACP*, Circulaire du Service de Coopération Economique, Paris, 18 January 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78

⁵⁹⁸ E. Burin des Rozières, *De la Conférence CEE/ACP*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 17 January 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

veritable attempt to intervene on international market dynamics and those who opposed this kind of interferences and wished to see the system's scope reduced to a minimum, such as the Germans. The ACP finally accepted these conditions, but fought to enlarge the list of products covered by the mechanism. In the end, STABEX would cover 12 general commodities and their by-products: groundnuts, cocoa, coffee, cotton, coconuts, palm tree products, hides and skins, timber, bananas, tea, raw sisal, and iron ore. Despite vehement British opposition, the latter was eventually included as a concession to the requests of African countries which, spearheaded by Mauritania⁵⁹⁹, had demanded the inclusion of a number of minerals⁶⁰⁰.

The total amount of Community aid towards the ACP was set at 3.39 billion EUA, including STABEX funds and European Investment Bank's loans. Although the idea of budgetisation had been definitively discarded, a compromise on the member states' financial contributions was reached in January. France and Germany each agreed to contribute 25.95% of the total, maintaining their status as the largest donors, as had been the case since the first Association Convention under the Rome Treaty. Britain, meanwhile, committed to 18.7% of the total, thus becoming the third-largest contributor⁶⁰¹. When the Commission delegates announced that the next EDF would be set at 3 billion units of account, the ACP delegation, led by Senegalese Minister Babacar Ba, reacted with disappointment but ultimately accepted the figure. Ba delivered a powerful statement, emphasising that the ACP had not entered the negotiations to haggle over numbers. He expressed deep dissatisfaction that the Community's offer fell short of its own stated commitment to maintain the treatment of existing Associates and extend equal terms to all ACP countries, but laconically reminded that "after all they financed most of their development themselves"⁶⁰². Aware that they could not secure a better offer, the ACP's sole request was for the Convention to expire five years after its signing rather than its ratification – a modification that would effectively shorten the timeframe for committing EDF funds⁶⁰³.

While the ACP had to accept that the Community's aid proposal was final, they remained firm on matters of principle. Regarding the inclusion of a clause about EEC-ACP consultations on

⁵⁹⁹ *Optimisme dans les Négociations CEE-ACP*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 1 February 1975, ANS; Millot, *Remerciements et Invitations du Gouvernement Mauritanien*, Telegram from Nouakchott to Paris, 8 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶⁰⁰ *Steering Brief for Protocol 22 Negotiations: EEC/ACP Joint Ministerial Meeting 30-31 January 1975*, Attached to Minute from H. J. Arbuthnott, EID, to R. J. O'Neill, Cabinet Office, 24 January 1975, TNA FCO 30/2630.

⁶⁰¹ E. Burin des Roziers, *Conférence Ministérielle CEE/ACP des 13, 14 et 15 Janvier*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 18 January 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶⁰² Telegram n. 628 from M. Palliser, UK Permanent Representation to the European Commission, to FCO et al., 3 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2631.

⁶⁰³ E. Burin des Roziers, *Conclusion des Négociations CEE/ACP*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 3 February 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

international negotiations – such as those at UNCTAD – the ACP stood their ground. They only agreed to a minimal reference, limited to a mutual commitment to discuss shared EEC-ACP interests in international forums during the sessions of the Convention's institutions⁶⁰⁴. Furthermore, the Anglophones' firm stance on the politically sensitive connotations of Yaoundé prevailed: the new agreement would not be referred to as an "Association Convention" but would instead adopt a neutral title, becoming the "ACP-EEC Convention of Lomé", named after its place of signing. Thus, on 28 February 1975, with the signing of the Convention in the Togolese capital, the Association system established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and later renewed by the Yaoundé Convention of 1963 officially came to an end. In principle, this marked the beginning of a new chapter in Euro-African relations.

In Europe, reactions varied. For Britain, the Lomé Convention represented an overall success, as it fulfilled the primary objectives that had guided its approach to the negotiations⁶⁰⁵. British officials in the FCO commented with satisfaction the outcome of the negotiations, underlining how the “complete omission of the word ‘Association’ from the title and text of the agreement” marked the change between the new agreement and the old Eurafrican system⁶⁰⁶. In Paris, on the other hand, tones were different. Publicly, the outcome of the negotiations was celebrated by describing the new Convention as “an important contribution to the development of mutually beneficial relations between developed and developing countries and, consequently, to a more satisfactory world economic order”⁶⁰⁷. Unsurprisingly, the tone of French confidential dispatches was more nuanced. They underscored that the Community had achieved a satisfactory agreement, balancing the diverse perspectives of the Nine while incorporating significant innovations such as STABEX. Nevertheless, they did not shy away from admitting that Paris had had to sacrifice important aspects of Euro-African relations. First and foremost, French diplomatic strategy had failed to preserve the foundational principles of Euro-African

⁶⁰⁴ *The Lomé Convention and the UN*, Letter from W. J. Adams to H. J. Arbuthnott (FCO), Brussels, 18 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2633.

⁶⁰⁵ «1) to get a good deal for the eligible Commonwealth countries; 2) to encourage as many of them as possible to participate; 3) to reduce or eliminate the objectionable features of the earlier Yaoundé Conventions; 4) to get access to Europe for 1,4 million ton of Commonwealth Sugar; 5) to undertake no burdensome new obligations, and in particular to limit the cost to of the EDF.», *The End of Protocol 22*, R.Q. Braithwaite (EID) to Mr. Butler (FCO), London, 03 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2631. See also: G. Migani, *La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)*, in «Revue Française de civilisation Britannique», Vol. 18, issue 2, 2013, pp. 90-91.

⁶⁰⁶ *The End of Protocol 22*, R.Q. Braithwaite (EID) to Mr. Butler (FCO), London, 03 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2631.

⁶⁰⁷ Note d'Information, Ministère de la Coopération – Presse et Information, Paris, 6 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

solidarity and reciprocity⁶⁰⁸. Associates and Associables had initially followed separate paths, but over time their positions had converged – not, as hoped by Paris, thanks to the Associables adopting the more moderate stance of the Associates, but rather the opposite⁶⁰⁹. This shift, marked by the rejection of trade reciprocity and even the abandonment of the term "Association" itself, was significant because it paved the way to the potential dissolution of a privileged Euro-African relationship into a Communitarian global development policy⁶¹⁰.

Despite these differences between Paris and London, the Community generally perceived the new Convention as a delicate compromise among member states, as well as a series of concessions to ACP countries. European diplomats had long harboured doubts about the strength and cohesion of the ACP's united front, viewing their efforts to jointly negotiate with the EEC with a persistent paternalistic attitude. This condescendence was particularly evident in the way European officials regarded their own concessions, believing that the measures included in the Convention went above and beyond what was necessary to accommodate African demands. From their perspective, the ACP should have recognised the generosity of the Community's offer and responded with gratitude⁶¹¹. The assumption that African negotiators should be thankful for what had been granted by the Community underscored the lingering colonial mindset that shaped European perceptions of the negotiation process.

Far from being grateful, the ACP could now draw their own conclusions about the long negotiations with the EEC. When they convened in Accra in mid-February to formally approve the text before its signing, the new Convention elicited a lukewarm response from the ACP. Although representatives from both Anglophone and Francophone African countries recognised the benefits of the new Convention – such as non-reciprocal trade preferences and more flexible rules of origin – they viewed these gains as achievements of ACP unity and strengthened bargaining power, rather than as evidence of the EEC's commitment to shaping a new international order. ACP solidarity was also celebrated as a powerful tool for overcoming the colonial legacy of division between Anglophone and Francophone nations. In his speech,

⁶⁰⁸ E. Burin des Rozières, *Conférence Ministérielle CEE/ACP des 13, 14 et 15 Janvier*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 18 January 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶⁰⁹ J. Deciry, *Convention CEE/ACP, Réunion des ACP à Accra (11-12 Février 1975)*, Dispatch from French Embassy in Ghana to Jean Sauvagnargues, French Foreign Minister, Accra, 13 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶¹⁰ E. Burin des Rozières, *Conférence Ministérielle CEE/ACP des 13, 14 et 15 Janvier*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 18 January 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶¹¹ J. Deciry, *Convention CEE/ACP*, Telegram from Accra to Paris, 11 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78; R. S. Gorham, *The ACP/EEC Convention: The Accra Session*, Letter from British High Commission in Accra to G. E. Fitzherbert, FCO, 13 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2633.

Acheampong stressed that this unity should not end with the conclusion of Euro-African negotiations, but should instead evolve into an institutionalised group within the G-77, so as to provide the developing world “with yet another ammunition for the general struggle” towards international justice⁶¹².

The meeting also revealed the lingering frustration the ACP had felt in dealing with the Community, which they still perceived as “a modern version of the old European colonial regimes”⁶¹³. In the words of Acheampong, the EEC had only satisfied ACP demands when they aligned with its own interests:

There was no difficulty in securing agreement on free access for African, Caribbean and Pacific manufacturers and semi-manufacturers so long as these concepts were restrictively defined in terms of rules of origin so as to prevent free and fair competition with Europe. There was not much difficulty in securing agreement on a scheme for stabilising export earnings, so long as the mechanism of the scheme did not call into question the so-called free market forces, even though the internal agricultural trade pattern of the EEC is based on a deliberate manipulation of these very forces⁶¹⁴.

Acheampong’s bitter words underscored the distance between the Community’s proclamations about a new kind of North-South relations and the stark reality of its concessions, reminding other African representatives that “naturally, it is easier to appear charitable than to do justice”⁶¹⁵. For the ACP, this was all the more evident in the Convention’s trade and aid provisions. In this sense, the definitive refusal to include the ACP in the management of the EDF was yet another piece of evidence of the rhetorical nature of the Community’s commitment to redress systemic international injustice. Nevertheless, African countries could celebrate the fact that, while the Community’s approach had been marked by internal divisions exacerbated by the oil crisis, ACP representatives – emboldened by the example of oil-producing nations and the broader momentum of the NIEO – managed to leverage the Community’s weakened position to reshape both the negotiation agenda and the overall objectives of Euro-African relations. As a result, the new Convention placed unprecedented emphasis on issues central to the ACP,

⁶¹² *Extraits du discours prononcé par le Colonel Acheampong, Chef de l’Etat Ghanéen, à la séance d’ouverture de la septième session du Conseil des Ministres des A.C.P. à Accra*, Accra, 13 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78; *Draft Agreement on ACP/EEC Conference*, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, 13 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2633.

⁶¹³ R. S. Gorham, *The ACP/EEC Convention: The Accra Session*, Letter from British High Commission in Accra to G. E. Fitzherbert, FCO, 13 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2633.

⁶¹⁴ *Extraits du discours prononcé par le Colonel Acheampong, Chef de l’Etat Ghanéen, à la séance d’ouverture de la septième session du Conseil des Ministres des A.C.P. à Accra*, Accra, 13 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

including industrial cooperation. These developments underscored the extent to which African agency and bargaining power were instrumental in shaping the final agreement, aided by a shifting international climate that amplified their claims. Especially after 1973, African countries had managed to harness the energy of the Global South-led discourse, effectively bringing the Community to adopt a new language and to formally endorse the ultimate goals of NIEO.

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter reconstructed the negotiations that culminated in the first Lomé Convention investigating how the broader transformation of the international economic system triggered by the 1973 oil shock impacted on Euro-African relations. From the outset, the EEC struggled to reconcile divergent internal priorities. France sought to preserve the Association's special character and the political influence it secured over its former colonies, while Britain and several other member states preferred to normalise Euro-African relations within a global framework of development cooperation. These tensions constrained the Commission's mandate and delayed progress, as the Nine struggled to reach a compromise over crucial issues such as reciprocity, export-earnings stabilisation, and the size of the next European Development Fund. Despite the frustration that the EEC ambiguity engendered among the ACP, these very uncertainties created diplomatic openings that African negotiators were quick to exploit. The oil shock amplified this dynamic. The demonstration of producer power by OPEC and the momentum generated by the calls for a NIEO lent increased weight to ACP demands, while exposing European vulnerability. Within this climate, Euro-African negotiations became a laboratory for testing the principles of economic sovereignty, redistribution, and interdependence. Figures such as Senghor and Nyerere explicitly invoked these ideas, framing the dialogue with Europe as part of a broader effort to redress the structural inequalities of the world economy. The EEC, anxious to protect Euro-African relations from the disruptive effects of the oil shock, recognised the necessity of adapting its rhetoric and instruments to the new post-1973 reality. By the summer of 1974, the Community had already begun to appropriate the language of international equity and interdependence, presenting Lomé as a model for fairer North-South relations. Despite the fact that African leaders privately remained sceptical about Europe's willingness to truly transform the global economic order, the shift in the Community's rhetoric was accompanied by tangible improvements. Among these, STABEX

stood out as the most meaningful innovation, as it set a precedent in the long-standing struggle against the erosion of developing countries' terms of trade. Although limited in scope and resources, its inclusion in the Convention was celebrated by African representatives convened in Accra in 1975, since it represented "an embryo which, properly nurtured, could assume a larger and fuller life in due season and serve as a useful precedent from which other commodity schemes [...] could draw inspiration and sustenance"⁶¹⁶. The next chapter examines whether these hopes for STABEX were ultimately well-founded.

⁶¹⁶ Ibidem.

Chapter 4

The ‘Spirit of Lomé’ and the ghost of Eurafrica: STABEX and a new model for North-South relations

The prices! The prices! Always the global prices!

(M. Ferrandi : « À Kingston, l'Europe et les ACP ont jeté les bases d'un Nouvel Ordre International », Le Soleil, Dakar, 9 August 1974, ANS.)

We cannot afford to have breaks, fluctuations, sudden changes in our external economic relations. [...] In the nineteenth century we tried to deal with such problems through the colonial adventures. That time is over, but the needs, the requirements, which were largely the basis of the colonial adventures, are still there.

(C. Cheysson, *Europe and the Third World After Lomé*, in: «The World Today», Vol. 31, issue 6, June 1975, pp. 232-239, p. 236.)

It is not yet clear whether the industrialised countries will recognise the need for a fundamental reorganisation of international economic relations.

(Adebajo Adedeji, Déclaration du Secrétaire Exécutif de la CEA, Kinshasa, 24 February – 3 March 1977, AMAE 446INVA/1653, p.17)

While the negotiations were long and at times difficult, the signing of the Lomé Convention between the EEC and 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries was heralded as a landmark achievement. In the months that followed, Carol Cosgrove, a British economist specialising in multilateral trade, described it as the Community's "most far-reaching attempt to establish a multilateral framework for EEC-LDC relations"⁶¹⁷. The German-American international relations scholar Isebill Gruhn went further, portraying Lomé as a significant step towards global interdependence and hailing it as a "concrete manifestation of some very important and

⁶¹⁷ C. Cosgrove-Twitchett, *The European Community and Development Cooperation*, in: «International Relations», Vol. 6, issue 1, 1978, pp. 257-271, p. 259. See also: Cosgrove-Twitchett, C. (1978). *Europe and Africa: from Association to Partnership*, Farnborough, Teakfield, 1978.

multi-faceted changes in the relationship among Third World countries and in their collective capacity to gain objectives in the international arena”⁶¹⁸.

While such assessments focused primarily on the contrasts – and perceived advancements – between Yaoundé and Lomé, they consistently highlighted one particularly innovative feature: STABEX. Short for *Système de Stabilisation des Recettes d’Exportation*, the scheme was designed to stabilise the export earnings of ACP countries for 11 key commodities, including cotton, coffee, tea, and iron ore. Its purpose was to mitigate the volatility of African countries’ export revenues by creating a special fund that would be activated whenever earnings from the export of these commodities fell below an agreed threshold. This threshold was calculated for each product and for each ACP state, based on the average export earnings over the previous four years. As Claude Cheysson, the Community’s Development Commissioner, explained in 1975: “Should Ghana’s earnings for her cocoa exports to the Nine in 1978 be lower than during the average previous four years, we undertake to pay the difference”⁶¹⁹. Thus, in principle, STABEX allowed ACP countries that depended on a limited range of exports to be compensated for revenue losses caused by unpredictable fluctuations in commodity prices. In presenting Lomé, Cheysson underscored this point, portraying STABEX as a safeguard against global market instability and natural events. He insisted that the scheme was particularly vital for nations heavily reliant on a single export – often the case for many former colonies – as it provided a guaranteed minimum income, allowing them the economic stability needed to plan long-term development strategies⁶²⁰. Further advancing the idea of the EEC as a civilian power, Cheysson also suggested that the Lomé Convention could serve as a model for broader North-South relations, suggesting that its structure could be replicated among different regional groupings beyond Europe and Africa⁶²¹.

In this sense, it is easy to see how STABEX was instrumental in framing the Lomé Convention as the Community’s response to developing countries’ calls for a fairer international economy⁶²², formalised in May 1974 with the United Nations resolution for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). While commodity agreements were not unheard of, STABEX was the

⁶¹⁸ I. Gruhn, *The Lomé Convention: Inching Towards Interdependence*, in «International Organization», n. 30, issue 2, 1976, pp. 241-262, pp. 241-242.

⁶¹⁹ C. Cheysson, *Europe and the Third World After Lomé*, in: «The World Today», Vol. 31, issue 6, June 1975, pp. 232-239, p. 234.

⁶²⁰ Ibidem, p. 234.

⁶²¹ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

⁶²² K. Whiteman, *A History of the ACP-EU Relationship: The Origins and Spirit of Lomé*, in: A. Montoute and K. Virk (eds.), *The ACP Group and the EU Development Partnership: Beyond the North-South Debate*, op. cit., p. 39.

first scheme to guarantee earnings across multiple commodities, backed by a direct commitment from industrialised states to developing countries. For these reasons, in her analysis of Lomé, Gruhn deemed STABEX “justifiably [...] ground-breaking”, to the point that “it is hard to imagine future industrial LDC economic negotiations in which a STABEX-type scheme stabilizing raw material prices will not be included”⁶²³.

Contrary to Gruhn’s high expectations, STABEX-like schemes did not become a staple in North-South trade and aid agreements in the following years. Yet, the possibility of creating a global STABEX-like system to address the longstanding problem of export revenue volatility was widely discussed within and beyond the Community after the signing of the Lomé Convention⁶²⁴. Given the broader international economic context of the early 1970s – when the Global South, emboldened by the 1973 oil shock, sought to challenge structural inequalities in the global economy – it is striking how little attention STABEX has received in historical accounts of the decade. Although frequently mentioned in studies of the Lomé Convention⁶²⁵, detailed analyses of its origins, mechanisms, and development are rare. This neglect by academic literature is all the more surprising considering the significance attributed to STABEX at the time of its introduction.

The chapter seeks to address this gap in the literature by uncovering the origins and evolution of STABEX. In doing so, it examines whether the scheme was conceived in response to African countries’ denunciation of terms of trade erosion, or whether it served a broader ideological purpose for both African and European states. It also explores related questions, such as: what political and economic factors ultimately led Community member states to endorse such a mechanism? And did STABEX contribute to the construction of a new intra-Communitarian equilibrium following British enlargement? The chapter concludes by tracing the evolution of STABEX throughout the remainder of the 1970s, analysing its functioning and effectiveness, and assessing whether it fulfilled its potential as a pioneering model for North–South relations.

⁶²³ I. Gruhn, *The Lomé Convention: Inching Towards Interdependence*, in op. cit., p. 259.

⁶²⁴ *Le problème des matières premières : pour une nouvelle politique Europe-Tiers Monde*, European Commission, Brussels, sine data, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991 ; *Communication from the Commission to the Council on raw materials in relations with the developing countries which export raw materials*, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 21 May 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01242/001.

⁶²⁵ See for example: J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: op. cit.; G. Migani, *La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)*, in: op. cit.

4.1 Ferrandi, Chapperon, Deniau: the problem of sugar and a colonial solution

As seen in the previous chapter, African countries' agency had a profound impact in shaping Euro-African negotiations between 1973 and 1975. Bolstered by the oil revolution and the aspiration to achieve similar leverage with their own commodities, African countries managed to negotiate as a single front and compelled the Community not only to acknowledge their demands but also to adopt their rhetoric. Nevertheless, the Community did not accommodate ACP demands that conflicted with its own interests. This is further underscored by the fact that STABEX emerged as the Convention's defining innovation, while other ACP demands rooted in the NIEO were not pursued with the same commitment by the Community and therefore were not equally advertised as revolutionary. The Community dismissed ACP requests for participation in the management of the European Development Fund (EDF), while their demands for meaningful access to technological and industrial expertise were met with broad, largely non-committal promises to encourage industrial cooperation between the EEC and the ACP. The Convention's provisions on industrial cooperation revealed a lack of genuine intent to advance a "new international division of labour" – a concept frequently emphasised in ACP documents and declarations but conspicuously absent from those of the EEC. In the end, as underscored by Ghanaian Head of State during the Accra ACP ministerial conference of February 1975⁶²⁶, African claims effectively found place in the Lomé Convention only insofar as African goals aligned with European interests. If this premise is accepted, it is natural to wonder: why did the Community want to create a STABEX-like system? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to suspend the chronological narration of the events of the 1970s and go back to the previous decades.

The history of STABEX is inextricably linked to that of French officials within the European Commission's DG Development (also known as DG VIII). The idea behind STABEX, indeed, was not crafted in the early 1970s as a response to African countries' preoccupations with their terms of trade. Instead, it had been circulating for some time within the French-influenced political environment of DG VIII. One of its earliest proponents was Jacques Ferrandi. As many others within DG VIII, Ferrandi began his career at the *École Nationale de la France d'Outre-Mer* (known until 1934 as the *École Coloniale*), served as a colonial administrator in French West Africa after the Second World War and then migrated to the European Commission, where he would lead the EDF until 1975. Ferrandi claimed that he had become a supporter of commodity

⁶²⁶ *Extraits du discours prononcé par le Colonel Acheampong, Chef de l'Etat Ghanéen, à la séance d'ouverture de la septième session du Conseil des Ministres des A.C.P. à Accra, Accra, 13 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.*

price stabilisation since his experience in the Senegalese territories of French West Africa, where the colonial administration had established its own version of colonial marketing boards that were common in British West African territories⁶²⁷. In French colonial system, these boards served two purposes: guaranteeing a stable revenue for producers and states within the franc zone, while also covering France's import needs for the relevant products in francs⁶²⁸.

After joining the European Commission, Ferrandi first put forward the idea in the early 1960s, during the Yaoundé negotiations⁶²⁹. As it was common within DG VIII⁶³⁰, the adaptation of well-known colonial practices to the Communitarian context was not problematic⁶³¹. While the Yaoundé Convention did not eventually include provisions aimed at stabilising African countries' export earnings, it is true that early reports about the possible features of Yaoundé indicated that Community member states could pursue "the joint implementation [...] of an action to regulate the income of producers in the associated States"⁶³². Although the proposal was not pursued in the early 1960s, the idea maintained a certain popularity within the French sections of DG VIII⁶³³. After all, at the time, France was also promoting the idea of a regulated global commodity market on the international stage, as demonstrated by its proposal at the first UNCTAD session in 1964, which called for an international fixed-price system for commodities⁶³⁴.

At the end of the decade, when The Hague Summit of 1969 marked the start of the EEC's first enlargement process, Community officials recognised that while Ireland and Denmark could be integrated relatively smoothly, British membership would pose significant challenges, especially because of the Commonwealth⁶³⁵. The future of EEC-Commonwealth relations was a

⁶²⁷ J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, pp. 65-68. For a more detailed account of how colonial marketing boards included price stabilisation funds, see: W. Jones, *Food-Crop Marketing Boards in Tropical Africa*, in: «The Journal of Modern African Studies», Vol. 25, issue 3, 1987, pp. 375-402.

⁶²⁸ *Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653.

⁶²⁹ J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, pp. 67-80.

⁶³⁰ For a more detailed discussion on the matter, see: Dimier, V. (2014), *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

⁶³¹ Ferrandi openly admitted that the idea originated from French colonial *sociétés de prévoyance*, which, in their turn, had been based on colonial marketing boards established by the British in Gambia and Sierra Leone. See: J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, p. 67-68.

⁶³² *Projet De Rapport Au Conseil Prepare Par Le Groupe De Travail Des P.T.O.M.*, Bruxelles, 4 November 1961, HAEU CM6/EAMA-00002/012, p. 6.

⁶³³ J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, pp. 69-70.

⁶³⁴ *Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653.

⁶³⁵ For a detailed description of how the Commonwealth issue was treated in British accession negotiations, see Chapter 2.

sensitive topic during enlargement negotiations, riddled with problematic issues. Among these, one of particular significance was that posed by the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA). The CSA was a legacy of bulk commodity purchasing agreements that Britain had established during the Second World War. While other similar arrangements had not been renewed, in 1951 the British government committed to buying around 1.8 million tonnes of sugar every year from different Commonwealth sugar producers, including those in the Caribbean, East Africa, and the Pacific⁶³⁶. The CSA allowed Britain to secure cheap sugar in pound sterling while guaranteeing producers a stable outlet for their exports⁶³⁷. However, when Britain began negotiations to join the EEC, it quickly became clear that the CSA conflicted with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its provisions for protecting European sugar production.

