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The European Union and Africa in the Next Millennium: The Politics of Forced Regionalization

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1 Introduction

It seems generally accepted that it is fruitful to distinguish between so-called >old= and >new= regionalism (Hettne, 1999, Grugel & Hout, 1999). >Old regionalism= is the kind of regional cooperation which was initiated during the cold war whereas Aone of the defining characteristics of the new regionalism is, finally, that it takes place in a multipolar global order≅ (Hettne, 1999:XVII). *The* classical example of cold war regionalism is the European Community (the EC) which was established in 1958 and later developed into the European Union (the EU).

If the European Community is the prime example of old regionalism, then the Community=s cooperation under the Lomé Conventions with former European (mainly French) colonies in Africa must likewise be considered as an example of >old= regional cooperation and trans-regional cooperation. Irrespective of its origins in the cold war period, the cooperation among the European countries has developed and >deepened= under the current multipolar circumstances. However, it is a far more open question if, and in case, in what form the trans-regional cooperation between the EU and the developing countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (the ACPs) under the Lomé Convention is going to develop into the next millennium. On the EU side, there is general agreement among the 15 member states that the Convention in its present form has to be thoroughly reformed involving both main elements, trade and aid. On the other side, the ACP countries do not agree that the Convention needs a major overhaul even though they find that the Convention needs some revisions.

The disagreements between the two >partners= have been exposed for the last couple of years because the current Lomé IVB (1995-2000) expires on February 29, 2000. That date is the legal argument in favour of the current negotiations for a possible Lomé V which started formally on 30 September 1998. In the current negotiations, the disagreements center on both main elements of the treaty, i.e. the level of financial aid and trade. As far as the traditional nature as the level of aid is concerned, the future level of Europe=s financial contributions to the European Development Fund (the EDF) which funds the Lomé Conventions. Most EU member states maintain they want to cut their share to the EDF while, the ACPs, for obvious reasons want an EDF as big as possible.

The most controversial part which splits the two contracting parties concerns trade. The ACPs want to remain a single entity arguing in favour of maintaining the >old= regionalism from the days of the cold war when the same rules and the same concessions applied to all ACP countries. For its part, the EU wants to shift the strategy on trade from one single EU-ACP agreement to several agreements between the EU and different regions of the developing world. The current European approach to regionalization includes proposals not only for the three >natural= regions Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Moreover, the Europeans operate with the possibility of, at least three sub-regions in Africa south of the Sahara.

No doubt, the core point of disagreement in the of current negotiations is the European proposal for a split up of the existing group of ACP members into no less than six regional and sub-regional groupings. Officially, the ACPs oppose strongly to this proposal. Due to the structural weakness of the ACP group vis-a-vis the European Union, the most probable outcome of the negotiations is a regionalization of the ACPs more or less in agreement with the proposal of the EU countries. Because of the opposition from the ACPs, the paper characterizes the kind of regionalization which is the possible outcome of the current negotiations as >forced regionalization=.

Such a policy of >forced regionalization= is far from the ideas of partnership and mutual interdependency which was the original concept of the Lomé treaty in 1975 (Lister, 1988, Lister, 1997, Ravenhill, 1985). Back in the 1970s and the 1980s, the Lomé was considered Aa showpiece of its (the EU=s) development policy≅ (Ravenhill, 1985:22-23) and still, the EU itself describes Lomé as Aone of the most important facets of the European Union=s external activities (Green, 1996).

Interestingly, the strong opposition of the APCs also go against the current academic writings on regionalism which among other things see the trend towards regionalism in developing countries as an attempt to Aarrest the

process of marginalization and also, it is principally a defensive response to the economic marginalization of much of the south (Hettne, 1999: XVIII, Grugel & Hout, 1999: 4). So, there are at least two reasons for asking why the European Union has come to such a position on the future relationship with the ACP countries? Put differently, the core question of the paper is: What are the determinants of Europe's policy in the current negotiations on a possible Lomé V with special reference to the proposal of a sub-regionalization of the ACP group? To some extent, the question is in line with Helge Hveem when he asks how may we account for the behaviour of an actor, more or less powerful, when choosing regionalism among several theoretically available options? (Hveem, 1999: 91).

It is the hypothesis of the paper that the determinants are not only to be identified at the overall European level. Rather, it is the assumption that the determinants are basically national, i.e. they are tied to each of the 15 member countries. Thus, it is assumed that the position of the powerful EU on sub-regionalization in a future Lomé V is the result of lengthy and sometimes conflictual bargaining processes involving all 15 members in the Union.