Negotiations with Britain were conducted by the French Commissioner Jean-François Deniau and spanned 1970 and 1971, culminating in the signing of the Brussels Treaty in January 1972. The treaty set out the terms of Britain's entry into the Community, but did not settle many of the issues relating to the Commonwealth. These were described by Protocol 22, an appendix to the Treaty that outlined the potential arrangements for former British colonies to establish relations with the EEC. Although Protocol 22 did not mention the CSA and its incompatibility with the CAP, sugar was not ignored. Part III of Protocol 22 directly addressed the challenge of integrating the CSA into the rigid framework of the Community's regulated agricultural sector. It stipulated that the Community would safeguard the interests of Commonwealth countries that significantly depended on the export of primary products, with particular attention to those who relied on sugar export revenues⁶³⁸. This was the first instance in which a public Community document mentioned the possibility of protecting the interests of third countries whose economies heavily relied on the export of a commodity. At the time, however, the suggestion was not incorporated in the plans for the new Association Agreement, which was still envisioned within the Community as little more than a renewal of Yaoundé. By the spring

⁶³⁶ M. Moynagh, *The negotiation of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, 1949–1951*, in: «The Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics», Vol. 15, issue 2, 1977, pp. 170–190.

⁶³⁷ V. A. Mahler, *Britain, the European Community, and the Developing Commonwealth: Dependence, Interdependence, and the Political Economy of Sugar*, in: «International Organization», Vol. 35, issue 3, 1981, pp. 467–92.

⁶³⁸ *Documents concerning the accession to the European Communities of the Kingdom of Denmark, Ireland, the Kingdom of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, Official Journal of the European Communities, 27 March 1972, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:1972:073:FULL&from=EN> (last accessed 01 March 2025), p. 178.

of 1973, however, this outlook had shifted, and the debate about the future of Association spanned Europe and Africa both⁶³⁹.

At this stage, Ferrandi exploited the opening offered by Protocol 22 and put forward a bolder proposal for export revenue stabilisation, with the support of other DG VIII officials such as Jean Chapperon. Chapperon was another former French colonial administrator who had moved to DG VIII after decolonisation, reportedly motivated by a desire “to continue to look after [his] negroes”⁶⁴⁰. Chapperon and Ferrandi were working at the time under the leadership of Deniau himself, who had been serving as both chief negotiator for the enlargement and Development Commissioner since 1970. In the spring of 1973, Deniau was preparing to return to French national politics. Before stepping down from his role at the Commission, however, he issued a memorandum outlining the framework for the new Association Convention, which soon became known as the Deniau Memorandum.

According to Ferrandi, the document was not directly authored by Deniau, but was instead drafted by a team of DG VIII officials, including Ferrandi and Chapperon themselves. At their insistence, Deniau eventually endorsed a far more ambitious proposal on export stabilisation – one that not only incorporated sugar but also created the foundation for a broader and more comprehensive policy⁶⁴¹. As a result, the Deniau Memorandum devoted an entire section to the possibility of creating an export receipts stabilisation mechanism, linking the problem posed by CSA to that of low and unstable export receipts – an issue which had been long lamented by the Yaoundé Associates⁶⁴². Thus, the Memorandum stated that “on the basis of a standard product, namely sugar [...] the Community wishes to define a policy for a number of products of vital importance to the [Associate and Associable] developing countries”⁶⁴³.

Thus, the introduction of an export stabilisation mechanism in Euro-African relations predated both the oil crisis and the proclamation of the NIEO. At least initially, the embryo of STABEX outlined in the Deniau Memorandum was primarily the result of bureaucratic initiative taken

⁶³⁹ For a more detailed account of how the future of Association evolved between 1972 and early 1973, see Chapter 2.

⁶⁴⁰ Chapperon explicitly confirmed that he joined the European Commission because he was not interested in pursuing a career in French national administration: “Ce que je souhaitais, c’était de continuer à m’occuper de mes nègres [...] et comme l’Europe me proposait de le faire avec des moyens, et dans un autre cadre, j’ai dit que c’était une chance qu’il ne faut pas que je manque, et voilà”. See: J. Chapperon, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT706, p. 6.

⁶⁴¹ J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, pp. 67-68.

⁶⁴² *Memorandum on the Future Relations between the Community, the Present Associates and the Countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian and Pacific Oceans Referenced to in the Protocol 22 of the Act of Accession*, Brussels, 21 March 1973, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1973)0500, pp. 10-12.

⁶⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 26.

by DG VIII officials on the basis of instruments inherited from colonial market organisation practices. While the Associates had long expressed concerns about the deterioration of their terms of trade with the Community, the inclusion of such a mechanism in the new convention was only to a certain extent a response to these grievances. As seen above, a minimal version of price stabilisation initially found its way in the Treaty for British accession in 1972 as a solution to the sugar problem⁶⁴⁴. Although in early 1973 it began to be viewed as the possible basis for a more comprehensive stabilisation policy, doubts about feasibility of such a scheme persisted among member states, as well as within the Commission. According to Ferrandi, Deniau's successor as Development Commissioner, Claude Cheysson, was initially sceptical about the idea of an export stabilisation scheme. When presented with the Deniau Memorandum, Cheysson reportedly praised Chapperon and the others for their work but allegedly added, "Except for that crazy story about price stabilisation, of course. You don't expect me to defend this bullshit in front of the Member States, do you?"⁶⁴⁵. During the negotiations for the Lomé Convention, however, things would change: STABEX acquired a new significance, and Cheysson would quickly come to see how much African countries valued the prospect of stabilising their export receipts.

4.2 Exchanging reciprocity for stabilisation: an intra-Communitarian solution

From the outset of the enlargement process, France had sought to protect the Association system from excessive expansion and modification – by limiting the inclusion of too many Commonwealth developing countries and by preventing Britain and other Community members from altering the foundations of Euro-African relations. Precisely for this reason, Protocol 22 posited that Commonwealth Associable countries could join the Yaoundé renewal negotiations alongside the Associates only if they intended to join the Association. Alternatively, they could negotiate separate, less comprehensive agreements with the EEC⁶⁴⁶. However, the opening conference of the Lomé negotiations in late July 1973 fell short of vindicating France's diplomatic efforts. During the conference, the three ACP spokespersons rejected the principle of trade reciprocity and disregarded the Association options outlined in

⁶⁴⁴ *Conférence de Kingston – Entretien avec Babacar Ba*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 13 July 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶⁴⁵ J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, p. 73.

⁶⁴⁶ *Documents concerning the accession to the European Communities of the Kingdom of Denmark, Ireland, the Kingdom of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, Official Journal of the European Communities, 27 March 1972, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:1972:073:FULL&from=EN> (last accessed 01 March 2025), p. 177.

Protocol 22⁶⁴⁷. In so doing, they signalled that they were not interested in joining the Association as it was, and that they sought to negotiate an entirely new kind of agreement with the EEC.

Unsurprisingly, reactions in Paris were not favourable. At the Quai d'Orsay, French diplomats tried to hold the line they had carefully drawn while negotiating Protocol 22. They defended reciprocity by downplaying the unity displayed by the African delegation and insisting that Associates would have to choose one of the Protocol 22 options⁶⁴⁸. The attitude of French representatives in Brussels, however, was different. Jean-François Deniau, architect of British entry into the Community and former Development Commissioner, attended the conference as newly-appointed Secretary of State for Cooperation. Observing the evolution of the ACP position, Deniau moved swiftly to adjust French diplomatic strategy.

The former Development Commissioner, intent on finding a compromise that could preserve the political significance of the Association, pondered alternatives to reciprocity that could be acceptable both to African countries and other Community members. His successor in the Commission, Cheysson, tried to facilitate this process. At his suggestion, Deniau met with Richard Wood, British Minister for Overseas Development, trying to soften the British stance. During the meeting, Deniau acknowledged that “he was not wedded to trade reciprocity” but stressed its political value, insisting that without a suitable substitute symbolising the “distinctive and special relationship” between Africa and the Community, “the political advantages of the present relationship with Africa” could be lost. The best alternative to reciprocity, in his view, would be “some form of commodity arrangement” such as the one outlined in the memorandum he had presented before relinquishing his role as Commissioner⁶⁴⁹.

Trying to persuade his British counterpart, Deniau explained that the proposed scheme sought to stabilise export receipts for specific products critical to ACP countries whose economies were particularly vulnerable. Specifying that the scheme's structure was still under debate, he clarified that there would need to be a ceiling on the Community's financial liability, with limits

⁶⁴⁷ *Statement by Mr. Wenike Briggs, Commissioner of Trade of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and Spokesman for the African Group*, Brussels, 26 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697; *Statement by Mr. Shridath S. Ramphal, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana on behalf of the Delegation of Caribbean Countries*, Brussels, 26 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697. For a more detailed account, see Chapter 3, pp. 9-12.

⁶⁴⁸ *Protocol 22*, Letter from H. D. Miers, British Embassy in Paris, to P. S. Fairweather, European Integration Department of FCO Paris, 02 August 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697.

⁶⁴⁹ *Note of a Meeting between Mr. Wood and M. Deniau on Protocol 22*, Minute from P. S. McLean, Overseas Development Administration, to FCO, 27 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697.

varying based on a country's dependency on particular commodities. The main aim was to address these countries' dependence on commodities with unstable global prices, providing a minimum level of economic stability. Deniau argued that this arrangement would endow the new convention with a "special character," allowing the Community to derive significant political benefits by establishing a secure and advantageous relationship with developing countries⁶⁵⁰.

In other words, faced with the fact that trade reciprocity had become unacceptable to both its partners and the majority of the Associables at such an early stage of the negotiations, Deniau reacted in a different manner than his colleagues at the Quai d'Orsay. Right at the beginning of negotiations, he suggested that commodity agreements – something that African states had shown interest in – could be a suitable substitute for reciprocity. Beyond addressing developing countries' structural challenges in the global economy, the stabilisation scheme was envisioned as a replacement for the symbolic function played up to that point by reciprocity. During the meeting with the British, Deniau even suggested that the scheme could act as the new "cement" of the future Convention⁶⁵¹, echoing Senghor's description of reciprocity as the "psychological cement" of the Association⁶⁵².

Deniau was not the only one to recognise the political potential of the stabilisation scheme. If, as Ferrandi recalled, Cheysson had initially dismissed the proposal in the Deniau Memorandum, it appears that he soon realised how much his African interlocutors valued the prospect of stable export earnings. Not only did Cheysson assist Deniau in arranging his meeting with the British Minister for Development⁶⁵³, but he also quickly aligned himself with Deniau's position. Indeed, during a visit to Dakar in September 1973, Cheysson reinforced Deniau's argument, dismissing the issue of reverse preferences as a "false problem" and stressing the paramount importance of organising markets for key raw materials⁶⁵⁴.

The strategy of deflection employed by Deniau and Cheysson exemplified the Communitarian approach to Africa developed by French officials within the Community – an approach that since 1957 focused on maintaining influence over African states through the European

⁶⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁶⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁶⁵² Letter from President Senghor to President Pompidou, Dakar, 11 September 1972, AMAE 1089INVA/76.

⁶⁵³ *Note of a Meeting between Mr. Wood and M. Deniau on Protocol 22*, Minute from P. S. McLean, Overseas Development Administration, to FCO, 27 July 1973, TNA FCO 30/1697.

⁶⁵⁴ D. La Chevalerie, *Sejour de M. Claude Cheysson à Dakar*, Telegram French Embassy in Senegal to MAEF, Dakar, 24 September 1973, MAE 1089INVA/77.

Community's framework other than through direct bilateral relations⁶⁵⁵. In this sense, the history of STABEX highlights the extent to which the rationale of Eurafrica remained deeply embedded within the Community, shaping the EEC's approach to Africa even in the 1970s. Rooted in French influence within the EEC, the Eurafrican vision evolved in the 1970s, taking on different forms that reflected the changing dynamics of the Community. Despite the shifts brought by British accession, this framework continued to underpin the EEC's engagement with Africa, illustrating how French officials operating within the structures of the Community managed to sustain and reshape the concept of a special Euro-African relationship. In the late summer of 1973, this was evident in the divergent strategies taken by Deniau and Cheysson on the one hand and the French diplomats on the other.

A year later, Ferrandi rejoiced when the inclusion of the stabilisation mechanism in the new Euro-African Convention was officially sanctioned by Kingston EEC/ACP ministerial meeting. In an interview for the Senegalese newspaper *Le Soleil*, he recalled how, during his time as a colonial administrator, the main problem had been "The prices! The prices! Always the global prices!"⁶⁵⁶. These experiences had reinforced his conviction that international market forces should be tamed. He acknowledged that the envisaged stabilisation scheme would be imperfect, but he underlined that it would be an important first step to draw the international community's attention to the longstanding problem of terms of trade erosion. For Ferrandi, a former French colonial administrator who supported this idea of prices stabilisation since the creation of the Association, the events of 1973 and 1974 had finally allowed the Community to play an important role in bringing about a more balanced international order: "As far as I know, the Kingston Act was the first response to this distressing and hitherto unsolved problem. A crack has now been opened in the wall of unbridled liberalism. It cannot be closed again"⁶⁵⁷. In this sense, STABEX represented yet another avenue through which France could shape Communitarian action and safeguard the Europeanised political connection with Africa, through a mechanism that drew directly from its colonial experience. Indeed, when the negotiations ended, French top diplomats elected STABEX as the new symbol of a preferential relationship between the Community and Africa⁶⁵⁸.

⁶⁵⁵ For further elaboration on this, see: Chapter 1.4 and 1.5. See also: V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit.

⁶⁵⁶ M. Ferrandi : « A Kingston, l'Europe et les ACP ont jeté les bases d'un Nouvel Ordre International », *Le Soleil*, Dakar, 9 August 1974, ANS.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁶⁵⁸ E. Burin des Roziers, *Le Tiers Monde, l'Europe et la France : II, La Communauté et le Tiers Monde*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 25 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

This allows for a more nuanced appreciation of how Euro-African relations were reshaped after British enlargement. In London, the finalisation of the Lomé Convention was celebrated as “another major step towards turning the Community away from its introspective and francocentric past”⁶⁵⁹. Given the evident discontinuity between Yaoundé and Lomé, it is easy to understand why literature has generally emphasised Britain’s role in bringing about a new era in Euro-African relations⁶⁶⁰. Nonetheless, a deeper analysis of the negotiations and their smoke-filled rooms reveals that Britain, which had been so diplomatically active in 1972 in affirming its own conception of Euro-African relations, lost its innovative charge after the oil shock. Britain’s ability to lead the ACP negotiations weakened in 1974, as the new Labour government’s push to renegotiate the terms of EEC membership undermined its credibility with both the Community and the Commonwealth Associates⁶⁶¹. While Britain had successfully brought Anglophone Africa to the negotiating table in 1973, its renewed push for a global Communitarian development policy in 1974 stalled negotiations with the ACP, creating an opening for French Communitarian officials to adjust their strategy to the shifting balance within the Community.

This does not mean, however, that the opportunities offered by the Lomé negotiations were immediately welcomed by Paris. As Gfeller argues, the years 1973 and 1974 were pivotal in the Europeanisation of French policy, marking a significant shift in France’s pursuit of a global role. While earlier efforts focused on reversing the decline of French national grandeur, the crises of the early 1970s instilled a new awareness in French political élite, leading top French diplomats to realise that they needed Europe in order to exert influence at the global level. While Gfeller’s work focuses on the use of European Political Cooperation (EPC) and the Euro-Arab Dialogue⁶⁶², it is possible to broaden this perspective and observe the effects of this shift in the realm of Euro-African relations as well. Here, the interplay between France as a sovereign state and France’s projection in the Community – or, as Van Middelaar would call it, France as a member state⁶⁶³ – is crucial. The difficult beginning of EEC/ACP negotiations, which soon

⁶⁵⁹ *The End of Protocol 22*, R.Q. Braithwaite (EID) to Mr. Butler (FCO), London, 03 February 1975, TNA FCO 30/2631. See also: G. Migani, *La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)*, in: op. cit., p. 101.

⁶⁶⁰ See, among other works: J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: op. cit.; G. Migani, *La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)*, in op. cit.

⁶⁶¹ R. Q. Braithwaite, *Protocol 22: The Link with Renegotiation*, Letter to Callaghan’s Private Secretary, 10 December 1974, TNA FCO30/2138.

⁶⁶² A. Gfeller, *A European voice in the Arab world: France, the superpowers and the Middle East, 1970–74*, in: «Cold War History», Vol. 11, No. 4, 2011, pp. 659-676,

⁶⁶³ L. Van Middelaar, *Le Passage à l’Europe : Histoire d’un Commencement*, Paris, Gallimard, 2012, pp. 37-55.

demonstrated the extent to which the Association structure would be called into question, initially caused the Quai d'Orsay to adopt a defensive reaction and to strenuously protect the distinctive elements of the Association, such as reciprocity. This strategy was doomed to fail.

The solution to protect France's colonial legacy within Europe, indeed, was not to be found in Paris, but rather in Brussels. In this sense, Ferrandi, Chapperon, and Deniau – as active agents in the Europeanisation of France's colonial legacy – were the first to recognise that, following British enlargement, France could no longer unilaterally shape the direction of Euro-African policy. While the reaction in Paris was to strenuously defend the Association *acquis*, French top officials in Brussels chose from early 1973 to instead push for a bold Communitarian step in the direction of export revenue stabilisation. Such a scheme could entice British attention for the Association because it offered a solution to the sugar problem, while simultaneously addressing developing countries' long-lamented problem of terms of trade erosion. After the oil shock, this kind of approach became more and more relevant, as the developing countries in question started to become emboldened by oil-producing countries' show of force. At this stage, Cheysson, initially sceptical of the mechanism⁶⁶⁴, recognised its potential to revitalise Euro-African relations within the shifting international context and became a staunch advocate for its successful incorporation into the final Convention⁶⁶⁵. Moreover, the introduction of an export stabilisation mechanism in the new Convention would preserve the distinctive character of Euro-African relations, making up for the loss of reciprocity.

This combination of factors – chronologically: the need to accommodate the British CSA, the need to preserve the special character of Euro-African relations, the increased relevance of such a scheme in the post-1973 world – made the introduction of STABEX worth pursuing for all the parties involved and, ultimately, possible. The most innovative feature of Lomé, therefore, cannot be understood just as an effect of the changed international context after the 1973 oil shock, but needs to be considered as the product of different claims, that ranged from the ACP demands to make Euro-African relations fairer and more responsive to Third World concerns, to French desire to protect its Europeanised colonial legacy. It is no coincidence that the official

⁶⁶⁴ According to Ferrandi, when Cheysson succeeded Deniau as Development Commissioner, he expressed serious doubts about the soundness of including an export stabilization mechanism in the negotiation platform, calling the idea a “*connerie*”. See: J. Ferrandi, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT711, p. 73.

⁶⁶⁵ E. Burin des Rozières, *Négociations CEE/ACP: Communication de M. Cheysson au Comité des Représentants Permanents*, Telegram from Brussels to Paris, 8 March 1974, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

French commentary of the new Convention framed Lomé – and STABEX – as the new bases of “a future for Eurafrica”⁶⁶⁶.

4.3 1975, the year of Raw Materials: reckoning with economic decolonisation and undercutting the Global South’s offensive

The conclusion of EEC–ACP negotiations was not the only significant milestone in North-South relations in 1975. Between late 1974 and early 1975, developing countries took further steps towards the practical implementation of a New International Economic Order. In December 1974, the UN General Assembly approved the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which, among other things, reaffirmed the right of every state to “exercise full permanent sovereignty, including possession, use and disposal, over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activities”⁶⁶⁷. The Charter went on to explicitly state that every nation had the right to nationalise any foreign-owned economic activity that relied on the extraction and exploitation of its own natural resources and raw materials, causing consternation among Western countries⁶⁶⁸. In the meantime, UNCTAD’s Commission on raw materials was developing its own project for a refashioning of global commodity markets, while the works for the Second General Conference of UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) were well under way. Held in Lima in March, the UNIDO Conference called for the establishment of an Industrial Development Fund and for a substantial increase of developing countries’ share of world industrial production⁶⁶⁹. While developing countries were far from a cohesive group, the ferment of those months painted an impressive picture of a Global South on the offensive, bent on substantiating NIEO demands.

This was exemplified by the Developing Countries’ Conference on Raw Materials held in Dakar in February 1975. The Conference opened just three days after the final Lomé negotiation

⁶⁶⁶ Note d’Information, Ministère de la Coopération – Presse et Information, Paris, 6 February 1975, AMAE 1089INVA/78.

⁶⁶⁷ United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 3281/1974, *Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States*, 12 December 1974, Chapter II, Art. 2.

⁶⁶⁸ 748^{ème} réunion du Comité des Représentants permanents – 13/15 novembre 1974, *Attitude de la Communauté à l’égard de la Charte des droits et des devoirs économiques des Etats*, Note à l’attention de MM. Les Membres de la Commission, Brussels, 18 November 1974, HAEU CEUE_DECO-971. See also: B. H. Weston, *The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the Deprivation of Foreign-Owned Wealth*, in: «The American Journal of International Law», Vol. 75, issue 3, 1981, pp. 437–475.

⁶⁶⁹ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, *Summary of decisions and recommendations of the second general conference of UNIDO Lima., Peru, 12-27 march 1975: annex III*, Dakar, October 1978, <https://hdl.handle.net/10855/42540> (last accessed on 10 April 2025).

session, bringing together 110 states, members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and of the G77⁶⁷⁰. Between 4 and 8 February 1975, representatives from across the Third World gathered in Dakar to condemn the lack of response from industrialised countries and to develop strategies for strengthening South-South economic cooperation. Nearly a year after the Sixth UN Special Session, the conference aimed to renew solidarity between OPEC and non-oil producing developing countries, ensuring that calls for NIEO were not ignored.

The atmosphere in Dakar was anything but conciliatory. In his opening speech, Senghor condemned the great powers' refusal to make "any serious attempt to organise the international markets for major commodities" and criticised how industrialised countries had shaped the global economic system to their advantage: "the interests of the Third World have not really been taken into account, neither with regard to participation in decision-making nor in the allocation of stable financial resources to development tasks"⁶⁷¹. Once again, Algeria acted as a catalyst for solidarity between OPEC and other developing countries. Through the words of its Minister of Commerce Layachi Yaker, Algeria urged non-oil exporting nations to follow OPEC's lead by strengthening existing producers' organisations and creating new ones in order to secure higher, fairer prices for agricultural and mineral raw materials. At the same time, Yaker used the stage in Dakar to warn industrialised countries against threatening Third World solidarity, stressing that they were dependent on more commodities than just oil: "it is important for Western developed countries to know that developing countries now have the means to ensure that their rights are respected"⁶⁷².

By the end of the conference, participants agreed to strengthen producers' organisations and ultimately federate them into a "union of underdeveloped countries"⁶⁷³ – a council of raw materials exporters tasked with coordinating efforts and supporting price stabilisation through measures such as stockpiling⁶⁷⁴. Concrete expressions of Third World solidarity were also proposed, including the creation of a special international fund to finance stabilising stocks⁶⁷⁵. Delegates endorsed the idea of indexation – linking raw material and agricultural prices to the

⁶⁷⁰ 110 délégations se réunissent aujourd'hui à Dakar, Le Soleil, Dakar, 4 February 1975, ANS.

⁶⁷¹ «Nous contestons un système de relations économiques appauvrissant les nations les plus pauvres» déclare le Chef de l'Etat en ouvrant la conférence sur les matières premières, Le Soleil, Dakar, 5 February 1975, ANS.

⁶⁷² «La solidarité et l'unité sont un élément fondamental de notre commune stratégie de lutte» déclare le Ministre algérien Layachi Yaker, Le Soleil, Dakar, 6 February 1975, ANS.

⁶⁷³ Pour une «inter-syndicale» des pays sous-développés, Le Soleil, Dakar, 6 February 1975, ANS.

⁶⁷⁴ Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653, p. 2.

⁶⁷⁵ Matières Premières : Une première bataille à été gagnée à Dakar, Le Soleil, Dakar, 10 February 1975, ANS.

cost of imports from industrialised nations – an initiative already championed by Senghor during negotiations with the EEC⁶⁷⁶. The conference stressed the importance of promoting direct trade among developing countries and diversifying their economies through coordinated investment and industrial cooperation⁶⁷⁷. Its overarching goal was to expand commodity markets and boost export revenues by stabilising prices and strengthening the collective bargaining power of the Global South. In this sense, the Dakar conference sought to cement a common front of developing commodity producers vis-à-vis industrialised consumers.

Developing countries, however, were not relying solely on the confrontational stance adopted in Dakar. A more pragmatic initiative was being discussed in the meantime in Geneva, within UNCTAD's commission on raw materials. There, debates focused on the Integrated Programme for Commodities (IPC), a proposal put forward by UNCTAD's secretary general Gamani Corea⁶⁷⁸. Unlike to the confrontational rhetoric espoused in Dakar, the Integrated Programme was grounded in the concertation between producers and consumers, which – if genuine – could lead to stable and remunerative prices. The programme aimed to achieve this by establishing a global Common Fund to support the price stabilisation of 18 non-energy primary commodities through international stockpiling efforts⁶⁷⁹.

The divergence between the IPC and the proposals advanced in Dakar can be explained by two factors: on the one hand, pursuing a strategy that rested solely on antagonising industrialised countries could be dangerous, especially for developing countries that were bearing the economic brunt of the 1973 crisis and that were heavily reliant on industrialised countries' markets. This was especially true for African states: in 1970 the Community had absorbed 60% of independent Africa's exports and provided 55% of its imports⁶⁸⁰. Things had not changed in the meantime: in 1973, Ivory Coast and Nigeria conducted 63.4% and 55.7% of their trade with the EEC, respectively⁶⁸¹. On the other hand, the UNCTAD setting allowed moderate voices to

⁶⁷⁶ Statement by the President of the Republic, Conference of the Group of 41, Dakar, 4 June 1974, TNA FCO 30/2119, pp. 11-12.

⁶⁷⁷ *Conference Of Developing Countries On Raw Materials: Action Program And Resolutions On Raw Materials And Other Primary Commodities*, in: «International Legal Materials», Vol. 14, issue 2, March 1975, pp. 520-542.

⁶⁷⁸ J. Toye, *Assessing the G77: 50 Years after UNCTAD and 40 Years after the NIEO*, in: «Third World Quarterly», Vol. 35, issue 10, 2014, pp. 1759-1774.

⁶⁷⁹ *Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653, p. 2.

⁶⁸⁰ M. F. Mellah, *La Convention de Lomé : Nouveau Type de Relations entre les Pays Sous-Développés et les Pays Développés ?*, in: «Notes Africaines», Vol. 152, October 1976, Université de Dakar, Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, ANS.

⁶⁸¹ *British Objectives and Priorities in Africa South of the Sahara, 1976-1980*, Permanent Under-Secretary's Planning Committee, 21 October 1975, TNA FCO 30/2638, p. 13.

emerge more clearly. While the Algerian Minister Yaker had been acclaimed in Dakar, that same rhetoric, repeated in Geneva, elicited lukewarm responses from many other developing countries. These included Nigeria, which admitted that the problem of unstable and non-remunerative commodity prices could not be solved without recognising the interests of both producers and consumers. Doing so required cooperation between industrialised and developing countries, as it had been the case during the Lomé Convention negotiations⁶⁸². Nigeria's reference to the Lomé Convention as a model for North-South cooperation on commodities – despite Lagos' ambivalent stance during EEC-ACP negotiations and frequent criticism of the EEC's neo-colonial tendencies – confirmed that the rhetoric of partnership promoted at Lomé was succeeding in reshaping the Community's image even among the most sceptical African countries, at least in public.

In this charged context, the apparent incompatibility between the two approaches proposed in Dakar and Geneva led Western states to understand them as two alternatives put forward by developing countries: the offer to cooperate – backed, if disregarded, by the promise of confrontation⁶⁸³. In the early months of 1975, this gave rise to a range of reactions and counterproposals by the industrialised countries. European states reviewed their strategies vis-à-vis the international economic order as well. The earliest and most ambitious proposal came from France. Giscard d'Estaing had been working since late 1974 to capitalise on the emergence of moderate voices on both the producers' and consumers' sides, seeking to position France as a possible mediator between oil-producing and oil-importing countries⁶⁸⁴. This was the rationale behind what would become known as the 'North-South Dialogue'. Building on a proposal advanced in late 1974 by Saudi Arabia, Giscard relaunched the idea of a conference among a limited number of producer and consumer states, to be held outside of the scope of international organisations such as the UN⁶⁸⁵. While the producers' front comprised Saudi Arabia, Iran, Venezuela, and Algeria, the oil-consuming countries were to be represented by the

⁶⁸² J. Fernand-Laurent, *CNUCED: Commission des Produits de Base*, Telegram from Geneva to Paris, 14 February 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653.

⁶⁸³ *Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653, p. 2.

⁶⁸⁴ Annotation de M. Le Président de la République sur le télégramme de Genève n. 425 du 14 février 1975, CNUCED : Commission des produits de base, 22 February 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653.

⁶⁸⁵ G. Garavini, *The Conference for International Economic Cooperation: A Diplomatic Reaction to the "Oil Shock" (1975-1977)*, in: M. Rasmussen and A. C. Knudsen (eds.), *The Road to a United Europe. Interpretations of the Process of European Integration*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 153-167.

US, Japan, Brazil, India, Zaire, and – seeking to project more cohesion and determination than it truly possessed – the EEC⁶⁸⁶.

Convincing the US, which had hitherto refused to bend to OPEC's and developing countries' demands for a new economic order, was not easy. Washington, however, had initially signalled a shift in its attitude at the beginning of the year, when it asked the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to assess the challenges posed by commodity price fluctuations. In March, the OECD Secretary responded to American requests by warning against the dangers of another surge in commodity prices and suggesting that industrialised countries offer developing countries a system of unilaterally guaranteed prices for key commodities⁶⁸⁷. This spurred the American administration to embark on a review of its policy towards the problems of raw materials – and, more broadly, its overall approach to the Global South⁶⁸⁸.

The first step in the North-South dialogue was to be the preparatory meeting held in Paris in April 1975, but nearly became its last. While France had persuaded the US to join the dialogue by framing it as a forum to address energy issues, the meeting quickly exposed a fundamental divide between industrialised and developing countries. These, represented forcefully by Algeria, insisted on maintaining the link between oil and other raw materials. For them, addressing energy in isolation meant overlooking the broader structural imbalances in global trade and the volatility of non-energy commodity prices, which were equally vital to their economic stability. This clash revealed the competing priorities at the heart of the dialogue: industrialised countries sought to manage their energy security, while developing states aimed to remedy the unequal distribution of wealth and the unjust division of labour that characterised the international economic system⁶⁸⁹. Kissinger and Ford, already sceptical about the prospect of a producers-consumers dialogue focused on oil, firmly rejected participating in a broader discussion on raw materials and development⁶⁹⁰.

The EEC, however, could not be deterred by Washington's dismissal of the dialogue, and continued to grapple with the raw materials question by searching for avenues of cooperation with developing countries. As Cheysson would write just a few weeks after the preparatory

⁶⁸⁶ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., pp. 195-200.

⁶⁸⁷ *Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁸⁸ M. Franczak, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 69-72.

⁶⁸⁹ *Après la Conférence préparatoire: où en sommes-nous et où allons-nous ?*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 21 April 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1705.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

meeting debacle, “The United States as well as the USSR can do with limited external economic relations; they can risk a crisis in their external economic relations. We cannot.”⁶⁹¹. Indeed, Cheysson and other officials in DG VIII were well aware that “the problem of raw materials [was] unquestionably rooted in colonialism”⁶⁹². A first draft of the Commission’s communication on the issue, circulated in January, acknowledged Europe’s peculiar position: the Community owed much of its industrial strength to the historical ability to access and exploit raw materials, first on European territory and then in its colonies⁶⁹³. Now that “almost all European colonies have achieved independence”⁶⁹⁴, a serious reckoning was required on how to secure future supplies. At the time, indeed, the Community depended on developing countries for the overwhelming majority of crucial raw materials such as manganese, tungsten, tin, phosphates, or cotton⁶⁹⁵. Ever since Europe had to give up its colonies, the solution to this problem had been found in cultivating relations with those former colonies. It was no surprise that the proposed solutions all involved deeper engagement with developing countries⁶⁹⁶.

As the Lomé negotiations had demonstrated, however, the Community could no longer rely solely on its Association with former African colonies; it needed to confront the broader push for economic decolonisation coming from the developing world. This became increasingly evident in the final months of 1974, when all Community member states either abstained or voted against the UN Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which featured several articles on nationalisation⁶⁹⁷. In his well-known article “Europe and the Third World after Lomé”, Cheysson made clear the Community’s need to engage with the Third World was rooted in the very logic of colonialism:

We cannot afford to have breaks, fluctuations, sudden changes in our external economic relations. [...] We must have co-operation; we must enlarge our economic space. In the nineteenth century we tried to deal with such problems through the colonial adventures. That time is over, but the needs, the requirements, which were largely the basis of the

⁶⁹¹ C. Cheysson, *Europe and the Third World After Lomé*, in: «The World Today», Vol. 31, issue 6, June 1975, pp. 232-239, p. 236.

⁶⁹² *Le problème des matières premières : pour une nouvelle politique Europe-Tiers Monde*, Brussels, sine data, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991, p. 1.

⁶⁹³ *The Community’s Supplies of Raw Materials*, Draft Communication from the Commission to the Council, Brussels, 29 January 1975, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991, p. 2.

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

⁶⁹⁵ *Le problème des matières premières : pour une nouvelle politique Europe-Tiers Monde*, European Commission, Brussels, sine data, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991, p. 1.

⁶⁹⁶ *The Community’s Supplies of Raw Materials*, Draft Communication from the Commission to the Council, Brussels, 29 January 1975, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991.

⁶⁹⁷ B. H. Weston, *The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the Deprivation of Foreign-Owned Wealth*, in: «The American Journal of International Law», Vol. 75, issue 3, p. 439.

colonial adventures, are still there. We need to have permanent consolidated relations with the Third World, and in particular with some countries in the Third World⁶⁹⁸.

Since the Community could not afford to lose its privileged partnership with its raw materials' providers, new proposals for engagement with developing countries were not designed to simply foster cooperation, but rather to integrate these states into the global capitalist extraction system. This implied entrusting their elites with a growing share of "capital, profits and management"⁶⁹⁹ of resource extraction. The underlying aim was to undercut developing countries' rhetoric of exclusive sovereignty over their natural resources and raw materials, thereby reducing the risk of nationalisation and supply disruption. By redistributing a minimal portion of extraction profits and ensuring that developing countries acquired a larger stake in the continued provision of raw materials to Europe, the Community could neutralise the more radical demands underpinning the NIEO and the call for a new international division of labour.

The rationale behind the Commission's strategy, however, was twofold. While it aimed to address the immediate concern of potential commodity supply disruptions, it also served the longer-term ambition of establishing the Community as a major actor in international relations⁷⁰⁰. The line put forward by the Commission began to take shape during spring 1975, and was gradually cloaked in the familiar rhetoric of development and partnership. In March, the leaders of the Nine formally agreed to devise a common strategy on the raw materials issue, enabling the Community to speak with a single voice in various international fora. The Nine swiftly endorsed the Commission's view that this shared approach should be anchored in cooperation with developing countries⁷⁰¹ and in particular support for the poorest nations⁷⁰². As already suggested during the Lomé negotiations, the EEC could not hope to reshape the international order single-handedly. Yet, by virtue of its ties with Africa and other developing countries, it could position itself as a benevolent mediator between industrialised and developing states. Once again, the Community decided to draw on its member states' – and its

⁶⁹⁸ C. Cheysson, *Europe and the Third World After Lomé*, in: «The World Today», Vol. 31, issue 6, June 1975, pp. 232-239, p. 236.

⁶⁹⁹ *The Community's Supplies of Raw Materials*, Draft Communication from the Commission to the Council, Brussels, 29 January 1975, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991, p. 12.

⁷⁰⁰ S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrica into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit., pp. 1–15.

⁷⁰¹ *Relevé des décisions prises par le Conseil lors de sa 336ème session tenue les 14/15 avril 1975 à Luxembourg*, Note de la Présidence du Conseil des Communautés Européennes, Bruxelles, 21 April 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-00038/001.

⁷⁰² *Aspects de la question de l'approvisionnement en matières premières susceptibles de constituer une base de discussion au sein de Comité des Représentants permanents*, Note de la Présidence du Conseil des Communautés Européennes, Bruxelles, 8 April 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01239/001.

own – postcolonial ties with the Global South not only to address its dependence on raw materials, but also to bolster its ambition of asserting an independent role on the international stage. After all – explained official DG VIII papers – Europe, Africa, and the broader developing world were naturally inclined to work together to bring about genuine global interdependence because of their shared history and interests⁷⁰³. As it had been with political decolonisation, the drive for economic decolonisation prompted the Community to fall back on long-standing colonial and Eurafrican narratives of natural complementarity and historic partnership with its former colonies.

In the 1950s, these tropes had been used to bind soon-to-be-independent territories to the emerging Communitarian project. By the mid-1970s, they were repurposed to assert Europe's enduring vocation as the natural ally of the developing world, thereby reaffirming its place as a central actor in shaping a new international order. If the European approach had remained the same, however, this could not be said for African responses. In the 1950s and early 1960s, Francophone African countries like Senegal and Ivory Coast had espoused the Association to the EEC as a first step towards an egalitarian Eurafrican community, while radical Anglophone countries like Ghana denounced its neo-colonial nature. By 1975, things were different. It was true that, at least in public, the Lomé Convention was celebrated as the successful result of African diplomatic efforts and European solidarity with the Third World⁷⁰⁴. Anglophone and Francophone African countries, however, were privately well aware that the Community's concessions to their demands did not spring from European benevolence, but rather from need. Even the friendliest countries among the ACP, like Senegal, saw through the Communitarian rhetoric of partnership and interdependence. In the words of an analysis appeared at the time on the Dakar University periodical *Notes Africaines*, the promotion of Lomé as a new model for international relations as well as the foundation of Europe's bid to superpower status

leads any observer to wonder whether this is not a continuation of the classic neo-colonial policy, especially as Europe no longer has direct political control over these raw-material-producing countries – the main factor in its economic growth and essential for its expansion

⁷⁰³ *Le problème des matières premières : pour une nouvelle politique Europe-Tiers Monde*, European Commission, Brussels, sine data, HAEU CEUE_DECO-991, pp. 16-17.

⁷⁰⁴ J. Bosco Adotevi, *ACP-CEE: accord signé hier à Lomé – Une solidarité à deux niveaux*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 1 March 1975, ANS.

– and is looking for the most discreet and painless way to retain its grip over them, while presenting itself as [these countries'] natural point of attraction⁷⁰⁵.

4.4 Selling Eurafrica to the world: Lomé, STABEX and a new model for North-South relations

Throughout the year, the Commission further elaborated on the Community's approach to the Global South and, in continuity with the rhetoric adopted by the end of the Lomé negotiations, emphasised the need to support the plight of developing countries:

It is essential that relations of solidarity and co-responsibility are established in a climate of cooperation in which the developing countries will no longer simply appear as the suppliers of a limited range of goods required by the industrialized countries, but as partners in the world's economic growth, in which a larger and fairer share should fall to them⁷⁰⁶.

To achieve such an objective, the Commission laid out a number of policies that could be pursued within international fora. These included promoting trade and industrial cooperation, producer-consumer consultation, and product-specific commodity agreements. The strategy of the Community, however, should have also rested on its own particular brand of commodity policy: export earnings stabilisation schemes. The Commission, in fact, proposed the creation of a global STABEX-like system, broader in scope than the original, with funding from all industrialised countries⁷⁰⁷. By asserting ownership of the scheme, the EEC planned to leverage its expertise and recast a colonial-era mechanism as a foundation for future relations between industrialised and developing countries. Beneath the rhetoric of global interdependence, the Commission clearly recognised that offering a concrete solution to North-South tensions would enhance the Community's international standing and reinforce its ambition to be acknowledged as a major "civilian" power. Moreover, championing STABEX could also help bridge internal divisions – particularly between Member States like France, which favoured

⁷⁰⁵ M. F. Mellah, *La Convention de Lomé : Nouveau Type de Relations entre les Pays Sous-Développés et les Pays Développés ?*, in : «Notes Africaines», Vol. 152, October 1976, Université de Dakar, Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, pp. 102-111, ANS, p. 103.

⁷⁰⁶ *Communication from the Commission to the Council on raw materials in relations with the developing countries which export raw materials*, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 21 May 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01242/001.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 8-10.

global market regulation, and those like Germany, which opposed interferences with free market dynamics⁷⁰⁸.

Member states' internal deliberations, indeed, seemed to be aligning with the Commission's. After the disappointing overture of the North-South Dialogue in April, France adjusted its approach, seeking to relaunch discussions with developing countries as soon as possible and to address both energy and development issues. In the energy sector, however, this renewed engagement was to be tempered by a *de facto* policy of solidarity with other industrialised countries⁷⁰⁹ – an inclination that France had resisted since early 1974, when Kissinger proposed the creation of the International Energy Agency (IEA) as a counterweight to OPEC. Yet despite this concession to the US, Giscard held firm to France's broader ambition: to reshape the international economic order by advancing its own model of state-led market regulation, and by extension, that of the Community⁷¹⁰. Rather than increasing access to European markets for developing countries' raw materials – a move at odds with key policies like the CAP – France wanted to promote commodity agreements based on negotiated prices, a practice explicitly rooted in its colonial past⁷¹¹. This approach, it argued, offered a more structured and equitable solution to the imbalances of the global market. A Community-sponsored export earnings stabilisation scheme would complement this vision. Recognising the broad appeal of STABEX among countries within and beyond the Lomé Convention, France was ready to capitalise on its popularity and support its transformation into a global initiative⁷¹².

In Britain, Wilson's government was making similar considerations. In June 1975, the referendum on Communitarian membership solidly placed the UK within the EEC, leading various branches of the FCO to reassess British position in the Community and in the world. When it came to Africa, Euro-African relations were seen as a useful buttress to British influence in the continent, especially in "countries where [British] interests and presence seem

⁷⁰⁸ *International Action on Stabilization of Export Earnings*, Supplementary Commission Communication to the Council, Brussels, 11 June 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01243/002; *Matières Premières*, Communication de Sir Christopher Soames, M. Cheysson et M. Spinelli, Brussels, 26 February 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01243/002.

⁷⁰⁹ *Après la Conférence préparatoire: où en sommes-nous et où allons-nous ?*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 21 April 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1705. See also: G. Garavini, *The Conference for International Economic Cooperation: A Diplomatic Reaction to the "Oil Shock" (1975-1977)*, in: op. cit., pp. 159-160.

⁷¹⁰ Extract of Jean Sauvagnargues's speech to French National Assembly, 26 June 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1705.

⁷¹¹ Ever since the first UNCTAD session in 1964, France had supported "l'organisation des marchés par d'accords de produits avec stocks régulateurs, système transposé des caisses de compensation de la période coloniale". *Préparation des positions françaises pour les prochaines étapes du Dialogue Nord-Sud*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 23 August 1978, AMAE 446INVA/1736.

⁷¹² *Propositions en présence sur le thème des matières premières*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 12 May 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1653, pp. 3-4.

otherwise bound to dwindle”⁷¹³. Moreover, the Communitarian link to Africa was deemed important in global negotiations as well, where it would be instrumental in “promot[ing] realism and cooperation in multilateral discussions on the international economic order”⁷¹⁴. This was the rationale behind Britain’s own answer to the question of raw materials. During a Commonwealth summit in May, Wilson proposed a general commodities agreement which was essentially in line with STABEX, as he called for “stabilisation not only of commodity prices, but of stabilising developing countries’ earnings from their exports”⁷¹⁵.

Thus, between spring and summer 1975, the Nine worked hard to develop a common strategy on raw materials that hinged on supporting commodity agreements in multilateral negotiations and on proposing a global export revenue stabilisation system⁷¹⁶. In the meantime, representatives of the Community and of Member States alike, such as Development Commissioner Claude Cheysson⁷¹⁷ and French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues⁷¹⁸, continued to present the Lomé Convention as evidence of the special relationship that tied Africa and the developing world to Europe. These efforts were necessary in view of the forthcoming UNGA Seventh Special Session, scheduled for September 1975. In the view of the Commission, the Community should exploit the occasion to act cohesively as “the driving force behind western coordination and [as] mediator vis-à-vis developing countries”⁷¹⁹. In New York, indeed, the Community advertised its own recipe for North-South relations based on the tenets of Lomé: the organisation of raw materials markets through case-by-case commodity agreements, the stabilisation of export earnings, trade cooperation, industrial development through technology transfer, and aid, set at a target of 0.7% of each Member State’s GDP⁷²⁰.

⁷¹³ *British Objectives and Priorities in Africa South of the Sahara, 1976-1980*, Permanent Under-Secretary’s Planning Committee, 21 October 1975, TNA FCO 30/2638, p. 20.

⁷¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁷¹⁵ H. Wilson, *Leader’s speech to the Labour Conference in Blackpool*, October 1975, <http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/speech-archive.htm?speech=173>, (last accessed 20 March 2024); Speech notes for use by Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection at the Annual Dinner of the United Nations Association, 22 July 1975, TNA FCO 30/2637.

⁷¹⁶ *Relevé des décisions prises par le Conseil lors de sa 343ème session tenue le 26 mai 1975 à Dublin*, Council of the European Communities, Brussels, 2 June 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-00052/001.

⁷¹⁷ *Matières Premières*, Communication de Sir Christopher Soames, M. Cheysson et M. Spinelli, Brussels, 26 February 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01243/002.

⁷¹⁸ Extract of Jean Sauvagnargues’ speech to French National Assembly, 26 June 1975, AMAE 446INVA/1705.

⁷¹⁹ *Seventh Special Session of the UN General Assembly and mid-term review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy for the Second UN Development Decade*, Commission Communication to the Council, Brussels, 4 June 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01274/002.

⁷²⁰ *Exposé de la position de la Communauté économique européenne et de ses Etats membres*, Commission Speciale de la 7ème Session Extraordinaire UNGA, New York, 1 September 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-02232/003.

The Seventh Special Session ended with resounding declarations about the willingness to negotiate and define the parameters of the New International Economic Order by both developing and industrialised countries. Even Daniel Patrick Moynihan, US ambassador to the UN who held rather public contempt for Third World demands and NIEO discourse⁷²¹, commented enthusiastically that “never before in the history of the United Nations has there been so intensive and so genuine a negotiation between so many nations on so profoundly important a range of issues”⁷²². In reality, the US was exploiting the stage offered by the Special Session to present its new, reviewed approach to NIEO and North-South relations. The events of 1975, indeed, had strengthened the case for engaging with the Global South. The end of the Vietnam War in late April marked America’s first military defeat since the Second World War, exposing the limits of its global dominance. A year earlier, the fall of Salazar’s regime in Portugal had accelerated the decolonisation of Lusophone Africa. In the early months of 1975, the rapid descent into civil war of Angola – the richest of Portugal’s former territories – offered Moscow a newer, stronger foothold in Africa⁷²³. These developments, coupled with the persistent efforts of Third World countries to translate NIEO declarations into concrete action, underscored the growing strategic relevance of the Global South, prompting Washington to reassess its stance towards developing countries and their demands. This did not imply that the United States had suddenly embraced the NIEO. Rather, Kissinger recognised that the most effective way to fracture Third World solidarity was to present the US as open to dialogue on issues such as new commodity agreements and trade cooperation, thereby deepening the divide between moderate and more radical developing nations⁷²⁴.

The new American attitude was cautiously welcomed in Europe. This became evident during the Rambouillet summit of November 1975, when the leaders of the US, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Britain, Italy, and Japan met to discuss the international situation directly and informally, initiating the practice of G7 summits⁷²⁵. In Rambouillet, the underlying divisive intent of the new conciliatory US approach was made clear by Kissinger, who explained that a

⁷²¹ M. Franczack, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 67-70.

⁷²² D. P. Moynihan, Closing speech for UNGA Seventh Special Session, New York, 16 September 1975, quoted in: B. Gosovic and J. G. Ruggie, *On the Creation of a New International Economic Order: Issue Linkage and the Seventh Special Session of the UN General Assembly* in: «International Organization», Vol. 30, issue 2, pp. 309–345, p. 1.

⁷²³ O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 214-228.

⁷²⁴ M. Franczack, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 72-75; V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*, New York, The New Press, 2008, pp. 39-40.

⁷²⁵ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., pp. 209-210.

shared Western approach shrouded in a cooperative attitude could finally break the alliance between OPEC and non-oil producing developing countries. While France and Britain emphasised the need to meet at least some of the developing countries' demands, Kissinger's open admission strengthened the position of those within the Nine – such as Germany – who wanted the Community to use its role as a mediator to undermine the Global South's agenda⁷²⁶.