In order to answer the question, it is in principle necessary to analyse the interests and the domestic determinants of all 15 European actors but, such an approach is extremely time consuming. Instead, the paper restricts itself to scrutinize a limited number of, supposedly important and influential members of the European Union. Concretely, it is France, the UK, Germany and Denmark.

It is the assumption that the policy positions of each of these four European actors can be understood as the result of, on the one hand, the national interests in sub-Saharan Africa of each country and on the other hand, the activities of a number of domestic actors in each country which take an interest in policies towards Africa including development aid to the continent. So, it is the argument that the European Union's position in the current negotiations with the ACPs is the result of two processes: first bargaining and policy-making processes within each member country and secondly bargaining processes on the European level with the Commission as an important and very active partner.

The structure of the paper is as follows. First, there is a brief presentation of the theoretical framework which is applied. Secondly, there is an overview of the Lomé Convention and the changes in the EC/EU-ACP relationship since 1975. Thirdly, the Commission's initiative to an internal debate among the EU members states on the future of Lomé, the so-called Green Paper is presented along with the EU negotiating mandate of 1998. This is followed by a brief presentation of the policy positions of the four actors on the possible Lomé V. Then comes the main element of the paper which is the analyses of the determinants of each of the four actors. This includes first, the discussion of the individual states' national interests in Africa followed by a discussion of the most important actors in each of the four countries taking an interest in Africa and in development aid.

2 The theoretical framework

The idea that there is a close relationship between the national interest and bilateral aid programmes is not new. It has even been empirically tested in numerous cases which, to a large extent support the hypothesis (Hook, 1995, McGillivray & White, 1993 and others). However, the focus of this paper is not on bilateral aid, but on a multilateral agreement which mixes both aid and trade. As a starting point, there is no reason to expect that multilateral agreements like the Lomé Convention should not be influenced by national interests (cf. Grilli & Riess, 1992). On the other hand, due to the fact that the Lomé Convention is a multilateral arrangement, it is still difficult to reveal what is the national interest of Europe.

There is only one serious attempt to analyse the (national) interests of Europe in the Lomé system and that is the work of John Ravenhill on 'collective clientelism' (Ravenhill, 1985). According to Ravenhill, it is possible to identify three different European interests in Lomé system. One is the psychological one, namely the satisfaction gained from providing aid to poor states. The second is the political interests in realizing the idea of a long-standing relationship between Europe and Africa which, as a matter of fact is basically a French idea. And finally, there are a number of material interests in Europe. Among these, important bureaucratic interests are involved on the European side. A failure of the negotiations (on the Convention) would have cast doubt on the raison d'être

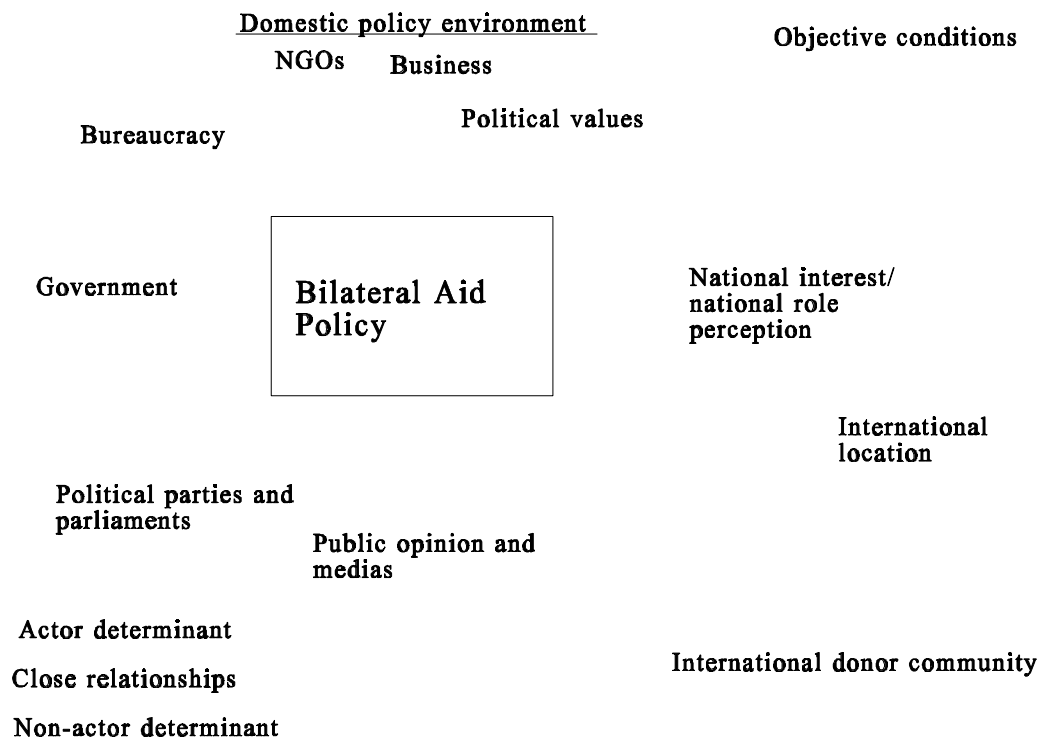
of DGVIII...≡(Ravenhill, 1985:36). Ravenhill=s= basic explanatory model for analysing the Lomé Convention is >collective clientelism= which operates with the individual European member states as separate entities along with the EU Commission (i.e. DGVIII) (Ravenhill, 1985: 45). The model is in agreement with the assumptions of this paper.