Building on the foundations laid during the Seventh Special Session, the Rambouillet summit enabled a rapprochement between Europe and the US, allowing them to find common ground on relations with the Third World and laying the groundwork for the imminent relaunch of the North-South Dialogue⁷²⁷. This was to be a crucial forum for North-South relations: operating outside the frameworks of the UN and UNCTAD, it offered Western states an opportunity to drive a wedge between oil producers and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). At Rambouillet, the seven leaders eventually agreed that the North-South Dialogue should aim to persuade oil-importing developing countries that their alliance with OPEC was hurting them, that the conjuncture of economic recession was the wrong time to design a new international economic order, and that Western industrialised countries were willing to assist them – provided these countries abandoned their demands for a fundamental overhaul of the global system⁷²⁸. This consensus overshadowed internal divisions within the Community, where former colonial powers like France, Britain, Belgium, and the Netherlands were more inclined than Germany to accommodate developing countries. Nonetheless, it was ultimately compatible with the EEC's broader strategy to present itself as the most open and constructive of the industrialised powers, concealing an essential alignment with the position of the rest of the industrialised states⁷²⁹. The Community's recurring emphasis on the need to support "the poorest countries" bears testimony of the extent to which the EEC fundamentally agreed with Kissinger's intent to undermine the alliance between OPEC and LDCs⁷³⁰.

The North-South Dialogue, officially named Conference on International Economic Cooperation (CIEC), opened in Paris in mid-December 1975. Between the April preparatory meeting and the

⁷²⁶ M. Franczack, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 84-85; V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, op. cit., pp. 47-52.

⁷²⁷ Ibidem, p. 84.

⁷²⁸ V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, op. cit., pp. 53-55.

⁷²⁹ Communication de M. Cheysson, *Préparation de la Conférence des Nations-Unies sur le Commerce et le Développement — Réunion du comité du commerce et du développement de la CNUCED du 8 au 19 mars 1976*, Brussels, 4 February 1976, HAEU CEUE_AFEF-1070.

⁷³⁰ *Conférence sur la Coopération Economique Internationale – Projet de position générale de la Communauté*, Note du Conseil de la Communauté Européenne, Brussels, 21 November 1975, AN 19870490/7.

official launch in December, the participants had grown in number. 19 developing raw materials producers and 8 industrialised consumers, for a total of 27 countries, would conduct negotiations within four commissions, dealing respectively with energy, raw materials, development, and financial and monetary matters. Over the course of 1975, the Nine had managed to overcome internal resistance – especially from Britain⁷³¹ – to a common representation within the North-South Dialogue. The Community would participate in each of the Dialogue’s four commissions, advancing the European brand of cooperation on all the topics tackled by the Dialogue⁷³². On energy, the EEC would strive to improve relations between oil producers and consumers, with a specific regard to LDCs’ position. On raw materials, the Community continued to insist on STABEX-like schemes, but declared itself ready to examine UNCTAD’s Integrated Programme for Commodities. On development and financial matters, the Community remained rather vague, calling for trade and technological cooperation, resource transfers, and better coordination between North and South, reiterating its well-known trope of mutually beneficial interdependence⁷³³.

Besides seeing the Dialogue as a key opportunity to promote the EEC’s own brand of North-South relations, officials within DG VIII also hoped it would provide a privileged vantage point from which to monitor the preparation of the IV UNCTAD, set to take place in Nairobi in May 1976⁷³⁴. However, this hope was increasingly disavowed with the passing of time, as the growing overlap between the Dialogue and UNCTAD soon began to spark concern within the Community. As DG VIII Director-general Hans-Broder Krohn wrote to Cheysson, the two fora revealed themselves “extremely difficult to coordinate and to conduct in parallel”⁷³⁵. Developing countries, for their part, were well aware that unity between OPEC and the broader Third World was crucial to their strategy, and strove to align their demands at UNCTAD and within the CIEC⁷³⁶. At a preparatory meeting in Manila in January, the G-77 formally endorsed UNCTAD’s Integrated Programme for Commodities and pledged to jointly push for the creation

⁷³¹ G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., pp. 220-221.

⁷³² Final Communiqué, Conference on International Economic Co-Operation, Paris, 19 December 1975, HAEU CM2/1975-01224/009.

⁷³³ *Conférence sur la Coopération Economique Internationale – Projet de position générale de la Communauté*, Note du Conseil de la Communauté Européenne, Brussels, 21 November 1975, AN 19870490/7.

⁷³⁴ H. B. Krohn, *Risque de conflit entre les filières “Dialogue” et CNUCED IV*, Note à l’attention de M. Claude Cheysson, Brussels, 23 October 1975, HAEU CEUE_DECO-967.

⁷³⁵ Ibidem.

⁷³⁶ *Chronologie des Conférences Internationales liées au Problème de Développement*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, sine data, AMAE 446INVA/1653 ; *CNUCED - Resultats de la 8ème session de la Commission des produits de base (3ème partie) (Genève, 8-19 décembre 1975)*, Note du Conseil de la Communauté Européenne, Brussels, 9 January 1976, HAEU CEUE_AFEF-1070.

of a Common Fund to manage both existing and future commodity agreements⁷³⁷. In their view, the Common Fund would act as a financial mechanism designed to stabilise commodity prices by centrally managing buffer stocks and intervening in commodity markets when necessary⁷³⁸.

In spring 1976, developing countries began signalling that if the Community was serious about reshaping North-South relations, that was the time to act accordingly. Within the CIEC, the 19 raw materials producers were already voicing frustration at the slow and superficial nature of consultations, arguing that the conference should be laying the groundwork for the upcoming UNCTAD session⁷³⁹. On the eve of that session, Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere visited West Germany to plead the Third World's case to the highest authorities of the Federal Republic. Echoing familiar NIEO themes, his speech underscored the structural inequality between industrialised and developing nations. In exposing the problem of terms of trade erosion and price volatility, however, Nyerere went one step further, calling out the European Community for its use of Lomé and STABEX as justification for its relative complacency within international negotiations:

The real problem about STABEX and similar compensatory payment schemes, however, is that they are designed to smooth out falls in money income derived from particular primary commodities. They are valuable for that; it is better to collect bruises from rolling down a hill than to be killed by falling over a precipice. But you are still back at the bottom; such schemes disregard any rise in the cost of imports⁷⁴⁰.

By urging the EEC to press other industrialised countries to support the IPC and consider indexation of raw material prices to those of manufactured goods, Nyerere was calling on the Community to honour its promises and demonstrate genuine commitment to the establishment of NIEO. The Communitarian push for innovation in North-South relations, however, was already losing momentum.

⁷³⁷ J. Toye, *Assessing the G77: 50 Years after UNCTAD and 40 Years after the NIEO*, in: op. cit., pp. 1765-1766.

⁷³⁸ M. Franczack, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., p. 89.

⁷³⁹ *Conférence sur la Coopération Economique Internationale – Conseil des Communautés Européennes*, Note du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 30 April 1976, AN 19870490/7.

⁷⁴⁰ J. Nyerere, *The Third World and International Economic Structure*, Address given by the President Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere in the Federal Republic of Germany, 4th May 1976, <https://www.juliusnyerere.org/resources/view/the-third-world-and-international-economic-structure-1976> (last accessed 27 April 2025).

4.5 A return to regionalism: the premature end of the Spirit of Lomé

In 1976, the journal 'Business Economics' published an article titled "The Spirit of Lomé". The article suggested that in the 1980s "NIEO may eventually become a new global model of industrialization" and that, if this forecast was proven true, "the spirit of Lomé will expand to commerce and manufacturing"⁷⁴¹. Writing as the planning director of a US transnational company, the author suggested that the realisation of the NIEO would likely entail a reorganisation of the international division of labour, involving the relocation of industries to the Global South. Such a transformation, he noted, would demand coordination and cooperation both within and between industrialised and developing countries – mirroring the approach taken in the Lomé negotiations. For a moment in the mid-1970s, it seemed like the Community was truly providing the blueprint for the future. That impression, however, would be short-lived.

The first cracks in the Community's strategy to position itself at the core of North-South relations appeared during the IV UNCTAD, which opened in Nairobi on 5 May 1976. Although the agenda formally covered a range of issues – from international trade to institutional reform – raw materials and financial concerns quickly took centre stage. On commodities, the G77 reaffirmed its support for the Integrated Programme for Commodities and the creation of a Common Fund. On financial matters, they drew attention to their rapidly escalating debt, which by 1976 had nearly quadrupled compared to pre-oil shock levels⁷⁴². Developing countries argued that their mounting debt was a direct consequence of their disadvantaged position within the international economic order – one that left them dependent on aid and reliant on borrowed capital to import essential goods. To address this, they sought to use UNCTAD to convene an international conference in which creditors and debtors would participate on equal footing, with the aim to prioritise the suspension of debt service payments and outright debt cancellation for the poorest developing countries⁷⁴³.

Faced with such concrete requests, Western industrialised countries found themselves unable to appease developing countries as they had done during the UNGA Seventh Special Session, as internal divisions within the Community quickly became apparent. Continued G77 support for the IPC and its proposed Common Fund split the Nine between those ready to consider the

⁷⁴¹ A. Van Dam, *The Spirit of Lomé*, in: «Business Economics», Vol. 11, issue 4, 1976, pp. 56-59.

⁷⁴² G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit., p. 222.

⁷⁴³ M. Franczack, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., p. 89.

proposal and more willing to consider commodity agreements, such as France, and staunch critics of such an approach, like Germany. This split, in turn, prevented the Community from playing the role of mediator between developing countries and the rest of the Western industrialised countries. Kissinger's counterproposal – the creation of an International Resource Bank to manage a minimal version of commodity price stabilisation with funding from OPEC and industrialised countries – only deepened the rift among the Nine and intensified the G77's frustration⁷⁴⁴. Only at the end of the session did the Nine reach a minimal compromise: to examine the Common Fund proposal later in the year – and even then, with explicit reservations from Germany and Britain⁷⁴⁵. Similarly, disagreement among Community members over how to address the increasingly worrying issue of developing countries' debt further paralysed the proceedings⁷⁴⁶. As a result, several ACP representatives lamented that the West – and the Community in particular – was squandering a rare opportunity to demonstrate genuine partnership with the developing world⁷⁴⁷.

Although delegates left Nairobi with the promise of further examining the Common Fund and the debt problem within both the CIEC and other fora, at the end of UNCTAD IV the atmosphere was sombre, as developing countries started to wonder about the veracity of Western countries' will to restructure the international order⁷⁴⁸. Indeed, during the rest of 1976, the Community was unable to provide viable alternative solutions to the raw materials problem. Already in late 1976, in preparing for the EEC's participation in UNCTAD meeting to discuss the Common Fund for commodities, Cheysson underlined that the “view of industrialised countries” needed to be highlighted and that it was its intention to eschew “centralised management and market intervention”⁷⁴⁹. Even the most innovative Communitarian proposal, rooted in STABEX, was gradually scaled back over the course of time: the ambitious idea of establishing a global STABEX-like system conceived in 1975 was studied as part of the

⁷⁴⁴ J. Toye, *Assessing the G77: 50 Years after UNCTAD and 40 Years after the NIEO*, in: op. cit., p. 1766.

⁷⁴⁵ *Premières réflexions relatives à CNUCED IV*, Note de M. Durieux, diffusé à la demande de M. Cheysson, Brussels, 2 June 1976, CEUE_SEGE-SEC(1976)2132.

⁷⁴⁶ Communication de J. Dumont, *Etat des travaux de la IV CNUCED (Nairobi) à la fin de la matinée du 24 mai 1976*, Nairobi, 24 May 1976, HAEU CEUE_AFEF-1070.

⁷⁴⁷ Communication de J. Durieux, *RAPPORT RELATIF AUX TRAVAUX DE LA CNUCED IV - NAIROBI (semaine du 10 au 15 mai)*, Brussels, 19 May 1976, HAEU CEUE_AFEF-1070.

⁷⁴⁸ *Premières réflexions relatives à CNUCED IV*, Note de M. Durieux, diffusé à la demande de M. Cheysson, Brussels, 2 June 1976, CEUE_SEGE-SEC(1976)2132.

⁷⁴⁹ Preparation of the European Council, 29th November 1976, UNCTAD Preparatory Meeting on a Common Fund for Commodities, Note by Mr. Cheysson, Mr. Gundelach, Brussels, 19 November 1976, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1976)0632.

Community's strategy in the CIEC⁷⁵⁰, but by mid-1977 it had lost part of its novelty because of the improvement of the IMF's Compensatory Financing Facility (CFF)⁷⁵¹. The CFF had been created in 1963 to provide financing against short-term export revenue shortfalls. Differently from STABEX, access to the facility was not automatic, nor unconditional: countries who required to benefit from the facility had to demonstrate that the loss of export revenue had destabilised their balance of payments and had to accept IMF input on possible solutions⁷⁵². In December 1975, its capacity had been enhanced as part of Kissinger's plan to appease developing countries, undercutting the significance of the Community's proposals about its own global export stabilisation system⁷⁵³. The brief moment in which the Community had hoped to act as a bridging force between the Global South and the rest of the West was coming to an end, under the increasing pressure of developing countries' requests for more concrete action beyond solemn declarations on solidarity and interdependence.

The most vociferous of these requests came unsurprisingly from Africa, whose economic situation continued to worsen. In spring 1977, Adebayo Adedeji, the new Secretary-General of UNECA, painted a grim picture of Africa's development prospects. The continent's economy remained heavily dependent on external factors – mostly stemming from the industrialised West – to the extent that cyclical fluctuations in OECD countries adversely affected African exports, terms of trade, import costs, inflation, and overall economic growth. As a result, average annual growth in Africa had slowed from 5% in the 1960s to 4.5% in the first half of the 1970s. Over the same period, inflation had risen sharply. Combined with sluggish agricultural output, which left many commodity-exporting countries increasingly reliant on imports of both manufactured goods and foodstuffs, this led to a further deterioration in Africa's already unfavourable terms of trade. Such a structural dependence on external markets entailed another serious consequence: a ballooning debt burden, which soared from \$7 billion

⁷⁵⁰ Communication de la Commission au Conseil relative à une action internationale de stabilisation des recettes d'exportation, Commission des Communautés Européennes, Brussels, 31 March 1976, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1977)0113.

⁷⁵¹ Financement compensatoire – Eléments pour une déclaration de la Communauté à la Session d'Avril de la Commission Matières Premières de la CCEI, Annex to FONDS COMMUN ET AUTRES MESURES APPROPRIÉES, Note la Commission Européenne, Brussels, 5 April 1976, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-SEC(1976)1439 ; *Resumption of the CIEC*, Note by the Presidency, April 1977, AN 19870490/7.

⁷⁵² R. F. Meagher, *The Expansion and Modification of the IMF's Compensatory Finance Facility*, in: «The International Lawyer», Vol. 11, issue 2, 1977, pp. 277–89.

⁷⁵³ Communication de la Commission au Conseil relative à une action internationale de stabilisation des recettes d'exportation, Commission des Communautés Européennes, Brussels, 31 March 1976, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-COM(1977)0113.

in 1965 to \$28 billion by 1974⁷⁵⁴. Adedeji's sombre remarks about the efforts undertaken to reverse these structural imbalances seemed to leave little room for optimism:

Despite the region's vast natural resources, [...] the generous and even non-discriminatory facilities granted to foreign private enterprises, our participation in numerous regional and interregional conferences, and our adherence to orthodox theories and guidelines – despite all this, it seems we are unable to achieve either high rates of growth and diversification or any meaningful increase in autonomy and dynamism⁷⁵⁵.

Adedeji ended his speech by recommending regional and sub-regional cooperation in trade and industry development. Indeed, he stressed, the future of Africa could not continue to depend on the ebbs and flows of the industrialised countries' will, especially at a moment when "it is not yet clear whether the industrialised countries will recognise the need for a fundamental reorganisation of international economic relations"⁷⁵⁶.

At the beginning of June 1977, the CIEC drew to a close. Although the agreements reached in the field of energy were limited, some progress was made on raw materials: the 27 participants agreed to continue negotiations within UNCTAD on the establishment of a Common Fund for commodity agreements, as well as on improving the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) to favour developing countries' exports. The 19 developing countries could also welcome the industrialised participants' decision to launch a Special Action Programme worth \$1 billion – primarily funded by the EEC and the United States – to support the weakest LDCs. However, no agreement was reached on measures to strengthen developing countries' purchasing power, stabilise their export earnings, or address the increasingly pressing issue of debt⁷⁵⁷. As a result, the first official forum of the North-South Dialogue ended without fulfilling the core objectives of either side. Industrialised countries, who had hoped to secure an agreement on energy pricing – or at the very least regular consultations with oil producers – left disappointed. So too

⁷⁵⁴ *La Crise du Développement et le Problème de l'Instauration d'un Nouvel Ordre Economique en Afrique*, Déclaration du Secrétaire Exécutif de la CEA, Adebajo Adedeji, Quatrième réunion de la Conférence des Ministres de la Commission Economique pour l'Afrique, Kinshasa, 24 February – 3 March 1977, AMAE 446INVA/1653, pp. 4-6.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 7.

⁷⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 17.

⁷⁵⁷ Report of the Conference on International Economic Cooperation, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 6 June 1977, Bank Administration and Policy: Conference on International Economic Cooperation [CIEC] - 1975 / 1977 Correspondence - Volume 3, Folder ID: 30044790, World Bank Group Archives (WBGA) WB IBRD/IDA EXT-08. See also: G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, op. cit, pp. 226-228.

did developing countries, who had viewed the CIEC's flexible structure as a potential vehicle for substantiating the principles of the NIEO⁷⁵⁸.

With the conclusion of the CIEC, the Community's efforts to position itself at the forefront of global North-South negotiations became less cohesive, even as Cheysson continued to promote the idea of a Community most attuned to the needs of the Third World⁷⁵⁹. Between 1978 and 1979, the Lomé Convention underwent renegotiation, but the diplomatic momentum that had characterised EEC-ACP negotiation five years earlier was notably absent. Implementation of Lomé during its initial phase had proceeded relatively smoothly, and ACP countries were generally satisfied with its provisions, although they drew attention to the erosion of their preferential treatment vis-à-vis other developing countries⁷⁶⁰. As a result, despite some attempts at minor innovation, the Community's main objective in the new round of EEC-ACP negotiations was the preservation of the Lomé acquis. Yet, STABEX remained the crown jewel of the Community's offer to the ACP, to the point that these approached the renegotiation of Lomé demanding a substantial expansion of its coverage, both in terms of funds and of eligible products⁷⁶¹.

Thus, during the negotiations for the new Convention, STABEX was at the centre of an African effort to expand its significance. Between late 1978 and early 1979, various proposals were put forward to modify and enhance the scheme. As case-by-case commodity negotiations stagnated within UNCTAD⁷⁶², ACP countries pressed for the inclusion of products whose prospects under the IPC framework appeared increasingly unlikely, such as phosphates and copper⁷⁶³. In early 1979, this gave rise to mounting pressure for the inclusion of minerals within STABEX – a shift that, however, posed both financial and conceptual challenges. First of all, covering a wide range of minerals would be very costly; secondly, while price fluctuations in agricultural products were largely driven by supply shocks, mineral markets were more vulnerable to shifts in

⁷⁵⁸ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 152-154.

⁷⁵⁹ S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrica into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit., pp. 13-15.

⁷⁶⁰ *Renouvellement de la Convention de Lomé*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 1 June 1978, AN 489/105.

⁷⁶¹ G. E. Fitzherbert, *Lomé Renegotiation: Visit to London by M. Cheysson on 8 February – Briefing for M. Cheysson's visit on 8 February*, STABEX coverage/Minerals, Annex to Letter to F. Judd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 7 February 1979, TNA FCO 98/593.

⁷⁶² R. Burges Watson, *Common Fund and the Integrated Programme for Commodities (IPC)*, Letter to F. Judd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 18 January 1979, TNA FCO 98/606.

⁷⁶³ *Demande du Togo d'inclure les Phosphates dans le STABEX*, Note de l'Ambassade de la République Togolaise à Bruxelles, Bruxelles, 11 December 1978, TNA FCO 98/606 ; *Record of conversation between the Minister of State and the Zambian High Commissioner in the FCO at 11.30 A.M. on 10 January 1979*, FCO European Integration Department, London, 15 January 1979, TNA FCO 98/606.

demand⁷⁶⁴. Remedying export revenue losses originating from this kind of fluctuations would be a very different endeavour.

When renegotiations stretched beyond the original April 1979 deadline, overlap with UNCTAD V, scheduled for May in Manila, became inevitable despite European attempts at keeping the two negotiations separate⁷⁶⁵. When the Manila session failed to deliver meaningful progress on commodity export stabilisation⁷⁶⁶, ACP's only option was to exploit the ongoing negotiations with the EEC and push even harder for the inclusion of minerals in STABEX⁷⁶⁷. Eventually, the Community – driven in part by its own interest in safeguarding European investments in African mining sector and in securing mineral supplies from Africa⁷⁶⁸ – put forward a compromise: minerals would not be included in STABEX, but a separate, parallel facility with similar aims would be created. The second Lomé Convention, signed on 31 October 1979, established SYSMIN (short for *Système de Développement du Potentiel Minier*), a scheme covering copper and cobalt, phosphates, manganese, bauxite and alumina, tin, and iron. Unlike STABEX, SYSMIN did not provide automatic compensation for export losses; instead, it aimed specifically at stabilising production levels by offering financial assistance in response to export declines⁷⁶⁹.

Thus, frustrated by the sluggish pace of global negotiations and facing deepening economic crises, at the end of the decade African states approached the Lomé renegotiations with a renewed determination to extract tangible benefits from a regional system that offered more immediate results. As a result, solidarity with the rest of the developing world was overshadowed by more immediate concerns. ACP's main grievances in the renegotiations, hinging on the expansion of STABEX and the protection of their preferential treatment vis-à-vis other developing countries, reflected this shift. Although the momentum for reforming the international economic system had not entirely vanished – evidenced by the work of the Brandt

⁷⁶⁴ *Statement of Mr. Cheysson, Member of the Commission, Before the European Parliament*, 13 December 1978, FCO 98/593.

⁷⁶⁵ G. E. Fitzherbert, *Lomé Renegotiation: Anglo-French Talks*, 9 February, Letter to F. Judd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 12 February 1979, TNA FCO 98/593.

⁷⁶⁶ M. A. Burney, *A recognition of interdependence: UNCTAD V: An analysis of the results of the Manila session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development against the background of discussions on North-South issues*, in: «Finance & Development», Vol. 16, issue 3, 1979, pp. 15-18.

⁷⁶⁷ D. Maitland, ACP/EEC Ministerial Conference: 24/26 May – Working Group on STABEX and Minerals, Telegram to FCO, 17 May 1979, TNA FCO 98/609.

⁷⁶⁸ D. Maitland, *The Negotiation of the Lomé Convention*, Report of British Permanent Representative to the EEC, Brussels, 31 October 1979, TNA FCO 98/604, p. 16.

⁷⁶⁹ M. Anchouey, *L'amorce et la recherche d'un style nouveau de relations*, in: «Le Courrier», Vol. 58, 1979, p. 20.

Commission⁷⁷⁰ – it no longer carried the disruptive potential it had in the early 1970s. The oil shock of 1979, unlike that of 1973, failed to empower developing countries, many of which were now crippled by spiralling debt. By this point, the Community had lost the drive to play a leading role in a North–South dialogue that was visibly losing traction. Although Lomé was still considered “one of the most successful examples of North–South dialogue”⁷⁷¹, the ‘spirit of Lomé’ was not meant to spread to the rest of the international system anymore: contrary to the first Lomé Convention, Lomé II was not conceived to become a model for broader global reform. The push to render Lomé a blueprint for the rest of the world had ended, and the work to expand the guarantees offered by the Convention itself, both in Africa and in Europe, had just started.

4.6 Conclusions

This chapter examined the EEC’s bid to place itself at the centre of North-South relations in the 1970s by investigating the origins, creation, and significance of STABEX. The history of the scheme, designed to stabilise ACP export earnings, encapsulates the tension between the ‘Spirit of Lomé’ and the ‘ghost of Eurafrica’ inherent in Euro-African relations. Indeed, a closer look to how STABEX came to be incorporated in the Lomé Convention reveals that its functioning was inspired by the marketing boards that had operated in the French and British colonial empires. Initially conceived as a pragmatic response to the uncertainties surrounding the future of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement after Britain’s accession to the Community, the scheme’s scope and meaning quickly expanded. In the context of the 1970s, it appeared to offer an innovative response to developing countries’ long-standing grievances about the deterioration of their terms of trade. Thus, thanks in no small part to STABEX, Lomé came to embody a seemingly fairer model of international cooperation, allowing the European Community to exploit and recast its colonial legacy – presenting itself as a mediator between industrialised and developing nations rather than as the heir to a colonial past. This ambition was most visible in 1975–1976, when developing countries mounted an effective challenge to the existing international economic order in various multilateral fora. While the United States sought to

⁷⁷⁰ On the work of the Brandt Commission and the Brand Report, see: S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 161–162; G. Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957–1986*, op. cit., pp. 238–240; M. Franczack, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 183–185.

⁷⁷¹ P. Achard, *Renouveau de la Convention de Lomé – Résultats des négociations de Bruxelles les 24, 25 et 26 Mai 1979*, Note du Conseiller Technique du Premier Ministre, Paris, 31 May 1979, AN 489/110.

dismantle the alliance between OPEC and the wider Global South, the Community attempted to act as a bridge between developed and developing countries, capitalising on the emergence of more moderate voices on both sides. Yet, during both the IV UNCTAD session of 1976 and the subsequent debates within the CIEC, the Community proved unable to respond meaningfully to the concrete demands of developing states. By mid-1977, the disappointing outcome of the CIEC further exposed Community's limited cohesion and its failure to provide a genuine alternative model for North-South relations. As negotiations for different commodity agreements proceeded at a sluggish pace within the UNCTAD framework and momentum for NIEO continued to weaken, Lomé – and STABEX – ceased to realistically represent an alternative for North-South relations. During the renegotiation of the Convention, African states therefore sought more tangible economic gains from their partnership with Europe – once again centring their demands on STABEX. Under Lomé II, the mechanism was expanded in both scope and funding, and complemented by SYSMIN. The ambition to turn Lomé into a global model for North-South cooperation had faded; what remained was a pragmatic effort to consolidate and deepen the economic guarantees of Euro-African relations within the bounds of the existing framework.

Chapter 5

Lomé after ‘the Spirit of Lomé’: Tracing the later evolution of a Convention that promised to revolutionise North–South relations

When the first Lomé Convention was signed by the EEC and 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries in 1975, the European Community presented it as a blueprint for reorganising North-South relations. In the context of mounting confrontation between a newly assertive Global South and industrialised powers – ranging from the hostility of the United States to the complacency of the Soviet Union – the European Community sought to transform its burdensome colonial legacy into a platform for shaping the New International Economic Order (NIEO). However, amid deepening economic crises across the African continent, by the late 1970s African countries had grown increasingly disillusioned with the idea that North-South dialogues and processes could deliver a new international order. While Lomé had initially been viewed as a first step – however imperfect – towards restructuring the international order, by the early 1980s African governments were increasingly focused on extracting concrete benefits from the Convention, rather than using it as a stepping stone towards broader systemic change. The 1981 Cancún summit confirmed the demise of NIEO agenda⁷⁷², while Europe turned inwards, prioritising deeper integration through initiatives such as monetary union. Thus, the international landscape of the 1980s drastically differed from the context in which Lomé had originated. Throughout the decade, indeed, international agencies and organisations gradually aligned themselves with a new approach to development, pioneered by the IMF and the World Bank. This alignment appeared so inevitable that, in 1990, economist John Williamson underscored this paradigm shift by coining the term “Washington Consensus”⁷⁷³. While this notion has sparked considerable academic debate – particularly over the extent to which the term obscures the diversity of responses to the emerging paradigm, especially from the Global

⁷⁷² G. Migani, *The road to Cancun: The life and death of a North–South summit*, in: E. Murlon-Druol and F. Romero (eds.), *International Summitry and Global Governance: The rise of the G7 and the European Council, 1974-1991*, London, Routledge, 2014, pp. 174-197.

⁷⁷³ J. Williamson, *What Washington means by policy reform in Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?*, Washington DC, Peterson Institute for International Economics, 1990.

South⁷⁷⁴ – there is broad agreement that, for a time, the Washington Consensus shaped the development aid strategies of nearly all major multilateral and bilateral donors, including the European Community⁷⁷⁵. As a result, the subsequent evolution of the Lomé Conventions has received limited attention in historical literature. Yet, this shift did not spell the end of the Lomé framework.

To investigate how both sides continued to leverage the Lomé framework to manage, contest, and redefine their shared – and, at times, competing – interests, this final chapter examines that evolution by focusing on how Euro-African relations adapted to the emergence of the Washington Consensus. In so doing, it investigates the extent to which the European Community aligned with the emerging consensus and whether, on the other hand, African countries were still able to shape Euro-African relations at a time of weakened international economic position. After tracing a broad picture of how development discourse changed in the 1980s, the chapter examines the inclusion of food security and structural adjustment programmes within the Conventions, assessing how the EEC and the ACP navigated the international economic order of the 1980s. This allows for a better understanding of how African and European countries adapted to the emergence of a neoliberal framework to address developing countries' indebtedness and economic underperformance. In so doing, this chapter investigates how the EEC and ACP countries sought to balance the rigid prescriptions of Washington with a more flexible, negotiated approach. This is particularly evident in their shared stance on food security. While international financial institutions increasingly promoted trade as the path to food security, the Community advocated for food self-reliance, supporting African countries' efforts to strike a balance between export crops and domestic food production. Similarly, as ACP countries faced the harsh social costs of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), Lomé IV came to incorporate a special facility designed to provide financial and technical support to ACP countries undergoing structural reforms. Through this

⁷⁷⁴ V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, op. cit., pp. 143-145. See also: R. Jolly, *Adjustment with a human face: A UNICEF record and perspective on the 1980s*, in: «World Development», Vol. 19, issue 12, 1991, pp. 1807-1821.

⁷⁷⁵ S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrika into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit., p. 445; S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 160-168; P. Hugon, *What is Distinctive about European Development Aid: Taking account of New Paradigms (1975-1995)*, in: G. Bossuat and G. D. Cummings (eds.), *France, Europe and Development Aid. From the Treaties of Rome to the Present Day*, Paris, Institut de la gestion publique et du développement économique, 2013, pp. 95-107; G. Garavini, *The New Context of Relations between North and South, and between the EEC and Developing Countries from the 1960s to the 1980s*, in: G. Bossuat and G. D. Cummings (eds.), *France, Europe and Development Aid. From the Treaties of Rome to the Present Day*, op. cit., pp. 81-93. For a broader review of the academic debate on the Washington Consensus, see: S. Babb and A. E. Kentikelenis, *Markets Everywhere: The Washington Consensus and the Sociology of Global Institutional Change*, in: «Annual Review of Sociology», Vol. 47, 2021.

facility, the Community attempted to walk a fine line between alignment with the IMF and World Bank and the development of a distinctly Communitarian approach – one that aimed to reconcile structural adjustment with long-term development goals.

5.1 “The magic of the free marketplace”: the emergence of a new paradigm

The turn of the decade was marked by a number of significant events. Between 1978 and 1979, the unfolding of the Iranian Revolution ignited the flame of a new oil shock, which, however, lacked the catalysing effect that the first one had had on Third World solidarity⁷⁷⁶. In the following months, the Soviet Union’s increasing activism on the international stage – already complicating bipolar relations in Angola and further souring them by igniting the Horn of Africa crisis⁷⁷⁷ – culminated in the invasion of Afghanistan, decisively bringing to an end a decade of détente between the superpowers⁷⁷⁸. In the meantime, in the West, somewhat unconventional leaders came to power in both the UK and the US, just as the European Economic Community embarked on the path towards eventual monetary union through the creation of the European Monetary System (EMS)⁷⁷⁹. At the same time, the push for NIEO had not disappeared completely, as in 1980 the Independent Commission on International Development, chaired by Willy Brandt, published *North-South: A Programme for Survival*, a report calling for urgent action to address global inequality⁷⁸⁰. Each of these developments touched upon the history recounted here. Yet, despite the tangible upheavals that marked the dawn of a new decade, it was the gradual emergence of a new international economic paradigm – less resonant than major geopolitical events – that would come to define one of the most significant features of the systemic transformation set to reshape the international order in the years ahead.

⁷⁷⁶ G. Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, op. cit., 2019, pp. 289-291. On the second oil shock and its long-term consequences, see also: D. Basosi, G. Garavini, and M. Trentin (eds.), *Counter-Shock. The Oil Counter-Revolution of the 1980s*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2018; C. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization*, op. cit., A. Keshavarzian and A. Mirsepassi (eds.), *Global 1979: Geographies and Histories of the Iranian Revolution*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021.

⁷⁷⁷ O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, op. cit., pp. 278-287.

⁷⁷⁸ While there is ample debate on the periodization of détente, it is commonly accepted that, by the end of the 1970s, confrontation between the two superpowers had once again become the main hallmark of Cold War dynamics. See: R. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan*, Washington D. C., Brookings Institution Press, 1985.

⁷⁷⁹ G. Garavini, *The New Context of Relations between North and South, and between the EEC and Developing Countries from the 1960s to the 1980s*, in: G. Bossuat and G. D. Cummings (eds.), *France, Europe and Development Aid. From the Treaties of Rome to the Present Day*, op. cit., pp. 81-93; See also: E. Mourlon-Druol, *A Europe Made of Money: The Emergence of the European Monetary System*, New York, Cornell University Press, 2012.

⁷⁸⁰ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., pp. 161-162; M. Franczak, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 183-184.

In Africa, it went almost unnoticed, when in late 1979 the African Governors of the World Bank (WB), increasingly worried by Africa's spiralling debt problems and worsening economic crisis, requested that the institution prepare "a special paper on the economic development problems" of Sub-Saharan countries⁷⁸¹. The Bank's response arrived less than two years later: in the summer of 1981, the WB published a report officially named *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action*, which would soon be better known as "The Berg Report", from Elliot Berg, the economist who had guided the report's drafting. The document painted a grim picture of Africa's economic progress over the previous two decades, disavowed development strategies based on industrialisation and prescribed a new kind of panacea for underdevelopment: liberalisation⁷⁸².

The report reflected a broader shift in how development was conceived. The end of the 1970s marked the decline of the notion that developing economies were fundamentally different from those of developed countries, effectively signalling the demise of development economics as a distinct discipline. Traditionally, development economics had adopted a structural approach, emphasising the central role of the state in steering development – typically through industrialisation strategies based on import substitution. By the 1980s, however, these ideas had fallen out of favour⁷⁸³. A growing number of economists began to argue that the distinction between developed and developing countries no longer held in a world where even advanced industrial economies were vulnerable to "the vagaries of international trade and the investment decisions of large transnational corporations"⁷⁸⁴. The perceived need to treat developing countries as a separate category had thus evaporated. In its place emerged a new apparent consensus: the goal of development was supplanted by that of economic growth, to be achieved through the removal of state intervention, which, according to the new paradigm, had long hindered the realisation of developing countries' true economic potential⁷⁸⁵.

In line with this emerging economic paradigm, the Berg Report argued that the balance of payments crises faced by developing countries were not the result of a structural and inevitable

⁷⁸¹ World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa – An Agenda for Action*, Washington D.C., 1981, p. 1.

⁷⁸² Ibidem.

⁷⁸³ A. E. Kentikelenis and S. Babb, *The Making of Neoliberal Globalization: Norm Substitution and the Politics of Clandestine Institutional Change*, in: «American Journal of Sociology», Vol. 124, issue 6, 2019, pp. 1720-1762; S. Babb and A. E. Kentikelenis, *Markets Everywhere: The Washington Consensus and the Sociology of Global Institutional Change*, in: op. cit., pp. 521-541.

⁷⁸⁴ J. Toye, *The Counterrevolution in Development Economics*, in: «History of Political Economy», Vol. 50, issue 1, 2018; pp. 269-285., p. 273.

⁷⁸⁵ D. Plehwe, *The Origins of the Neoliberal Economic Development Discourse*, in: P. Mirowski and D. Plehwe (eds.), *The Road from Mont Pèlerin: The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2009, pp. 238-279.

decline in their terms of trade, but rather stemmed from insufficient export growth. Likewise, debt crises were attributed to states' misguided attempts to plan and control their economies⁷⁸⁶. The report stressed that, rather than focusing on reimagining the international division of labour, African countries should concentrate on expanding exports by specialising in commodity production and unlocking the continent's underexploited agricultural potential⁷⁸⁷. Whereas the 1970s had centred on addressing the structural inequalities of the international economic order, the 1980s marked a shift towards a negative assessment of the state's role, which was now blamed for prioritising industrialisation at the expense of agricultural development.

The Report was extensively criticised by progressive economists, and its reception in Africa was far from enthusiastic, as African governments foresaw the adverse consequences of overhauling their economies and slashing social spending⁷⁸⁸. Between the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s, African states and regional organisations such as the UNECA and the OAU were conducting their own assessments of the global crisis, seeking to craft a strategy grounded in intra-African solidarity rather than continued external dependence. Like their counterparts elsewhere, African policymakers were grappling with the economic turmoil affecting both industrialised and developing countries. Yet, unlike in the West – where the crisis was taken as evidence of the death of development economics – African responses reaffirmed the importance of “self-dependent development”, in a rejection of the assumption that African countries could attain development as an “automatic by-product of the world economic system”⁷⁸⁹.

These themes were first articulated by UNECA Secretary-General Adebajo Adedeji in the UN context, but found more forceful expression in the *Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000*, a document endorsed by African heads of state and government at the OAU summit in April 1980. The Lagos Plan explicitly declared its commitment to “a far-reaching regional approach based primarily on collective self-reliance”⁷⁹⁰. This vision encompassed the attainment of food self-sufficiency, the development

⁷⁸⁶ World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa – An Agenda for Action*, Washington D.C., 1981, pp. 24-45.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibidem, pp. 49-69.

⁷⁸⁸ J. Loxley, *The Berg Report and the Model of Accumulation in Sub-Saharan Africa*, in: «Review of African Political Economy», Vol. 27/28, 1983, pp. 197–204; A. Benachenhrou, *South-South Cooperation: The Lagos Plan of Action and Africa's Independence*, in: «Africa Development / Afrique et Développement», Vol. 8, issue 4, 1983, pp. 5-19.

⁷⁸⁹ A. Benachenhrou, *South-South Cooperation: The Lagos Plan of Action and Africa's Independence*, in: op. cit., pp. 6-7.

⁷⁹⁰ Organization of African Unity, *Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000*, Addis Ababa, 1980.

of industrial and institutional infrastructure, the integration of transport and communication networks across the continent, and the strengthening of institutional capacities to assert control over natural resources. The Lagos Plan also called for a significant increase in intra-African trade, which in 1979 accounted for less than 5% of the continent's total trade⁷⁹¹. In this sense, the Plan's ultimate purpose was to attain African development through regional integration, as it explicitly aimed at paving the way for "the eventual establishment of an African Common Market leading to an African Economic Community" by the year 2000⁷⁹².

Unsurprisingly, such an aspiration was later dismissed by Berg as misguided. He argued that regional blocs had performed poorly across the continent and contended that Africa's future depended not on regional integration, but on deeper engagement with liberalised global trade⁷⁹³. In essence, the Lagos Plan and the Berg Report laid out two fundamentally opposed visions for Africa's development: one rooted in self-reliance and regional cooperation, the other in outward-looking market liberalism. Writing in 1983, Algerian economist Abdellatif Benachenhrou captured the crossroads at which African countries found themselves at the dawn of the new decade:

We have two options: 1) a sovereign African continent in charge of its own natural resources and of its economy, self-organizing its development and open to cooperation when it profits both partners or 2) an African continent which is open to foreign interests, plundered of its natural resources and which will go on sheltering the least advanced countries in the world and the most disgraceful poverty⁷⁹⁴.

While UNECA and OAU deliberations seemed to point clearly in the direction of the first option, these ambitions failed to materialise. In 1979, the US Federal Reserve's decision to tackle inflation through sharp interest rate hikes – the so-called Volcker shock – had a profound impact on developing countries, dramatically increasing their debt-servicing burdens and plunging much of the Global South into crisis⁷⁹⁵. In the early 1980s, the IMF and World Bank

⁷⁹¹ Déclaration de A. Adedeji, *L'Afrique et la Stratégie Internationale du Développement pour la Troisième Décennie des Nations Unies pour le Développement*, 20 June 1979, AMAE 446INVA/1649.

⁷⁹² Organization of African Unity, *Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000*, Addis Ababa, 1980, p. 5.

⁷⁹³ E. Berg, *Reappraising Export Prospects and Regional Trade Arrangement*, in: D. Rimmer (eds.), *Action in Africa: The Experience of People Involved in Government, Business & Aid*, London, Royal African Society in association with James Curreys, 1993.

⁷⁹⁴ A. Benachenhrou, *South-South Cooperation: The Lagos Plan of Action and Africa's Independence*, in: op. cit., p. 15.

⁷⁹⁵ D. J. Sargent, *The United States and Globalization in the 1970s*, in: N. Ferguson et al. (eds.) *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 2010, pp. 49-64. On the US Federal Reserve decision, see also: M. Konings, *Governing the System: Risk, Finance, and Neoliberal Reason*, in: «European Journal of International Relations», Vol. 22, issue 2, 2016, pp. 268-288.

moved to address the escalating debt crisis affecting much of Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa by reopening lines of credit to these countries and tying them to a new set of conditions. This translated into the growing imposition on indebted countries of policy packages based on fiscal austerity and liberalisation measures, which became known as Structural Adjustment Programmes⁷⁹⁶. While conditionality related to currency stability – traditionally the IMF’s primary area of intervention – had long been a feature of IMF assistance⁷⁹⁷, by the mid-1980s the US government encouraged the expansion of IMF’s mandate, resulting in a broader application of aid conditionality⁷⁹⁸. Simultaneously, the World Bank, increasingly influenced by neoconservative economists close to the US Treasury, revised its lending approach, allocating a greater share of its resources to structural adjustment loans linked to comprehensive national economic reforms. Thus, IMF and WB loans became contingent upon the adoption of both macro- and micro-economic reforms, essentially pushing developing countries to adopt neoliberal policies and conform to the recipes for development illustrated by the Berg Report⁷⁹⁹. This shift was facilitated not only by the fact that SAPs enabled heavily indebted countries to access additional funding from the IMF and the World Bank, but also because the implementation of a SAP signalled to other public and private creditors that the country in question had aligned itself with the emerging ‘consensus’ – and was therefore deemed a reliable borrower⁸⁰⁰.

As a result of this process, developing countries – particularly smaller ones that lacked the leverage of a potentially systemically significant default – were compelled to accept Structural Adjustment Programmes in order to restructure their sovereign debt and maintain access to both public and private credit lines. In some cases, African countries responded positively to this paradigmatic shift. Throughout the decade, several Ghanaian economists, for instance, rejected structural explanations of underdevelopment and began to emphasise market capitalism as both a path to growth and a means of overcoming the economic legacies of

⁷⁹⁶ S. Van Mourik, *Globalizing Neoliberalism: The IMF, the Paris Club, and the Political Economy of Sovereign Default in Africa after 1982*, in: «Global Perspectives», Vol. 6, issue 1, 2025, pp. 2-3.

⁷⁹⁷ J. Sgard, *The Debt Crisis of the 1980s: Law and Political Economy*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2023, pp. 23-49.

⁷⁹⁸ S. Babb and A. E. Kentikelenis, *Markets Everywhere: The Washington Consensus and the Sociology of Global Institutional Change*, in: op. cit., p. 527; J. Toye, *The Counterrevolution in Development Economics*, in: op. cit., p. 280.

⁷⁹⁹ L. Warloutzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World: Neoliberalism and its Alternatives following the 1973 Oil Crisis*, Abingdon-on-Thames, Routledge, 2018, pp. 90-92.

⁸⁰⁰ S. Van Mourik, *Globalizing Neoliberalism The IMF, the Paris Club, and the Political Economy of Sovereign Default in Africa after 1982*, in: op. cit., pp. 2-3.

colonialism⁸⁰¹. Unsurprisingly, such ideas contributed to Ghana's adoption of SAPs as a remedy for years of misguided policies that had stifled the emergence of home-grown African capitalism. In most cases, however, African governments accepted SAPs not out of conviction but because access to further credit was conditional upon them. As recalled by David Phiri, governor of Zambia's Central Bank in the 1980s:

Unfortunately, to be acceptable to the international community [...] a country has to have a program with the Fund, whatever the consequences. Consequently, there are times when we reluctantly enter into programs with the Fund even though we know only too well that they will not work, and we do so only so that the Paris Club and the London Club can reschedule our debts⁸⁰².

Thus, over the course of the decade, the roles of the IMF and the World Bank – originally designed to address distinct sets of issues related to monetary stability and development – began to converge, effectively succeeding in spreading free-market policies⁸⁰³.

This shift, however, did not pertain solely to economic theories regarding development, and would have not been possible without political support from Western countries. In the late 1970s, Community member states were grappling with increasingly alarming economic trends, exacerbated by the second oil shock of 1979. Inflation and unemployment kept rising simultaneously, so that the phenomenon of stagflation – previously thought unlikely – took hold⁸⁰⁴. Neo-Keynesian responses based on the management of economic cycles failed, as well as neo-mercantilist attempts at protecting industries, now threatened by the emergence of Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) in East Asia⁸⁰⁵. As a result, between the end of the 1970s and the mid-1980s, neoliberal thinking spread across the Community, thanks to the emergence of new leaders in both the US and within the EEC.

⁸⁰¹ F. Gerits, *Anticolonial Capitalism: How Ghana came to embrace market-led development theory (1970s-1990s)*, in: «Southern Journal for Contemporary History», Vol. 47, issue 1, 2022, pp. 20-24.

⁸⁰² D. Phiri, *Comments*, in: G. K. Helleiner (eds.) *Africa and the International Monetary Fund: Papers Presented at a Symposium Held in Nairobi, Kenya, May 13-15, 1985*, Washington DC, The International Monetary Fund, 1986; quoted in: S. Van Mourik, *Globalizing Neoliberalism The IMF, the Paris Club, and the Political Economy of Sovereign Default in Africa after 1982*, in: op. cit., p. 8.

⁸⁰³ S. Babb and A. E. Kentikelenis, *Markets Everywhere: The Washington Consensus and the Sociology of Global Institutional Change*, in: op. cit.

⁸⁰⁴ C. S. Maier, «Malaise»: *The Crisis of Capitalism in the 1970s*, in: N. Ferguson et al. (eds.) *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, op. cit., pp. 25-48.

⁸⁰⁵ L. Warlouzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World: Neoliberalism and its Alternatives following the 1973 Oil Crisis*, op. cit., pp. 100-118; G. Garavini, *The New Context of Relations between North and South, and between the EEC and Developing Countries from the 1960s to the 1980s*, in: G. Bossuat and G. D. Cummings (eds.), *France, Europe and Development Aid. From the Treaties of Rome to the Present Day*, op. cit., pp. 81-93.

The first was Margaret Thatcher, who became leader of the Conservative Party in 1975 and Prime Minister four years later, remaining in power for over a decade. Once in office, she began to challenge the foundations of the “post-war consensus” that had shaped British politics for the previous thirty years. This consensus had enabled the development of the welfare state and fostered corporatist relations between the state, industry, and trade unions. Once in power, Thatcher set about dismantling the consensus model, prioritising the fight against inflation regardless of social or political cost⁸⁰⁶. Embracing monetarist doctrine, which linked inflation to money supply, her government implemented deflationary measures, raised interest rates, and curtailed the power of trade unions. While some protectionist measures initially persisted in trade policy⁸⁰⁷, liberalisation and financial deregulation increasingly came to define Thatcher’s economic agenda throughout the decade.

While Thatcher was the first leader to openly renounce neo-Keynesian policies, other Western states soon aligned with the emerging neoliberal paradigm. In late 1982, Helmut Kohl became the new West German chancellor, further reinforcing Bonn’s orientation towards fiscal stability and free market policies. On the other side of the Rhine, François Mitterrand, who had been elected in 1981 on a socialist programme, was about to impress a “U-turn” to French economic policy, adopting austerity measures since 1983 onwards. These developments in European leadership signalled the definitive retreat of Keynesian approaches in Western Europe⁸⁰⁸. In the meantime, across the Atlantic, Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States in November 1980. Less than a year later, just a few months after the publication of the Berg Report, he addressed the IMF and WB Governors, showcasing the tenets of his administration’s approach to development and North-South relations.

The speech became famous because of Reagan’s exhortation to espouse the “magic of the market place”⁸⁰⁹. Essentially, this signalled that the new administration approached the Global South through the lens of its broader domestic economic agenda, prioritising market discipline and rejecting the structural explanations for global imbalances that had underpinned earlier internationalist strategies. This view extended outward: reforms in the Global South, including

⁸⁰⁶ G. K. Fry, *The Politics of the Thatcher Revolution: An Interpretation of British Politics 1979 – 1990*, London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, pp. 73-75.

⁸⁰⁷ L. Warloutzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World: Neoliberalism and its Alternatives following the 1973 Oil Crisis*, op. cit., pp. 93-94.

⁸⁰⁸ Ibidem, pp. 138-140.