If we turn to the debate on European foreign policy, there are a number of interpretations as how to understand it. But in general, there is agreement that the individual member states are still the dominant actors of European foreign policy and therefore, their interests and preferences to a large extent influence >European= foreign actions (Riesse-Kappen,1995). It is an important point that the foreign actions or the foreign policy of the EU is the result of bargaining processes among most of the member states of the community (Ginsberg,1989, Hill, 1996, Cafruny & Peters, 1998).

In spite of the fact that Ravenhill operates with a number of >European= interests, he does not provide us with tools to analyse the determinants of the Lomé policy of the individual EU countries. In order to dig into that question, the paper suggests to apply a policy network approach (Smith, 1993, Rhodes & Marsh, 1992) which will be used to identify the most important actors involved in policy making on aid in each individual European country. Also, the paper argues that non-actor determinants are important determinants of the aid policy of European states. Figure 1 shows both actor and non-actor determinants of a bilateral European aid donor. The non-actor determinants of European aid policy consist of national interest, the domestic political values and what is called >objective conditions, i.e. mainly the international setting of the country in question.

Figure 1: Policy network of a Bilateral European aid donor

International system



However, the network approach does only to a limited extent produce explanatory tools. Therefore, the paper suggests that the approach is supplemented by interpretations inspired by rational choice and rational institutional theory which stress the selfish or institutional interests of the actors involved in policy making (...incomplete)

Still, there remains the question of the determinants of >European level= involving not least the role of the Commission and in particular its DG VIII. There are different approaches to how to analyse policy-making in the European Communities. It is characteristic that policy-making in the EU is largely departmentalised and thus differentiated along functional lines. This situation creates relatively autonomous policy segments with a tendency for the actors involved to preserve their own power and their own interests. This may even go as far as to Areduce the capacity to ... make A good policy for the Community as a whole (Peters, 1992: 118).

Such decentralised policy-making is best understood as >bureaucratic politics=, Guy Peters argues (Peter, 1992, Peters, 1997). It is characteristic of such an approach that Ait considers the linkage existing within a policy area from the perspective of the bureaucratic organizations rather from that of the national or subnational governments. The component units of a government=s administrative apparatus are assumed to be quasi-autonomous actors with their own goals, which they pursue through the policy-making processes (Peters, 1992: 115-121). With such a decentralized structure of policy making in Europe involving a number of actors both at the European level and on the national levels, it is not surprising that European politics tend to be a product of loosely organized and flexible policy communities (Peters, 1992: 117). This can be considered as another argument in favour of applying the network approach.

Concluding on this brief discussion on the characteristics of EU policy-making, there are indications that policy making takes place within policy communities which are characterised by the participation of actors with strong institutional interests. This is a crucial precondition for bureaucratic policy-making. Bureaucratic policy-making points to a very crucial aspect of EU policy making which is that institutional mediation and bargaining between institutions has a major impact on EU decisions including Lomé, irrespective of the bureaucracies involved are common European or national ones

Figure 2 exactly stresses the large number of institutional or bureaucratic participants in the EU policy network on Lomé. It is quite deliberate, that the (European) public opinion and the European parliament including the 15 national parliaments are not included in the model like they are in figure 1.