⁸⁰⁹ *Reagan Talk to World Bank and I. M. F.*, in: «The New York Times», 30 September 1981, <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/09/30/business/reagan-talk-to-world-bank-and-imf.html> (last accessed on 15/06/2025).

trade liberalisation and market opening, were considered essential not only for revitalising international financial flows, but also for making these economies more attractive to private investors. The overarching objective was to reduce reliance on concessional lending and instead use multilateral aid to supplement, rather than replace, commercial investment. In this way, Reagan's approach to international development functioned as both a strategy for global economic recovery and a means of scaling back US involvement in wealth transfer mechanisms⁸¹⁰. This was in line with the neoliberal turn that had engulfed development economics, which posited that international aid was not truly conducive to development, but acted rather as "government to government subsidies" and thus contributed to inefficiency and funds misallocation⁸¹¹. Shortly after Reagan's speech, the North-South summit held in Cancun, Mexico, in October 1981 marked the last concrete attempt to revive North-South dialogues⁸¹². The momentum for a New International Economic Order had come to an end. As noted by a contemporary commentator, "the entrenched view of many Northern governments today is that the resolution of global economic crisis lies in domestic reforms [...] and not in North-South initiatives and strategies"⁸¹³.

Thus, between 1979 and 1983, Western Europe went through a phase of political realignment, abandoning the general social-democratic consensus that had characterised the post-war period up to that point. By the mid-1980s, neoliberal and monetarist governments in the UK, West Germany, Belgium, and The Netherlands were pitted against nominally socialist administrations – like those in France, Italy and the latest new Communitarian member, Greece – that were trying to adjust to the new realities of international economy⁸¹⁴. While differences among Community members had always existed and their dialectic had always contributed to the shaping of Euro-African relations, the emergence of this cleavage in the 1980s played a significant part in the later evolution of the Lomé framework, and determined the extent to which the EEC adhered to the Washington Consensus.

⁸¹⁰ M. Franczak, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*, op. cit., pp. 178-180.

⁸¹¹ S. Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, op. cit., p. 161; J. Bair, *Taking aim at the New International Economic Order*, in: P. Mirowski and D. Plehwe (eds.), *The Road from Mont Pèlerin: The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2009, pp. 347-385.

⁸¹² G. Migani, *The road to Cancun: The life and death of a North-South summit*, in: op. cit.

⁸¹³ T. Hill, *Whither Lomé? A Review of the Lomé III Negotiations*, in: «Third World Quarterly», Vol. 7, issue 3, 1985, pp. 661-681, p. 663.

⁸¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 664. See also: L. Warlouzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World: Neoliberalism and its Alternatives following the 1973 Oil Crisis*, op. cit., pp. 138-140.

5.2 Redefining the ‘Spirit of Lomé’

After eight years in Brussels, Claude Cheysson’s long tenure as Development Commissioner came to an end in 1981, when he was handpicked by Mitterrand to serve as French Foreign Minister⁸¹⁵. He was succeeded by Edgard Pisani. Like Cheysson, Pisani was a French socialist, but the similarities between the two figures ended there. In the 1960s Pisani had served as Minister for Agriculture under De Gaulle – an experience that would come to shape his approach to development⁸¹⁶. This would become evident in late 1982, when, in light of the negotiations for the renewal of Lomé set to open a year later, Pisani presented his own memorandum on the future of Euro-African relations. Oriented towards long-term visions of development, Pisani believed a sweeping restructuration of priorities was in order.

At first glance, Pisani’s vision appeared closely aligned with the new economic orthodoxy exemplified by the Berg Report. The first step of his restructuration, indeed, was to bring agricultural and rural development back at the heart of Euro-African cooperation. Pisani insisted that the previous iterations of Lomé had overshadowed the importance that food and agriculture had in fostering development. As pointed out by Véronique Dimier, Pisani’s vision was in evident continuity with the colonial approach that idealised rural Africa and predicated “evolution with respect for traditions”⁸¹⁷. Moreover, Pisani sought to introduce the notion of ‘policy dialogue’ in Euro-African discourse. This marked a clear departure from Cheysson’s approach, who within DG VIII had championed the principle that EDF funds should be used according to ACP countries’ own priorities and without undue European interference⁸¹⁸. In contrast, Pisani maintained that the Community had “a right and a duty”⁸¹⁹ to ensure that its aid was used effectively. From the outside, this shift bore a strong resemblance to the increasingly stringent aid conditionality promoted by the IMF and World Bank. Indeed, this is how much of the academic literature has interpreted the introduction of policy dialogue⁸²⁰.

⁸¹⁵ S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrika into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit., p. 445.

⁸¹⁶ Edgard Pisani comments on the Memorandum on Community development policy, in: «The Courier», Vol. 76, issue November-December, 1982, pp. 49-57.

⁸¹⁷ V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit., p. 118.

⁸¹⁸ D. Frisch, *The Role of France and the French in European Development Cooperation Policy*, in: G. Bossuat and G. D. Cummings (eds.), *France, Europe and Development Aid. From the Treaties of Rome to the Present Day*, Paris, Institut de la gestion publique et du développement économique, 2013, pp. 109-120.

⁸¹⁹ Edgard Pisani comments on the Memorandum on Community development policy, in: op. cit., p. 56.

⁸²⁰ S. Lorenzini, *Third Force Ambitions: Claude Cheysson and the Rebranding of Eurafrika into Europe's Grand Design*, in: op. cit., p. 445; P. Hugon, *What is Distinctive about European Development Aid: Taking account of New Paradigms (1975-1995)*, in: op. cit.; G. Garavini, *The New Context of Relations between North and South, and between the EEC and Developing Countries from the 1960s to the 1980s*, in: op. cit.

Examining this evolution from a closer point of observation, however, allows for a more nuanced narrative of how both the Community and ACP countries adjusted their relations in the shifting context of the 1980s. The two principles that Pisani proposed – a renewed focus on agriculture and the introduction of policy dialogue – found their perfect expression, according to Pisani himself⁸²¹, in a new kind of sectoral cooperation that DG VIII was testing at the time. Since 1981, against the backdrop of a growing international debate on global food security, Pisani had pushed the Community to support African countries' own food strategies, starting with pilot programmes in Zambia, Mali, Kenya, and Rwanda⁸²². Rather than financing single projects or just rely on food aid, this new approach aimed to provide technical and financial assistance for the development of broad policy frameworks that could underpin long-term, nationally owned food security strategies. Central to this approach was the recognition of food security as a macroeconomic issue, particularly given that food expenditure in many ACP countries accounted for over half of household consumption, and agricultural labour made up a significant majority of the workforce⁸²³. The fact that these strategies would be elaborated by African states with the help of Community officials best captured Pisani's conception of policy dialogue, while revealing the paternalistic undertones of his vision for Euro-African cooperation:

Every country has to define its own future. [...] What we have done so far is give these countries tools regardless of whether the people there could actually use them. And they often turned out to be unable to do so. [...] What I want to do, what the Commission has decided to do and the idea I hope the Council will go on to adopt, is to tell these countries that, if they can show they need a particular tool and can use it, then we will supply it⁸²⁴.

Thus, between the push for food strategies in 1981 and the presentation of his memorandum in 1982, Pisani sought to assert his vision for development and to forge intra-Community consensus around a redefinition of the so-called 'Spirit of Lomé' ahead of the upcoming Lomé III negotiations. To some extent, this redefinition marked a partial alignment with the emerging neoliberal approach to development, which similarly emphasised the centrality of agriculture, as highlighted in the Berg Report. Moreover, the Community guidelines for food strategies stressed the detrimental impact of fixed-price policies – widely employed by African

⁸²¹ *Edgard Pisani comments on the Memorandum on Community development policy*, in: op. cit., pp. 50-52.

⁸²² *Food Strategies: Review and Prospects*, Staff paper of the Commission of the European Community, Brussels, 26 October 1984, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-SEC(1984)1692.

⁸²³ *Ibidem*.

⁸²⁴ *Edgard Pisani comments on the Memorandum on Community development policy*, in: op. cit., p. 50.

governments – on agricultural output. They advocated instead for the removal of state-imposed price controls on agricultural goods, with the aim of encouraging farmers to boost production through market-based incentives⁸²⁵.

On the other hand, however, Pisani was no World Bank economist, and his approach remained anchored to the Euro-African framework: the ultimate aim of the Community's food strategy initiative was not to maximise African countries' cash crops so as to exploit their comparative advantage and attain food security through trade. On the contrary, Pisani's vision centred on the notion of self-sufficiency. In this perspective, a renewed emphasis on rural development could set in motion a virtuous cycle of economic stimuli: increased agricultural output would generate demand for local infrastructure and raise the incomes of a large segment of the population, which in turn would stimulate the "emergence of a wide, unspectacular range of small and medium-sized firms to meet local needs"⁸²⁶. The ultimate goal, then, was to achieve domestic food security while simultaneously supporting the transition from "an economy based on subsistence farming to one based on trade"⁸²⁷. In this respect, Pisani's approach – however paternalistic – was far more in line with the calls for self-centred development expressed in the Lagos Plan than with the neoliberal recommendations of the Berg Report. Moreover, as demonstrated by the demands put forward by ACP countries ahead and during the negotiations for Lomé III, African countries themselves, especially those engulfed in the droughts and consequent famines in the Sahel region⁸²⁸, were pressing to place rural development and food self-sufficiency at the heart of the Euro-African relations⁸²⁹.

During the negotiations for Lomé III, which took place between late 1983 and December 1984, a sense of ambivalence re-emerged. On the one hand, it had become apparent that, despite rhetorical references, neither the Community nor the ACP genuinely regarded the establishment of a New International Economic Order as a viable prospect. Both sides acknowledged the structural nature of the crisis affecting industrialised and developing countries alike, and increasingly framed North–South relations in terms of interdependence. For the Europeans, this marked a shift away from the earlier emphasis on Lomé as a vehicle for

⁸²⁵ *Food Strategies: Review and Prospects*, Staff paper of the Commission of the European Community, Brussels, 26 October 1984, HAEU CEUE_SEGE-SEC(1984)1692, pp. 4-5.

⁸²⁶ *Edgard Pisani comments on the Memorandum on Community development policy*, in: op. cit., p. 51.

⁸²⁷ Ibidem.

⁸²⁸ G. Arrighi, *The African Crisis: World Systemic and Regional Aspects*, in: «New Left Review», Vol. 2, issue 15, 2002, pp. 5-36.

⁸²⁹ *Allocution prononcée par le Président du Conseil des Ministres ACP lors de l'ouverture des négociations en vue d'un accord faisant suite à la Deuxième Convention de Lomé*, Brussels, 5 October 1983, AMAE 435INVA/2029.

transforming global relations. Pisani himself, addressing persistent challenges such as commodity price volatility and debt, reminded the ACP that “Europe is part of the world, and the Community cannot solve all the world’s problems”⁸³⁰ – a striking departure from the bold proclamations that had once celebrated the Lomé model in the 1970s.

For the ACP, however, this meant that “any confidence they may have had in this international dialogue and in the initiatives taken to alleviate the impact of the crisis [was] rapidly disappearing”⁸³¹. Whereas a decade earlier these countries had been able to shape the course of Euro-African relations through their own rhetoric and priorities, by the mid-1980s their demands – improved access to European markets, joint EEC–ACP management of the EDF, raw material price indexation, special aid, and debt relief⁸³² – lacked the ideological and economic underpinnings that they had in the 1970s. This shift was apparent from the early stages of the negotiations, when the ACP proposed linking commodity prices to those of manufactured goods. A similar proposal had at least been debated during the talks for Lomé I; in 1983, however, it was swiftly dismissed by Pisani, who stated plainly that “we cannot envisage putting ourselves outside the world market and we would be putting ourselves outside the world market if we granted you not only access privileges but also a guaranteed price”⁸³³. More broadly, ACP concerns over the deterioration of their terms of trade no longer carried the ideological weight they once did, and were increasingly met with the argument that the decline in ACP revenues stemmed not solely from structural imbalances, but also from the relative weakening of their productive systems in comparison with emerging economies in South-East Asia and Latin America⁸³⁴.

Indeed, Lomé III negotiations took place at a time when Euro-African relations appeared to be losing their strategic importance. Despite the preferential framework established by the Lomé Convention, trade between the EEC and ACP countries had declined between 1970 and 1980,

⁸³⁰ *Edgard Pisani : La Communauté avec les ACP a le devoir d’être ambitieuse*, Le Soleil, 22 October 1983, ANS.

⁸³¹ *Allocution prononcée par le Président du Conseil des Ministres ACP lors de l’ouverture des négociations en vue d’un accord faisant suite à la Deuxième Convention de Lomé*, Brussels, 5 October 1983, AMAE 435INVA/2029.

⁸³² M. Drumetz, *Mandat de négociation de la future Convention ACP/CEE*, Telegram from Lagos to Paris, 22 September 1983, AMAE 453INVA/2029; C. Harel, *Mandat de négociation de la future Convention ACP/CEE*, Telegram from Dakar to Paris, 17 September 1983, AMAE 453INVA/2029; R. Duzer, *Mandat de négociation de la future Convention ACP/CEE*, Telegram from Nairobi to Paris, 16 September 1983, AMAE 453INVA/2029; *Report drawn up on behalf of the Joint Committee taking into account the Eight Annual Report of the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers on the state of implementation of the Lomé Convention and the prospects for the subsequent new Convention*, ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly, 19 September 1984, HAEU ACP 715.

⁸³³ *M. Edgard Pisani, Commissaire européen au Développement : Assurer des garanties au système productif ACP*, Le Soleil, 24 October 1983, ANS.

⁸³⁴ *Ibidem*.

and ACP states remained a peripheral destination for European investment⁸³⁵. The impending accession of Spain and Portugal, scheduled for just a year after the renegotiation of Lomé, also raised concerns among African countries about increased competition for some of their key exports⁸³⁶. For the Community, this context offered greater latitude to redefine the spirit of Lomé. Between 1983 and 1984, this translated into a more assertive negotiating stance, allowing the EEC to push forward its own priorities: the introduction of policy dialogue, safeguards for European investments, oversight of STABEX fund usage, and explicit references to human rights⁸³⁷.

Despite the Community's stronger negotiating position, its objectives were only partially met. The negotiations – so protracted and contentious that they required six separate ministerial conferences – were marked by ACP resistance to any form of policy dialogue that might infringe on their sovereignty⁸³⁸. In the end, the Community had to settle for tighter procedures governing the allocation of EDF aid, which included an “exchange of views” on ACP national development programmes “in order to ensure the maximum effectiveness of cooperation schemes”⁸³⁹ – a formulation that fell short of establishing genuine conditionality. Similarly, although the Community sought greater oversight of STABEX transfers, ACP states ultimately conceded only to providing comprehensive information on how the funds were used⁸⁴⁰.

Nonetheless, by December 1984, the Third Lomé Convention signalled a new phase in Euro-African relations. While Lomé had originally been conceived as a blueprint for reshaping North-South relations, a decade later it was celebrated as the embodiment of a lasting special relationship between Europe and its former colonies. For the Community, Lomé continued to serve both practical and symbolic purposes: securing access to natural resources while presenting Europe as a partner committed to supporting Southern countries, even amidst global economic uncertainty. This commitment was exemplified by the scale of the new EDF, which, totalling 7.5 billion ECU, exceeded the previous fund in real terms – a striking contrast to the World Bank's International Development Association, whose 1984 replenishment, when

⁸³⁵ T. Hill, *Whither Lomé? A Review of the Lomé III Negotiations*, in: op. cit., p. 664.

⁸³⁶ C. Harel, *Le Sénégal et Lomé III*, Letter to R. Dumas, Minister for External Relations, Dakar, 10 July 1985, AMAE 589INVA/2443.

⁸³⁷ M. Butler, *EEC/ACP: Fifth Ministerial Negotiating Conference, Brussels, 9-12 October*, Telegram from Brussels to London, Brussels, 15 October 1984, TNA FCO 98/1939.

⁸³⁸ *Statement by the ACP President at the Signing of the Third Convention of Lomé – Lomé, Togo, 8.12.84*, Lomé, 08 December 1984, TNA FCO 98/1940, pp. 5-6.

⁸³⁹ B. L. Crowe, Note on Lomé Convention, London, 16 November 1984, TNA FCO 98/1940.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

adjusted for inflation, amounted to just 75% of its previous instalment⁸⁴¹. Indeed, ties with the ACP remained central to the Community's international identity, as Pisani underscored at the outset of the renegotiations: "But Europe has no political, economic or strategic destiny [...] unless it forges a privileged and positive relationship with the Third World"⁸⁴². Europe and its former colonies, Pisani insisted, were still bound by mutual need: "By distancing themselves from Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific would lose an irreplaceable source of support. Without the ACP, Europe lacks the scope it both seeks and must have"⁸⁴³.

For the ACP, on the other hand, Lomé had evolved over the course of a decade from a stepping stone towards NIEO into one of the few remaining arenas where their own voice could be heard and tangible results could still be achieved. Although their position had been structurally weakened by the ongoing crisis, ACP states nonetheless succeeded during negotiations in promoting their own conception of self-centred development, defending key prerogatives and securing some – albeit limited – improvements to both the trade regime and the aid package⁸⁴⁴. The unfolding of the negotiations had been followed closely by the OAU⁸⁴⁵ and eventually the signing of Lomé III was positively received by ACP representatives, for whom "[b]etween developed and developing countries, Lomé has indeed become a symbol of international cooperation, virtually the sole beacon in an otherwise dark and unlit sea, strewn with unfulfilled hopes"⁸⁴⁶. Thus, by the mid-1980s, despite the influence of the emerging neoliberal paradigm on the form and content of the new Convention, Lomé continued to reflect the interests of both European and African partners. While it had not succeeded in catalysing a broader reorganisation of core–periphery relations, Lomé still stood as a notable exception – especially as power dynamics in North-South relations tilted ever more heavily in favour of the North.

⁸⁴¹ *Negotiation of Successor to Second Lomé Convention*, Telegram from G. Howe to Commonwealth posts, London, 23 November 1984, TNA FCO 98/1940.

⁸⁴² *Ouverture des négociations pour le renouvellement de la Convention ACP CEE Luxembourg le 6.10.1983 – Discours de Monsieur Ergard Pisani, Membre de la Commission des Communautés Européennes*, Luxembourg, 6 October 1983, AMAE 435INVA/2029.

⁸⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁴⁴ B. L. Crowe, Note on Lomé Convention, London, 16 November 1984, TNA FCO 98/1940.

⁸⁴⁵ A. Gningue, *O.A.U : Le nouveau départ - Plusieurs Résolutions Economiques*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 16 November 1984, ANS.

⁸⁴⁶ *Statement by the ACP President at the Signing of the Third Convention of Lomé – Lomé, Togo, 8.12.84*, Lomé, 8 December 1984, TNA FCO 98/1940, p.2. Similarly, Senegalese press reported that the agreement for a new Convention represented "an act of faith, a testimony of fidelity to a common option, a renewed challenge to the incomprehension and egoism that have always characterised international economic relations". See: S. Gaye, *Un Acte de Foi*, Le Soleil, Dakar, 25 November 1984, ANS.

5.3 “Nurses, not surgeons”: searching for European exceptionalism in a new economic order

In the very days in which African newspapers were reporting on the newly signed Third Lomé Convention, Senegal’s leading daily newspaper, *Le Soleil*, published a different kind of piece: an extract from a publication by IMF Director Jacques de Larosi re, titled *Does the Fund Impose Austerity?*⁸⁴⁷. The purpose of the excerpt was to defend the IMF against the ever stronger accusations that were rising from developing countries that had to undertake SAPs in order to secure debt rescheduling and additional funding. By 1984, Senegal had already sought IMF help in rescheduling its debt for a number of times, roughly once a year since it had first sought an IMF arrangement in 1979⁸⁴⁸. Unsurprisingly, then, the excerpt from de Larosi re’s pamphlet was introduced by remarking that:

In the eyes of public opinion, particularly in the Third World, [the IMF] is regarded, in any case, as the symbol of capitalist cynicism and the dictatorship of money, exercised with disregard for the people and for the well-understood interests of the governments that turn to the IMF⁸⁴⁹.

The article’s explicit aim was to challenge this perception, mainly by presenting structural adjustment as “ineluctable”. De Larosi re argued bluntly that countries living “above their means”⁸⁵⁰ had no alternative but to implement SAPs, and that failure to do so would leave them to weather the crisis without direction – and without access to IMF and World Bank assistance. He also sought to shift the blame for the social costs of adjustment, claiming these were not imposed by the Fund but rather stemmed from the decisions of national governments, who were responsible for determining which sectors would bear the burden of spending cuts. That responsibility, he insisted, could never lie with the IMF:

The IMF’s role is to say: ‘Given the external financial resources at your disposal, the objective of returning to a viable balance of payments situation within a reasonable timeframe implies that you limit your internal consumption, increase your local savings and increase your exports’⁸⁵¹.

⁸⁴⁷ J. de Larosi re, *Does the Fund Impose Austerity?* Washington, International Monetary Fund, 1984.

⁸⁴⁸ S. Van Mourik, *Globalizing Neoliberalism The IMF, the Paris Club, and the Political Economy of Sovereign Default in Africa after 1982*, in: op. cit., p. 8.

⁸⁴⁹ *Le F.M.I impose-t-il l’aust rit  ?*, *Le Soleil*, Dakar, 13 December 1984, ANS.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁸⁵¹ Ibidem.

De Larosière's message was clear, and it sounded very much like the slogan that was being used by Margaret Thatcher in her domestic crusade to control inflation through increasingly restrictive fiscal policies: "There is no alternative"⁸⁵². Despite the harsh social costs that deflationary measures entailed, neoliberal leaders, in national governments and international organisations alike, insisted on the unescapable nature of such corrections. Thus, throughout the decade "There is no alternative" – or TINA, for short – came to constitute the ultimate counter-argument to those who pointed out that neoliberal policies were not having the desired effects on development or economic growth. The emerging consensus indeed repudiated any explanation of the crisis that hinged on international inequality and, consequently, proposals that hinged on structural change at international level. Global South's calls for debt cancellation or debt relief were easily dismissed, on the grounds that debt forgiveness did not really improve on the conditions of debtor countries⁸⁵³. By the end of the decade, Edward Jaycox, WB's regional vice-president for Africa, bluntly commented that "adjustment is a fact of life – for everyone, for every country. It is a continual process, not a one-time correction. *There is no alternative* [emphasis in the original]"⁸⁵⁴.

This rhetoric did not remain confined to Western high offices. In 1986, African heads of state gathered in Addis Ababa for an OAU summit convened specifically to assess the deepening crisis and formulate a collective response. The outcome was the Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER), which marked a notable shift from the Lagos Plan's emphasis on self-centred development. While external shocks were still cited as major contributors to the crisis, APPER also acknowledged the role of domestic policy shortcomings and the limited capacity of African states to tackle the crisis independently. This reorientation signalled a growing convergence with the emerging Washington Consensus, as APPER advocated for policy reforms in line with the new development orthodoxy exemplified by the Berg Report. In exchange, African leaders called for international assistance in alleviating debt burdens and stabilising export prices⁸⁵⁵. This new approach was internationally sanctioned during the UN General Assembly Special Session of May 1986, with the Community's support⁸⁵⁶.

⁸⁵² M. Thatcher, *Speech to Conservative Women's Conference*, London, 21 May 1980, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104368> (last access 22 June 2025).

⁸⁵³ D. Rimmer, *External Debt and Structural Adjustment in Tropical Africa*, in: «African Affairs», Vol. 89, issue 355, 1990, pp. 283-291, pp. 290-291.

⁸⁵⁴ E. Jaycox, *Structural Adjustment in Sub-Saharan Africa: The World Bank's Perspective*, in: «Issue: A Journal of Opinion», Vol. 18, issue 1, 1989, pp. 36-40, p. 40.

⁸⁵⁵ G. Arrighi, *The African Crisis: World Systemic and Regional Aspects*, in: op. cit., p. 9.

⁸⁵⁶ Rapport du Groupe ACP au Comité des Représentants Permanents sur les Relations avec les Etats ACP, Conseil de la Communauté Européenne, Brussels, 28 April 1987, AMAE 589INVA/3244, pp. 43-44.

In the meantime, African countries continued to struggle with a new fall in commodity prices, which had caused a sharp decline in their export earnings, and, in turn, exacerbated already existing debt problems⁸⁵⁷. In this context, EEC-ACP trade relations remained on a downward trajectory: while in 1970 the Community had absorbed nearly 70% of ACP exports to Western industrialised countries, by 1986 this share had fallen to just over 50%⁸⁵⁸. Ahead of the forthcoming Lomé renegotiations, scheduled to begin in late 1988, ACP states pressed the Community, which remained Sub-Saharan Africa's primary trade partner, to act across multiple fronts⁸⁵⁹. One of their primary concerns was the preservation of their preferential access to European markets, which they feared was being steadily undermined by preference erosion and creeping protectionism. This called for greater scrutiny of the implications of Community positions within the ongoing Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations, as well as for the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers which, despite the nominally free access granted to most ACP products, continued to hinder the expansion of their exports to Europe⁸⁶⁰. The continued deterioration in developing countries' terms of trade underscored the importance of compensatory mechanisms such as STABEX and SYSMIN, which, the ACP argued, required more substantial endowments. Yet, these instruments alone were insufficient to address the severe challenges faced by ACP countries in increasing the value of their exports. In response, ACP representatives called for urgent measures to promote the local processing, valorisation, and commercialisation of raw materials⁸⁶¹. They also drew attention to the widening gap between Western industrialised nations and the developing world, exacerbated by global economic trends. While low commodity prices were aiding recovery in the West – lowering inflation, boosting production, and reducing unemployment – ACP countries were sustaining the burden of the West's economic recovery⁸⁶². In this already adverse environment, the implementation

⁸⁵⁷ *African economic recovery within the ACP-EEC arrangement*, Economic Commission for Africa, Seminar of a Successor Arrangement to the Lomé III Convention, Dakar, Senegal, 11-15 July 1988, <https://repository.uneca.org/entities/publication/670b2a92-6524-5946-94ea-d2de58c324dd> (last access 27 June 2025).

⁸⁵⁸ *Memorandum ACP en vue de la mise en œuvre de l'Article 45 de la IIIème Convention de Lomé*, Group états d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique, Brussels, 24 April 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244.

⁸⁵⁹ *African economic recovery within the ACP-EEC arrangement*, Economic Commission for Africa, Seminar of a Successor Arrangement to the Lomé III Convention, Dakar, Senegal, 11-15 July 1988, <https://repository.uneca.org/entities/publication/670b2a92-6524-5946-94ea-d2de58c324dd> (last access 27 June 2025).

⁸⁶⁰ *Déclaration faite pour le Président du Conseil des Ministres ACP, M. Carl B. Greenidge, à l'occasion de l'Ouverture des Négociations en vue d'une 4ème Convention ACP-CEE*, Group états d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique, Brussels, 12 October 1988, HAEU CM6/ACP-00526/001.

⁸⁶¹ *Memorandum ACP en vue de la mise en œuvre de l'Article 45 de la IIIème Convention de Lomé*, Group états d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique, Brussels, 24 April 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244.

⁸⁶² *African economic recovery within the ACP-EEC arrangement*, Economic Commission for Africa, Seminar of a Successor Arrangement to the Lomé III Convention, Dakar, Senegal, 11-15 July 1988,

of Structural Adjustment Programmes had brought severe social and political costs, without delivering the long-term benefits promised by the International Financial Institutions. For the ACP, these phenomena were clearly interrelated:

there is a direct link between the fall in commodity prices, the indebtedness of the ACP States and their inability to implement genuine structural adjustment programmes which would enable them to transform their production sectors and reduce their dependence on commodities⁸⁶³.

In the ACP's view, this situation called for coordinated action with the Community to establish a dedicated facility aimed at supporting their structural adjustment efforts. Crucially, this new instrument was to be distinct from the EDF, sufficiently resourced to meet the objectives of ACP-EEC cooperation, and independent from the conditionality imposed by the IMF and the World Bank⁸⁶⁴. By pursuing this path, the ACP argued, both parties could forge a renewed balance – one that not only backed immediate adjustment efforts but also genuinely promoted long-term industrial development⁸⁶⁵.

In the meantime, both Community member states and the Commission – headed since 1985 by the French socialist Jacques Delors – were largely focused on internal developments, including the accession of Spain and Portugal and the adoption of the Single European Act (SEA), which laid the foundations for the establishment of the Single Market. Development Commissioner Lorenzo Natali, however, recognised that these shifts raised important questions about the future of Europe's global development policy, particularly as Spain criticised the limited scope of EEC-ACP cooperation – a stance that caused unease among ACP countries⁸⁶⁶. Against this backdrop, it soon became evident that the forthcoming Lomé renegotiation would not usher in

<https://repository.uneca.org/entities/publication/670b2a92-6524-5946-94ea-d2de58c324dd> (last access 27 June 2025).

⁸⁶³ *Déclaration faite pour le Président du Conseil des Ministres ACP, M. Carl B. Greenidge, à l'occasion de l'Ouverture des Négociations en vue d'une 4^{ème} Convention ACP-CEE*, Group états d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique, Brussels, 12 October 1988, HAEU CM6/ACP-00526/001, p. 11.

⁸⁶⁴ *Memorandum on ACP Guidelines for the Negotiations for a Fourth ACP/EEC Convention*, African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, Brussels, 4 October 1988, TNA FCO 98/3342, pp. 167-170.

⁸⁶⁵ *Déclaration faite pour le Président du Conseil des Ministres ACP, M. Carl B. Greenidge, à l'occasion de l'Ouverture des Négociations en vue d'une 4^{ème} Convention ACP-CEE*, Group états d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique, Brussels, 12 October 1988, HAEU CM6/ACP-00526/001, pp. 15-16.

⁸⁶⁶ *Le système contractuel ACP/CEE, d'une convention à l'autre*, Note du Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Paris, 4 May 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244 ; *Renégociation de la Convention de Lomé – Rencontre du 6 Janvier entre une délégation française et la Commission*, Compte-rendu de la Représentation Permanente de la France auprès des Communauté Européenne, Brussels, 11 January 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244.

major innovations but would instead focus on the intertwined issues of aid and structural adjustment⁸⁶⁷.

Already in the summer of 1987, Thatcher's Britain, emboldened by its role in championing the Single Market, was ready to wage "a general campaign to get better value for money" during the forthcoming Lomé negotiations⁸⁶⁸. The UK aimed to harness intra-Communitarian momentum to rationalise and contain European aid⁸⁶⁹. For policymakers in London, this meant tightening policy dialogue to ensure the effectiveness of project and programme aid, as well as reforming STABEX through the introduction of strict conditionality. Since 1981, the stabilisation mechanism had thrice failed to cover all the ACP legitimate requests for disbursement⁸⁷⁰, and was perceived in London as "anachronistic" in a time characterised by a prolonged deflation of commodity prices⁸⁷¹. As the British government elaborated already in the summer of 1987, "in the climate of the 1980s, a major way of improving the quality of EC aid is to mobilise a significant proportion of it in direct support of sensible structural adjustment programmes"⁸⁷². The best way to do this was to divert between 15% and 20% of EDF funding allocated to projects and funnel it into a new separate facility that could quickly disburse conditional aid. Instead of creating its own set of conditions, however, Britain wanted the Community to

support, and not undermine, the structural adjustment programmes advocated by the IMF and World Bank. In most (if not all) ACP countries, the World Bank is better placed than any other donor to negotiate appropriate reform programmes. [...] Ideally aid from the new EC facility should be explicitly cross-conditional with World Bank/IMF-supported policy-based lending. This is what HMG should aim for. It makes such obvious good sense⁸⁷³.

Essentially, Britain sought to create a new facility within EDF, and use it as a complementary instrument to the IMF and World Bank in promoting structural adjustment. This signalled that the Thatcher government did not recognise DG VIII's expertise in dealing with Africa, placing

⁸⁶⁷ *Position Française à l'égard de l'Ajustement Structurel dans le cadre de la renégociation de la Convention ACP/CEE*, Note de synthèse du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 15 February 1987, AMAE 591INVA/3244.

⁸⁶⁸ *Renegotiation of the Lomé Convention: UK Objectives*, FCO Paper enclosed in Letter from J. A. Shepherd to R. M. Ainscow, London, 1 October 1987, TNA FCO 98/3048.

⁸⁶⁹ *Lomé IV*, Letter from J. A. Shepherd to R. M. Ainscow, London, 31 July 1987, TNA FCO 98/3048.

⁸⁷⁰ T. W. Parfitt and S. Bullock, *The Prospects for a New Lomé Convention: Structural Adjustment or Structural Transformation?*, in: «Review of African Political Economy», Vol. 47, 1990, pp. 104-116.

⁸⁷¹ *Renegotiation of the Lomé Convention: UK Objectives*, FCO Paper enclosed in Letter from J. A. Shepherd to R. M. Ainscow, London, 1 October 1987, TNA FCO 98/3048.

⁸⁷² *Lomé IV – Aid Policy Orientations*, FCO Paper enclosed in Letter from P. D. M. Freeman to J. A. Shepherd, London, August 1987, TNA FCO 98/3048.

⁸⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

its trust instead in the Washington financial institutions as the sole legitimate actors in shaping adjustment and growth-oriented policies. This scepticism towards aid and financial cooperation was to be counterbalanced, however, by strong British advocacy for improved trade conditions for ACP exports⁸⁷⁴.

By early 1988, the influence of the emerging Washington Consensus was increasingly visible, as debates initiated by development economists began to echo within Community circles. Britain's stance found some support among other governments with neoliberal leanings, such as West Germany and The Netherlands⁸⁷⁵. Besides their desire to maximise trade concessions, these governments shared the will to skew European aid away from long-term development projects and towards fast-disbursing structural adjustment support. In contrast, countries like Italy, Spain, and Ireland continued to favour programme and project-based aid, free from conditionality clauses⁸⁷⁶. Meanwhile, France, keen to preserve its image as the ACP's staunchest ally, argued that the Community must maintain its commitments in the area of commodity stabilisation. If anything, STABEX's shortcomings during the 1980s only reinforced its importance as a pillar of European aid⁸⁷⁷.

When it came to structural adjustment, however, the French position was more nuanced. Officials at the Quai d'Orsay had been grappling with the issue since early 1987. France acknowledged that fast-disbursing aid had become a necessity for many African countries and was ready to support the idea of devoting around 10-20% of the next EDF to this purpose⁸⁷⁸, but called for a careful balance between the Community's commitment to long-term development and the need to assist with immediate economic challenges⁸⁷⁹. Inevitably, the Community's engagement with adjustment policies would necessitate a redefinition of its relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions. While France agreed that the Community's initiatives could not openly contradict those of the IMF and the World Bank, its principal

⁸⁷⁴ *Renegotiation of the Lomé Convention: UK Objectives*, FCO Paper enclosed in Letter from J. A. Shepherd to R. M. Ainscow, London, 1 October 1987, TNA FCO 98/3048.

⁸⁷⁵ *Relations avec les Etats ACP – Orientations pour le renouvellement de la Convention ACP-CEE*, Aide-Mémoire, Conseil de la Communauté Européenne, Brussels, 6 June 1988, AMAE 591INVA/3244.

⁸⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁷⁷ *Conseil (Affaires Generales) des 13-14 Juin à Luxembourg – Débat d'orientation sur la future Convention ACP/CEE*, Note du Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Annexe : *Éléments d'intervention du Ministre*, Paris, 10 June 1988, AMAE 591INVA/3244.

⁸⁷⁸ *Position Française à l'égard de l'Ajustement Structurel dans le cadre de la renégociation de la Convention ACP/CEE*, Note de synthèse du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 15 February 1987, AMAE 591INVA/3244.

⁸⁷⁹ *Le système contractuel ACP/CEE, d'une convention à l'autre*, Note du Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Paris, 4 May 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244.

concern was to craft a distinctively European approach to structural adjustment, as it was crucial for the Community “to provide real added value in terms of policy design and not just [...] additional resources to complete a programme that has been entirely designed in Washington”⁸⁸⁰.

Since DG VIII was not oriented towards macroeconomic policy, the Community should refrain from designing its own conditionality framework and instead play to one of its core strengths: supporting sectoral structural adjustment through its recognised expertise in the agricultural sector. A dedicated facility aimed at assisting African countries in restructuring their agricultural systems – aligned with the food security objectives championed under Lomé III – would complement the EDF’s broader goals in agricultural development. Furthermore, such a facility would:

provide the assurance of a real capacity for European counter-expertise in the face of the Bank’s agricultural development plans, which are often questionable (excessive reference to comparative advantages and world prices, openness to imports, mistrust of any attempt to organise markets, etc...) ⁸⁸¹.

Despite backing the creation of a structural adjustment facility within the Lomé framework, French policymakers remained acutely aware of the social costs and limited effectiveness of SAPs, and only partially embraced the “There is no alternative” narrative. While acknowledging that countries in acute financial distress did need to undertake structural adjustment, Paris insisted that a range of cases existed where such harsh measures were not yet inevitable – and where timely intervention could still avert further decline:

The IMF appears politically as a surgeon performing amputations, not as a nurse preventing gangrene. Our role is also to understand how we might help with prevention, so that treatment is not necessary⁸⁸².

Thus, in clear opposition to Britain’s position, France sought a more active role for the Community in shaping the very process of structural adjustment. This did not entail antagonising the IMF or the World Bank, but rather capitalising on the Community’s distinctive knowledge of Africa and its other former colonies, as well as its long-standing partnership with

⁸⁸⁰ *Position Française à l’égard de l’Ajustement Structurel dans le cadre de la renégociation de la Convention ACP/CEE*, Note de synthèse du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 15 February 1987, AMAE 591INVA/3244, p. 4.

⁸⁸¹ Ibidem.

⁸⁸² *Renégociation de la Convention de Lomé. Aide à l’ajustement structurel*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, 12 avril 1988, AMAE 591INVA/3244, p. 2.

African leaders, to reclaim a legitimate role in global policymaking on North–South relations. This objective could be achieved by balancing the rigid macroeconomic prescriptions of SAPs with greater sensitivity to their social impact, the specific contexts of individual countries, and the enduring imperative of development. Structural adjustment, after all, could not be seen as an end in itself. A more balanced approach was needed – one that reconciled macroeconomic reform with long-term development goals. Owing to its unique position vis-à-vis Africa, the Community was especially well placed to pursue such a vision⁸⁸³.

French and British competing visions found a synthesis within the Council of Ministers, which in May 1988 issued a resolution that stressed the necessity of SAPs and the Community's intention to support their implementation in coordination with the IMF and the World Bank. The resolution, however, also advocated for a more nuanced approach to structural adjustment – one that involved developing countries' governments in policy design, incorporated objectives beyond macroeconomic stability and growth, and took seriously the social consequences of adjustment⁸⁸⁴. With this compromise espoused by the Commission, in late 1988 the Community eventually entered negotiations with the ACP by signalling willingness to take action on the matter of structural adjustment – not just by allocating fast-disbursing funds, but also to advocate against the adverse effects of adjustment⁸⁸⁵.

This approach was not pioneered by Community officials, nor by French policymakers. As early as 1984–85, UN agencies such as UNICEF had been calling for “adjustment with a human face”, though their appeals met with limited resonance in the upper echelons of the IMF and the World Bank. By 1987, however, such concerns had begun to take root in Washington, prompting the World Bank to launch its Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) initiative⁸⁸⁶. What distinguished the Community's stance was not simply its attention to the social consequences of adjustment, but its intent to leverage its longstanding presence and expertise in Africa to help shape the evolving architecture of development policy itself. Pushed by actors such as France and the Commission, the legacy of Eurafrica still shone through the Community's apparent realignment with the Washington Consensus.

⁸⁸³ *Le système contractuel ACP/CEE, d'une convention à l'autre*, Note du Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Paris, 4 May 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244, pp. 13-15.

⁸⁸⁴ *Résolution du Conseil – Situation Economique et Processus d'Ajustement en Afrique au sud du Sahara*, 31 May 1988, HAEU CM2/1988-00031/001.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ouverture des négociations pour le renouvellement de la Convention ACP-CEE – Discours de Monsieur Lorenzo Natali, Vice-Président de la Commission des Communautés Européennes*, Luxembourg, 12 October 1988, HAEU CM6/ACP-00526/001.

⁸⁸⁶ R. Jolly, *Adjustment with a human face: A UNICEF record and perspective on the 1980s*, in: op. cit., pp. 1807-1821.

5.4 The last Lomé Convention?

After thirteen months of negotiations, the Fourth Lomé Convention was signed in the Togolese capital on 15 December 1989. For the first time, however, the Convention was set to last not five years, but ten⁸⁸⁷. As it had become customary in EEC-ACP negotiations, the final weeks were marked by intense bargaining over the financial provisions of the new agreement. France, which held the presidency of the European Council of Ministers during the second half of 1989, was eager to conclude a satisfactory deal before the end of its term – spurred in part by pressure from Francophone African states to finalise the agreement before the rotating presidency passed to Member States perceived as less committed to Euro-African relations⁸⁸⁸. Thanks also to ACP brinkmanship over the financial envelope⁸⁸⁹, the new EDF was ultimately endowed with 10.8 billion ECU, distributed across the various instruments which now composed the mosaic of European aid. During the negotiations, ACP states had successfully demanded to abandon the principle according to which STABEX funds should be replenished by the ACP themselves⁸⁹⁰. Thus, the entire EDF would be allocated in the form of grants, with an additional 1.2 billion ECU provided through loans from the European Investment Bank. In total, the Lomé IV aid package amounted to 12 billion ECU – 3.5 billion less than the ACP had originally demanded, but still over 3 billion more than the allocation under Lomé III⁸⁹¹.

Programme and project aid, which as in Lomé III would be disbursed through National Indicative Programmes (NICs) submitted by ACP countries and agreed with the Commission, received approximately 6.2 billion ECU. Following strong pressure from both France and the ACP⁸⁹², STABEX was allocated 1.5 billion ECU, representing a 62% increase over its Lomé III allocation, while SYSMIN received just under half a billion⁸⁹³. A further 1.15 billion ECU was devoted to structural adjustment support, which would take the form of fast-disbursing aid for

⁸⁸⁷ The financial protocol determining the value of the EDF, however, would be renewed after 5 years, leading to the approval of the 8th EDF in 1995.

⁸⁸⁸ G. M. Chenu, *Lomé IV: Démarches sénégalaises et togolaises auprès du Nigeria*, Telegram from Lomé to Paris, 16 November 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245.

⁸⁸⁹ L. Dominici, *Démarche du Président Bongo et des Chefs d'Etat d'Afrique Francophone*, Telegram from Libreville to Paris, 16 November 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245.

⁸⁹⁰ *Memorandum on ACP Guidelines for the Negotiations for a Fourth ACP/EEC Convention*, African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, Brussels, 4 October 1988, TNA FCO 98/3342, p. 144.

⁸⁹¹ D. Ratford, *Lomé IV Negotiations, 27-30 October: Work in Negotiating Groups*, Telegram from Brussels to London, 30 October 1989, TNA FCO 97/3820.

⁸⁹² H. Hannoun, *Positions dans la négociation de la Convention de Lomé*, Note du Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et du Budget, Paris, 16 November 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245.

⁸⁹³ *Details on principal developments and innovations*, in: «The Courier», Vol. 120, issue March-April, 1990, pp. 14-16.

general and sectoral import programmes aimed at securing essential goods for ACP economies. Only this portion of aid was subject to strict conditionality: its allocation hinged on the scope and ambition of reforms undertaken or agreed with the IMF and World Bank at both macroeconomic and sectoral levels. The Commission, however, would evaluate not only the technical soundness of these reforms, but also their anticipated economic, social, and political impact, taking into consideration the levels of hardship already endured by recipient populations. This assessment would draw on a broad range of indicators, from fiscal metrics to social welfare benchmarks. Yet, the inherently broad and ambiguous nature of these criteria effectively left the Commission with considerable discretion in distributing aid – a prospect that during the negotiations had raised concerns among ACP states⁸⁹⁴. In response, the final text of Lomé IV offered reassurance by affirming, at least in principle, that all ACP countries would remain eligible for support.

The revised architecture of the EDF was thus shaped by a number of factors: ACP demands, French determination to uphold the Community's commitment in the realm of commodity prices, the Commission's intent to preserve core features of the Lomé framework, and, to a lesser extent, Britain's insistence on aligning with the structural adjustment agenda of the World Bank and IMF. For France and, to a certain extent, the Commission, this new approach could "enable the EEC to carry greater weight within the Bretton Woods institutions"⁸⁹⁵. Thus, although the Community did display a certain level of alignment with the Washington Consensus, it did not do so uncritically – as Britain wished. Rather, under French impetus, it sought to articulate a distinctly European approach by relying on its expertise and knowledge of Africa, in order enhance its position in the international system.

One of the other central issues of the negotiation, trade, had soon become the fulcrum of a cleavage within the Community, which saw "Northern" member states such as Britain, The Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark advocate for satisfying ACP demands for greater access to the EEC market. Opposing them, "Southern" countries like France, Italy, Greece, and Spain were reluctant to endorse further liberalisation, particularly regarding agricultural products that might compete with their own, such as fruits and vegetables covered by the Common

⁸⁹⁴ *Préparation de la Conférence ministérielle de Brazzaville les 16 et 17 Février*, Note du Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et du Budget, Paris, 19 February 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245; D. Hannay, *Ad Hoc Lomé Negotiating Group: 23 October*, Telegram from Brussels to London, 24 October 1989, TNA FCO 98/3820. See also: T. W. Parfitt and S. Bullock, *The Prospects for a New Lomé Convention: Structural Adjustment or Structural Transformation?*, in: op. cit., p. 109.

⁸⁹⁵ *La Convention de Lomé*, Note du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, 6 December 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245.

Agricultural Policy (CAP)⁸⁹⁶. Nonetheless, by the end of 1989, the ACP had secured notable gains: improved access for agricultural exports, a streamlining of special protocols covering beef, rum, and bananas, and more flexible rules of origin⁸⁹⁷.

Finally, another key issue had surfaced during the negotiations: human rights. On one level, calls for greater attention to the humanitarian dimension of Euro-African relations reflected the growing centrality of human rights within the Community's evolving identity since the 1970s⁸⁹⁸. Over time, this gave rise to a tension between Europe's internal values and the parameters of its external action, fuelling demands – particularly from member states and, increasingly after 1979, the European Parliament – for the inclusion of human rights provisions within the Lomé framework⁸⁹⁹. Yet, Gerits' characterisation of the late 1980s EEC as a “reluctant soft power”⁹⁰⁰ appears correct: given its colonial legacy, the Community could ill afford to appear eager to interfere in the domestic political affairs of African states. French policymakers, in particular, were particularly aware that any debate over introducing a human rights clause risked producing a “dialogue of the deaf”⁹⁰¹ in which ACP representatives would seek to appropriate the human rights discourse to advance their own negotiating aims.

From the early attempts to introduce such language in Lomé II, indeed, African countries had sought to reframe the European push for a human rights clause to suit their own priorities. Their counterproposals focused on stronger European action against apartheid in South Africa, better regulation of ACP migrants' status in Europe, and the recognition of collective rights, such as the right to development⁹⁰². These demands sparked intense debate within the Community, ultimately prompting European negotiators to invoke the principle of non-

⁸⁹⁶ *Rénouveau de la Convention de Lomé (ACP-CEE)*, Note du Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne, Paris, 3 November 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245.

⁸⁹⁷ *Details on principal developments and innovations*, in: «The Courier», Vol. 120, issue March-April, 1990, pp. 14-16.

⁸⁹⁸ S. Lorenzini, U. Tulli, I. Zamburini, *The place of human rights in European integration*, in: S. Lorenzini, U. Tulli, I. Zamburini (eds.), *Human Rights Breakthrough of the 1970s: The European Community and International Relations*, London, Bloomsbury, 2022, pp. 1-12.

⁸⁹⁹ I. Zamburini, *Introducing human rights within development cooperation policies: The European Community between the United States and the Soviet Union (1968–79)*, in: S. Lorenzini, U. Tulli, I. Zamburini (eds.), *Human Rights Breakthrough of the 1970s: The European Community and International Relations*, op. cit., pp. 30-44.

⁹⁰⁰ F. Gerits, *The reluctant soft power - 1989 and the European Community's hesitant turn towards normative power in Africa*, in: op. cit.

⁹⁰¹ *Le système contractuel ACP/CEE, d'une convention à l'autre*, Note du Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Paris, 4 May 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244.

⁹⁰² C. Flesch, *Report on Human Rights – Report adopted by the ACP-EEC Joint Committee in Bujumbura (Burundi) on 31 January 1985*, 20 June 1985, HAEU ACP 699.

interference in domestic affairs as a means of limiting the Convention's scope⁹⁰³. Lomé IV eventually included references to the respect and promotion of human rights as a development objective, but the ACP's strategy succeeded in resisting any kind of conditionality tied to the respect of human rights and to the explicit mention of democracy in the text.

While the ACP did not achieve all their objectives for the new Lomé Convention – expressing particular disappointment over the limited attention given to the valorisation, processing, and commercialisation of raw materials⁹⁰⁴ – they nonetheless skilfully exploited intra-Community divisions to secure notable concessions on both trade and aid fronts. This involved a complex web of diplomatic pressure, including instances where Francophone African countries urged their Anglophone partners to lobby Margaret Thatcher's government for a more flexible stance on aid⁹⁰⁵. The outcomes secured by the ACP in the Lomé IV negotiations were, in many respects, impressive – particularly given their structurally weakened position in the late 1980s. Beyond illustrating the ACP's ability to exploit European contradictions, the ACP performance in Lomé IV negotiations reveals the extent to which Euro-African relations constituted an exception in the global landscape of the late 1980s. The reasons why, in the 1970s, the Community had insisted on framing Lomé as a model for North-South relations were anything but disinterested. Nonetheless, the model created at the time continued to underpin the Community's approach to ACP countries – even at a time when North-South relations were not as salient as in 1975. In this context, Lomé still provided ACP countries with a space to assert their own vision and to negotiate accordingly.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter traced the evolution of the Lomé framework in the changing international economic context of the 1980s, investigating the impact that the emergence of the Washington Consensus had on Euro-African relations. The new decade ushered in a profound transformation in the global political economy, as the decline of development economics and the rise of neoliberal orthodoxy reshaped the framework of North-South relations. In 1981, the World Bank's Berg Report first signalled this shift, discrediting state-led industrialisation and

⁹⁰³ *Le système contractuel ACP/CEE, d'une convention à l'autre*, Note du Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Paris, 4 May 1988, AMAE 589INVA/3244 ; *Renouvellement de la Convention ACP-CEE – Réunion ministérielle de Brazzaville – Rapport du Group présidentiel*, Paris, 21 February 1989, AMAE 589INVA/3245.