Figure 2: Policy network of the Lomé aid

International system

Objective conditions

The European policy environment

International location

Business

DGVIII

15 aid bureaucracies



DGI

15 governments

INGOs

15 nationally based NGOs

International donor community

Actor determinant

Close relationships

3 The Lomé Treaty and the Mid Term Review 1995

From its start in 1975, the Lomé-Convention was described as unique and as an example of a new form of cooperation between North and South (Lister, 1988: 186ff, Lister, 1997:109ff). At that time, it was argued strongly that the Convention ought to be followed by other similar trans-regional cooperation arrangements between North and South. It was due to a number of unique features which made and still makes the Lomé Convention special in a North-South context. For one thing, the Convention contains provisions both for trade and development aid. The trade concessions are non-reciprocal while the aid commitment of the EC gives the recipients a legal claim on the amount pledged. The aid commitments are for five years which gives the recipient country a unique possibility for planning its development activities.

The current Lomé-Convention, number four, was negotiated during the very last year of the old cold war international system and it started on March 1 1990. Compared with the three previous Conventions lasting 5 years each, the current one is a 10 year agreement scheduled to expire on 29 February 2000. Due to the fact that it is a 10 year agreement, from the start a so-called mid-term review (MTR) was planned to take place after five years i.e. no later than February 1995. The MTR was carried out even though the negotiations dragged on until the European Summit in June 1995.

All academic observers agree that in a number of respects, the MTR represented a considerable break with the traditional provisions of the Lomé treaties. Among the significant changes can be mentioned clauses on democracy and human rights, phased programming of the aid provisions meaning that the aid figures are only indicative and are no longer a legal commitment of the EU. Also, the aid funds are to be transmitted in two tranches. (Crawford, 1996, Arts & Byron, 1997:86, Olsen, 1997, Lister 1997). The level of funding which was far from satisfactory for the ACPs and that indicated a declining (EU) commitment to the ACP group, particularly in contrast with the growing volume of assistance to other regions (Crawford, 1996, :504).

Also, there is general agreement that the MTR indicated that the European Union and the member states wanted to change the relationship between the Union and the 71 contracting members. Arts and Byron argue that the Lomé is a child of its time, it is unlikely that the EU would view the Lomé Convention in its present form as an appropriate framework within which to face the challenges of the next century (Arts&Byron, 1997:87-88). Gordon Crawford finds that the outcome of the MTR not only undermines its flagship role as a progressive development agreement but also, it signals that the Convention itself is under threat, with growing doubts about its future after the expiry of the current agreement (Crawford, 1996:503-504). Representative for the Union such as the former Director of DG VIII in Bruxelles Dieter Frisch proclaimed that the Lomé Convention will need a thorough review as we approach the year 2000 (cit. Arts & Byron, 1997:89).

By the end of 1996, the European Commission came up with its provisional and very open-ended answer to the question of what is going to happen to the Lomé construction after the year 2000. It issued a discussion paper titled the 'Green Paper on relations between the European Union and the ACP countries on the eve of the 21st century. Challenges and options for a new partnership' (Green, 1996).

4 The EU Commission's position: The Green paper and the EU negotiating mandate

The 'Green Paper' contained both the Commission's evaluation of the cooperation between the EU and the ACPs up to then and also, it set out a number of possible options for the future EU-ACP relationship. The officially declared aim was to strengthen the relations between the two contracting partners. However, Marjorie Lister finds that the Green Paper produced no convincing alternatives to the present Lomé system. The Commission's thinking about EU-ACP relations was neither fully developed nor clear in its approach... (Lister, 1998:375). This may be so because the Commission's proposal was a compromise in the face of conflicting pressures from individual member countries such as France and from the so-called 'mercantilist lobby'. Whether, the DG VIII

in the Commission has been under pressure or has been lobbied from the >mercantilist lobby=, allegedly the Commission enthusiastically believes that free trade agreements Aact as a powerful stimulus for structural changes≡ and that they are Aessential to raise growth rates and they Aintegrate the ACP countries more fully into the World economy≡ (McQueen, 1998:672-273).

After having scrutinized the Commission=s paper, Majorie Lister raises the fundamental question: ≡Does (the EU) believe in what it is doing?≡ And she continues arguing that apparently, the Europeans have Alost their confidence in the West=s ability to develop other regions≡ and, she believes that the EU has Aadrifted into a state of confusion somewhere between improving its development policy and losing hope≡ (ibid: 377). Regardless of this critical evaluation, the Green Paper lists a number of possible options for the future cooperation. The starting point for this discussion is a statement that Athe ACP group is in reality neither a political group nor an economic entity≡. Therefore, there is a need to differentiate between Acooperation objectives and priorities and, possible, trade regimes, plus the prospect of reduced aid requirements for certain countries....≡ (Green, 1996: VII&VIII). AThe importance that the EU attaches to the cooperation and regional integration process for economic and political reasons≡ is admitted to have influenced the four possible options for the future which the Commission puts forward (Green, 1996: 44ff).