⁹⁰⁴ E. Carrington, *Many a challenge for the ACPs*, in: «The Courier», Vol. 120, issue March-April, 1990, pp. 18-19.

⁹⁰⁵ G. M. Chenu, *Lomé IV: Démarches sénégalaises et togolaises auprès du Nigeria*, Telegram from Lomé to Paris, 16 November 1989, AMAE 591INVA/3245.

promoting liberalisation, privatisation, and agricultural export-driven growth as universal solutions to underdevelopment. While many African leaders criticised these prescriptions and called for “self-centred development”, the debt crisis soon forced many to accept Structural Adjustment Programmes, fundamentally altering the terms of international cooperation. The 1980s thus became a decade of adjustment – both economic and ideological – for Europe and Africa alike. Within this shifting landscape, the Lomé framework once again became the principal arena in which Euro-African relations were debated and redefined. By 1984, the Third Lomé Convention reflected attempts to adapt to a new era while preserving the “Spirit of Lomé.” Under Development Commissioner Edgard Pisani, the Community sought to shift its focus to rural development and food security – priorities that resonated more with African calls for self-reliance than with the prescriptions of the Berg Report. By the late 1980s, however, the dominance of the Washington Consensus had become inescapable. During negotiations for Lomé IV, European governments diverged sharply: Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands pushed for closer alignment with the Bretton Woods institutions, while France, supported by southern Member States, resisted full convergence. Paris instead advocated for a distinctly European approach to adjustment – one that would combine immediate financial support with long-term development goals and social considerations. Once again, France sought to draw on the Community’s colonial expertise and postcolonial connections to assert a greater role in shaping the emerging international economic order. The resulting compromise embodied both continuity and change. Lomé IV included new provisions for structural adjustment while upholding its commitment to long-term development. Although weakened by economic crisis, African states managed to exploit intra-Communitarian divisions and contradictions and succeeded in upholding Lomé’s commitment to partnership and dialogue, securing concessions and preserving crucial elements of the original Lomé model, such as STABEX. In this sense, despite the increasing pervasiveness of the Washington Consensus, Lomé continued to constitute an exception in the transformed international economic system of the late 1980s.

Conclusions:

“Closest Neighbours”

Africa is Europe’s closest neighbour. As noted at the outset of this dissertation, this phrase was first coined in the 1920s by Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, who advocated not only for a united Europe, but also for the creation of Eurafrica, a geopolitical entity encompassing a unified Europe and its African colonies⁹⁰⁶. Nearly a century later, however, this expression still features prominently in the introductions of official European Union documents and webpages⁹⁰⁷. While the history of Euro-African relations throughout the twentieth century is undeniably one of change and evolution, the persistence of this notion of natural proximity and complementarity between the two continents reveals a parallel story: one of deep-rooted and enduring continuity. Since Coudenhove-Kalergi’s publication of *Afrika* in 1929, the Eurafrican ideal, gaining traction in the interwar years and resurfacing after the Second World War, has continued to shape the collective European outlook on Africa.

While the early years of European integration were marked by an active effort to create a Eurafrican entity, this history suggests that, despite the disappearance of explicit references to Eurafrica from European public discourse by the 1960s, this rationale remained deeply embedded in Euro-African relations. In the 2020s, as in the 1920s, independence, decolonisation, and aspirations for economic emancipation notwithstanding, Africa is still portrayed as Europe’s “closest neighbour” and “twin continent”⁹⁰⁸. The contemporary European approach to Africa continues to be grounded in the language of shared history, mutual interests, and a common future. To this day, the EU remains Sub-Saharan Africa’s largest trading partner and is actively engaged with the continent through various frameworks, including the Africa–EU Partnership and the Samoa Agreement, which has governed ACP–EEC relations since 2023. Yet, at a time in which both countries are engulfed in significant upheaval, Europe’s importance for Africa seems to be declining – challenged by growing anti-Western sentiment and increasing competition from emerging actors such as China, India, Russia, and

⁹⁰⁶ R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Afrika*, in «Paneuropa», 1929.

⁹⁰⁷ European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa*, 09/03/2020, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020JC0004> (last access: 07 July 2025); European Commission, *Africa-EU Partnership*, https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/africa-eu-partnership_en#current-priorities (last access: 07 July 2025).

⁹⁰⁸ Ibidem.

Gulf countries⁹⁰⁹. Therefore, gaining a better understanding of how Euro-African relations have recently evolved between change and continuity appears as an imperative.

Retracing the history of Euro-African relations entails uncovering the recurring interplay between change and continuity that has shaped interactions between the two continents. European integration historiography has recently begun to acknowledge the extent to which the early trajectory of European unification was entangled with the histories of colonial empire and decolonisation⁹¹⁰. Africa loomed large in the many post-war fora that sought to give substance to the idea of a united Europe. With the creation of the EEC in 1957, the formal association of African colonial territories marked the starting point of institutionalised relations between Africa and the nascent European Community – and, with it, the beginning of Euro-African relations⁹¹¹. By 1963, the contours of these relations had already shifted significantly as a result of formal African independence, and explicit references to Eurafrica faded from European texts. While the role of Eurafrica in the early stages of integration has increasingly attracted scholarly interest, most tend to conclude that the vision quickly lost relevance and ceased to shape the Community's identity – particularly following the 1973 enlargement⁹¹². This research set out to problematize that interpretation by investigating the persistence of colonial aims and practices in Euro-African relations through a study of the origins and evolution of the Lomé Conventions. In order to do so, however, it is necessary to take into account the multifaceted and multi-layered nature of the Eurafrican ideal and of Euro-African relations.

First of all, this is an intellectual and political history of European integration which touches upon some of the most delicate issues of the process of European integration – namely, the role of member states in shaping the Community's identity and policies, and Europe's evolving place in the international arena. It also responds to longstanding calls to decentre Europe⁹¹³, recognising that Euro-African relations cannot be meaningfully reconstructed without considering African countries' interests, priorities, and strategies – and the extent to which

⁹⁰⁹ M. Procopio and C. Čok, *DIVERSIFICATION NATIONS: THE GULF WAY TO ENGAGE WITH AFRICA*, European Council on Foreign Relations, 2025, p. 5.

⁹¹⁰ For a comprehensive overview of how Eurafrica had been recently reincorporated in European integration historiography, see Chapter 1.

⁹¹¹ According to the conceptualisation of Euro-African relations adopted in this dissertation.

⁹¹² Among others, see: V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: recycling empire*, op. cit., pp. 175-190; P. Hansen and S. Jonsson, *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism*, op. cit.

⁹¹³ K. K. Patel, *Provincializing the European Union: cooperation and integration in Europe in a historical perspective*, in: op. cit.

these shaped Europe's own responses. Indeed, while Eurafrica faded from European public discourse during the 1960s, the same cannot be said for Francophone Africa, where newly independent governments appropriated and reinterpreted the concept as they sought to navigate an uncertain international system by reconfiguring their relations with former colonial powers. This is therefore not only a history of the European approach to Africa, but also the product of an effort to narrate the relations between Europe and Africa by taking into account the insights of postcolonial history and theory.

At the same time, Eurafrica was never solely a political or ideological construct: Europe's external projection throughout the second half of the twentieth century – and indeed still today – remained shaped by its ongoing need for natural resources, space, and markets. Any analysis of Euro-African relations must therefore account for the underlying economic logics, which inevitably draw this research into the domain of international economic history. Finally, these relations did not unfold in isolation from the broader international system. On the contrary, situating their evolution within the wider history of international relations reveals the extent to which Euro-African dynamics were shaped by the global upheavals of the 1970s and 1980s. During these decades, the roles of both the Community and African states were far from static, shifting in response to changes in their relative political and economic power as global conditions evolved. This history, then, sits at the crossroads of multiple historiographical fields, borrowing from each, and contributing to them in turn.

The Community, its member states, Eurafrica, and Lomé: whose colonial legacy?

The history of Euro-African relations in the 1970s and 1980s demonstrates that the Europeanisation of member states' colonial connections was a seminal aspiration that continued to constitute an intrinsic trait of Communitarian action even after decolonisation. The Community inherited and incorporated member states' colonial aims and practices in at least three respects. First of all, the Community inherited European states' intrinsic need for natural resources that could not be extracted from European territories. As Claude Cheysson explicitly argued in 1975, in the 19th Century Europe had undertaken colonial exploration and exploitation because its quickening industrial development increasingly necessitated fresh resources and outlets. While decolonisation may have rendered the ambition to dispose of

colonial territories unspeakable, it had not erased the need for Europe to continue to exploit African resources and markets⁹¹⁴.

Secondly, the Community inherited a wealth of experience in colonial administrative techniques. Ever since the signing of the Treaty of Rome, Euro-African relations were structured around colonial knowledge and practices. On the one hand, this was the result of Member States' enduring colonial approaches towards their former colonies: the *divide et impera* rationale that underlay the division between Associates and Associables was the product of French and British attempts to steer Francophone and Anglophone countries towards their preferred outcome. On the other hand, however, the persistence of colonial practices and methods was also result of the fact that the Commission's DG VIII was populated by former colonial administrators who, during and after decolonisation, looked for ways to repurpose their colonial expertise. This was the case of important French *fonctionnaires* who feature directly in this history, like Jacques Ferrandi and Jean Chapperon. But DG VIII was not solely shaped by French officials: many others, including Belgians and, after 1973, British, contributed to model DG VIII procedures and instruments on the ones they had mastered during their time in colonial bureaucracies and postcolonial diplomatic services⁹¹⁵. The extent to which this colonial legacy influenced the Community's policymaking is plainly demonstrated by the fact that the STABEX – advertised and perceived as the most important innovation introduced by Lomé – was designed on the blueprint of colonial marketing boards that both the French and the British had created in West Africa in the early 19th Century.

Lastly, the Community inherited the aspiration to leverage postcolonial connections in the international arena, as is evidenced by the Community's desire to leverage relations with Africa to play a primary role in the North-South Dialogues of the 1970s. After the 1973 oil shock, when African countries and the rest of the Third World challenged the existing international order and pursued economic decolonisation, the Community sought to exploit its colonial expertise and its special relationship with Africa to attain global relevance. While this attempt was evident in the 1970s, this aspiration remained embedded in the Community's approach to Africa in the 1980s, despite the radically changed international context. Even when member states were conforming domestically to the emerging consensus around neoliberal economics,

⁹¹⁴ C. Cheysson, *Europe and the Third World After Lomé*, in: op. cit.

⁹¹⁵ J. Chapperon, Interview by J. M. Palayret and A. Legendre, 28-29 May 2004, HAEU INT706, p. 6. On how DG VIII incorporated colonial practises and methods, see also: V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire*, op. cit.

Euro-African relations were to a certain extent protected from the new development economics doctrine that predicated trade liberalisation, privatisation, and strict monetary policy. During the negotiations for Lomé III and Lomé IV, the Community tried to redefine the ‘Spirit of Lomé’ by introducing new elements, but these were more anchored in the *acquis* of Euro-African relations, than in the prescriptions devised in Washington. Both in 1983-4 and in 1988-9, the Community could not renounce its aspiration to use its longstanding involvement in Africa as a platform for participating in the redefinition of the international economic order of the new decade.

These claims, however, need to take into account important questions about whose colonial legacy did the Community inherit. *Strictu sensu*, Lomé IV was the last Lomé Convention, as it was followed in 1995 by the renegotiation of the new EDF – the 8th, since the first one created in 1958. Lomé IV, however, was also the first agreement negotiated by Development Commissioners who were not French: Lorenzo Natali and, from 1989 onwards, Manuel Marin. During the 1990s, Euro-African relations morphed once again, under the influence of the post-Cold War reorganisation of the international arena and discourse. This raises the question of the extent to which the continuity experienced throughout the 1970s and 1980s can be ascribed to the apparent dominion of French officials within DG VIII. Deniau, Cheysson, and Pisani, despite being all French, had very different approaches to Euro-African relations. Deniau was more interested in Europe than in Africa, and his strategic and pragmatic attitude allowed the convergence between France and Britain at the time of enlargement. Cheysson’s extensive knowledge and experience of Africa allowed him to turn African challenging calls for radical transformation of the international order into opportunities for the Community. Pisani’s paternalistic approach was rooted in colonial rural management, but he articulated a vision of long-term development that resonated with African concerns. On the one hand, talks of declining French influence on the EEC’s development policy had been circulating since the creation of Lomé. DG VIII officials even denied that Natali or Marin were less committed to Lomé on account of not being French⁹¹⁶. Nonetheless, this history shows that French initiative has consistently played a pivotal role in shaping Euro-African relations. While this helps explain the historiographical emphasis on France’s role in sustaining the Community’s ties with Africa, this research also reveals that other member states were far from indifferent to Euro-African relations, and sought to exploit and reshape them according to their own interests.

⁹¹⁶ B. Ryelandt, Interview by G. Migani, 26 October 2010, HAEU INT257, pp. 30-31; D. Frisch, *The Role of France and the French in European Development Cooperation Policy*, in: op. cit.

This touches upon the dilemma of how states have influenced the internal and external architecture of the Community. In the 1970s and 1980s, Euro-African relations remained the spearhead of Europe's external projection. This was possible not just because of the heavy role that France played within the Community as one of its most powerful and influential members, but also because the process of Europeanisation of these links had effectively worked. Despite the fact that other member states held different visions for the future of European development policy, even in the 1980s the deeply-rooted importance that Euro-African relations held in the European integration process could not be questioned – both in the Council of Ministers and, especially, within the Commission.

While literature has highlighted the transformative role played by the UK after enlargement⁹¹⁷, this history also shows how much Britain coveted the Europeanisation of the relations with developing Commonwealth countries during the 1970s. The UK did alter the balance within the Community when it came to defining Euro-African relations, but, far from being uninterested in perpetuating links with Africa at a European level, Britain sought to impose its own approach to the Communitarian management of postcolonial relations. Rather than just championing a *mondialiste* approach to European development policy⁹¹⁸, Britain attempted to broaden the Community's postcolonial connections by incorporating its own colonial legacy. The inclusion of Caribbean and Pacific states in Lomé, as well as British insistence on the creation of Lomé's Sugar Protocol, bears testimony of this attempt.

In the 1970s and 1980s, British and French priorities vis-à-vis Euro-African relations aligned and diverged depending on the domestic and the international context, but even critical governments, such as Thatcher's, never questioned the importance of maintaining distinctive relations with Africa. Thus, this history reveals that, while France provided essential political will for the creation and the evolution of Euro-African relations, these were valued by other member states as well. Clashes on the structure and future of the Community's development policy did not originate from questioning the need for Europe to entertain close relations with Africa, but rather from the fact that other member states sought to leverage their own postcolonial connections with other parts of the world.

⁹¹⁷ Among others, see: V. Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: recycling empire*, op. cit.; J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: op. cit.; G. Migani, *La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)*, in: op. cit.

⁹¹⁸ J. M. Palayret, *Mondialisme Contre Régionalisme: CEE et ACP dans les Négociations de la Convention de Lomé, 1970-1975*, in: op. cit.

Africa and the question of agency in the postcolonial world

Euro-African relations were also decisively shaped by African initiative and agency. Far from being passive actors, African states actively challenged the Community and influenced its responses throughout the 1970s and 1980s. This history, then, necessarily engages with the broader question of how newly-independent African countries sought to assert their own priorities within a world still deeply structured by the legacies of colonialism and empire. While Francophone African governments often viewed Eurafrica as a way to transcend the division between coloniser and colonised, Anglophone states regarded the Association system with greater scepticism⁹¹⁹. In the early 1970s, however, the prospect of British enlargement catalysed a process of intra-African rapprochement, which culminated in the decision to enter into negotiations with the EEC on a common negotiating platform. In this sense, enlargement offered African countries a strategic opening to recast their relationships with both their former colonial powers and other industrialised European states.

In Chapter 2, the reconstruction of intra-African diplomacy between 1969 and the summer of 1973 shows how this opportunity was seized by African countries, as European attempts to play Francophone and Anglophone interests against one another eventually failed. Associates and Associables managed to overcome mutual distrust and to define a number of key priorities. Among the Francophone, Senghor's Senegal played a dual role, leading the diplomatic effort to bridge the divide with the Anglophone while simultaneously defending the Eurafrican *acquis* of the Association. Among the Anglophone, key players such as Ghana and Nigeria, both openly critical of the Association, strove to build consensus around a fundamental overhaul of the Yaoundé framework. Although diverging visions of Africa's posture towards Europe persisted both between and within these groupings, African countries ultimately succeeded in presenting a united front. Bolstered by the ideological and economic leverage they gained following the 1973 oil shock, African countries capitalised on persistent divisions within the Community. As a result, the negotiations for Lomé I were decisively shaped by African rhetoric and priorities. Unable to counter the ideological force of ACP calls for a New International Economic Order, European actors resolved to adopt this discourse as part of their claim to leadership in the reorganisation of North-South relations. While African countries were fully aware that this alignment was not devoid of strategic interests, Lomé was nevertheless hailed as a meaningful step forward in Africa's relationship with its former colonial powers. In this sense, the so-called

⁹¹⁹ For a detailed account of Francophone and Anglophone positions in the 1960s, see Chapter 1.

‘Spirit of Lomé’ did mark a departure in Euro-African relations – one driven, above all, by African initiative.

By the end of the 1970s, however, as momentum for NIEO was declining, African countries increasingly sought to extract the greatest possible benefit from their relations with Europe. In the years that followed, ACP states not only defended the distinctive architecture of the Lomé Convention but also actively contributed to shaping its successors according to their own priorities. In this sense, Euro-African relations remained relevant for Africa also because they continued to stand as an exception within the broader landscape of North–South relations. This was particularly the case in the 1980s, a decade marked by drought, famine, spiralling debt, and collapsing commodity prices – all of which severely constrained African states’ capacity to pursue autonomous development strategies or influence the international system. Yet, the nominal equality at the heart of the Lomé framework allowed African countries to enter negotiations on their own terms and to remain active participants in shaping Euro-African dynamics, even in this challenging context. The ACP framework and the well-established structure of the Lomé *acquis* allowed African countries to draw attention to the dramatic conditions exacerbated by the 1983-4 famines first and by the late 1980s debt crisis then. In both the Lomé III and Lomé IV negotiations, they succeeded in pressing the Community to take concrete action in response.

The ‘Spirit of Lomé’ and the ghost of Eurafrica: a matter of economy, identity, and exceptionalism

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Euro-African relations did not evolve in isolation, but were instead deeply embedded within a rapidly changing international system. From 1973 onwards, they stood at the heart of the broader and increasingly salient issue of North–South relations. Transformations in the global economic order had a marked effect on Euro-African dynamics, as both European and African actors were profoundly influenced by the upheavals that characterised the two decades. As Cheysson realised already in 1974, ACP countries were likely to prioritise aid, commodity stabilisation, or trade and industrial cooperation depending on how the 1973 oil shock affected their individual circumstances. The history traced here appears to confirm the accuracy of that insight.

Given that commodity prices were reaching their peak in the mid-1970s, Lomé I was shaped by a powerful combination of ACP economic leverage and ideological momentum. As a result, it

centred on “future-oriented” policies: the areas of cooperation reflected ACP priorities such as commodity stabilisation and industrial development, and were grounded in a conception of development rooted in the structural transformation of the international system. As showed in the Chapter 2 and 3, the history of the negotiations for Lomé I is the history of a troubled European diplomacy, which sought to steer former colonies in an attempt to mediate between the interests of the former colonial powers. What European diplomats failed to anticipate, however, was the disruption caused by the oil revolution: by bridging the gap between Francophone and Anglophone countries – who had previously engaged with Europe largely through the prism of their former *metropoles* – African states contributed to lay foundations of the coordinated ideological challenge that developing countries would unleash on industrialised states after 1973. The anticolonial rhetoric voiced by OAU Secretary-General Nzo Ekangaki in the summer of 1973 – initially met with scepticism by many Francophone African leaders – gained increasing traction as the prospect of fundamentally restructuring the international order appeared more attainable in the mid-1970s. As detailed in Chapter 4, the European Community, eager to preserve its privileged ties with ACP countries and safeguard its access to their commodities, swiftly adapted its posture, positioning itself as the ideal mediator in North-South relations. Lomé I thus emerged from an eventual convergence of competing European and African visions, which both hinged on using Euro-African relations as a platform to improve their standing within the international system. For the Community, casting Lomé as a model for North-South cooperation was an attempt to assert itself as a civilian power by drawing on its colonial legacy; for African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries, it represented an early opportunity to renegotiate the structures of postcolonial relations.

By the early 1980s, however, NIEO was not a viable prospect anymore. While Africa and Latin America spiralled into debt, the West underwent a process of political realignment. The Community, on the other hand, focused on deepening integration, rather than on reinforcing its projection on the international arena. At this juncture, Euro-African relations were no longer seen as a model for reshaping Europe’s and Africa’s position in the world, but rather as a framework for securing tangible mutual benefits. Despite this shift, the principles underpinning Lomé, rooted in the Eurafrican tradition, proved resilient. As Pisani argued at the opening of the Lomé III negotiations, Europe continued to need Africa, and vice versa. Even in the 1980s, when the balance of North-South relations tilted sharply in favour of the North, Euro-African relations remained one of the few arenas in which African countries could actively shape their engagement with the West – or at least, with a part of it. Whereas in the 1970s ACP countries

had focused on improving terms of trade and promoting industrial development, by the mid-1980s many found themselves in increasingly precarious financial situations, exacerbated by falling commodity prices. As a result, Lomé IV placed a far greater emphasis on aid than its predecessors. The evolution of the international economic system thus influenced the content of Lomé and the relative strength of European and African negotiating positions. Yet, even in this less favourable context, African countries were able to leverage Europe's enduring need to legitimise – and, to some extent, define – itself through its relations with Africa and its former colonies.

In this sense, even as Europe increasingly aligned itself domestically with the neoliberal paradigm, Euro-African relations remained, to a certain extent, insulated from the broader shift in development practices. This was because, even when the Community considered introducing new approaches within its relations with Africa, it could neither relinquish its material interests nor abandon its aspiration to capitalise on postcolonial ties. This history, then, underscores that Europe's connection with Africa remained essential – not only due to its ongoing need for resources, but also because Europe continued to define itself through that connection. Whether presenting itself as the natural partner of its former colonies, the ideal ally of developing countries and mediator between them and the wider industrialised West, or as the proponent of a more humane version of structural adjustment, the Community consistently relied on Africa to assert its identity and position within the international order. In this sense, the 'Spirit of Lomé' served Europe and Africa in divergent ways. For Europe, enduring ties with Africa offered a means of crafting a distinct identity and purpose within a bipolar world. For Africa, the relationship initially provided an opportunity to reconfigure postcolonial relations as part of a wider effort to reform the international system. When that broader transformation failed to materialise, Euro-African relations nonetheless remained a platform through which African countries could assert agency and extract benefits in a reconfigured global context.

Finally, this history draws attention to a further, often overlooked phenomenon: the persistence of colonial practices across both Europe and Africa. As explored in Chapter 4, STABEX was deeply rooted in British and French models of colonial market organisation. Although African ambitions for the New International Economic Order clearly extended beyond such a mechanism, STABEX was widely embraced as a vital first step in addressing the structural problem of deteriorating terms of trade. Over the following two decades, African governments and key Communitarian actors such as France and the Commission repeatedly reaffirmed the scheme's centrality within the architecture of Euro-African relations. In the

1980s, Pisani's emphasis on food self-sufficiency and rural development – while steeped in colonial conceptions of African land and societies – aligned more closely with the Lagos Plan than with the prescriptions of the Berg Report. These convergences serve as further evidence that the policies and imaginaries of empire outlasted the formal end of colonial empires in the 1960s, and endured despite the ambitious attempts at economic decolonisation in the 1970s. In this light, the history presented here challenges the prevailing historiographical claim that Lomé marked a clean break with the Eurafrican tradition within European integration. Rather, it suggests that the ghost of Eurafrica continued to haunt Euro-African relations well into the final decades of the 20th century.

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