It is not surprising that the Commission=s Apreferred choice≡ is the option which splits the ACP group into regional and sub-regional units. Lister find that this particular option Ais a radical departure form Lomé, abolishing the ACP group and the Lomé framework agreement. It creates a high risk of political marginalization for each region, especially in sub-Saharan Africa≡ (Lister, 1998:384). Another option involves an agreement solely for the least developed countries.

Two features stand out after this brief summary of the Green Book. One is the evaluation of Majorie Lister that the Paper=s options reflects a thinking which lie far from the original ideas of the Lomé Conventions. The second is that the Commission seems to favour an option which splits the ACP group into regional and sub-regional units. It is not irrelevant to call attention to the fact that the idea Acomes from Europe, not from the ACP.....and that the proposal might not Abe in their (i.e. the ACPs=) best interests≡ (Lister, 1998:383). Therefore, it is appropriate to discuss the possible consequences for the ACP countries of the EU=s proposal for a regionalization and not least a sub-regionalization of Africa.

4.1 Consequences of sub-regionalization

Apart from the unclarified question of which sub-regions in Africa should be the result of the proposed regionalization strategy, Matthew McQueen points out that there are a number of problems in predicting the possible outcome of regional trade agreements like those suggested by the Commission. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to predict where the African countries will face major problems if they are forced into a situation with total open markets and no protective measures against international trade. Some of the basic problems, the African countries will face are that their markets are generally small and also, that these markets are imperfectly competitive. This leads to the basic conclusion that Athe case for ACP-EU free trade agreements is..... essentially a pessimistic one≡ (McQueen, 1998:687). Therefore, Afar from encouraging regional integration and cooperation, and integrating the ACP countries more fully into the World economy, the proposed arrangements would create additional barriers between sub-regional >spokes= and tie the ACP countries closely to the EU market≡ (ibid:691).

Patrick Watts is equally pessimistic in his evaluations of the possible outcome of a regionalization of the ACP countries. He calls the proposal Apoorly thought-out≡ and Aill-defined≡. He then establishes that Ait is not in the interests of the ACP countries to enter into free trade agreements with the EU≡ (Watts, 1998:52&53). However, since 1990, there has been a growth in free trade agreements but, it is no coincidence that the ACPs and other LDCs have been absent from such arrangements. However, there has been attempts to establish regional free

trade agreements, but they have not been successful. The reasons for the lack of success in Africa. They are obvious such as poor roads and railways, the small domestic markets, political instability plus the generally weak institutional capacity which have, in all hindered integration (Watts, 1998:51).

Irrespective of such objections including critique from the ACP countries, the EU member countries in early 1998 agreed upon a negotiating mandate for the Commission which included a proposal to replace the existing non-reciprocal trade preferences with so-called >Regional Economic Partnership Agreements= (REPAs) which were to be signed with different ACP regions or countries. The REPAs represent a form of regional free trade agreements in which there will be included provision for economic cooperation. According to the proposals in the EU mandate, the ACP partners would retain their current preferential access to the European markets, but they would have to reciprocate by progressively opening their markets to imports from Europe on a preferential basis. The agreements are to be put in place starting in 2005. It presupposes a WTO waiver on the current trade preferences during the preparatory period which the EU wants to be for five years while the ACPs want ten. The proposal for REPAs include free trade agreements with four sub-Saharan regions and one each for the Caribbean and the Pacific. According to the EU proposal, the countries within a region have to decide whether to enter into negotiations for a reciprocal free trade agreement with the EU or not. If they decide not to, they will graduate to the GSP and lose their preferential EU market access (Council, 1998).

In November 1998, the European Commission released five studies on the impact on ACP countries of its proposed Regional Economic Partnership Agreements. The main result based on six desk studies of different regions with the ACP countries does not make a clear case for or against REPA=s. The expected trade creation gains vary across regions, countries and over time. Thus, for SADC, the expected trade creation gains are small while trade diversion losses are much greater for some of the countries in the region. Likewise for the Central and West African regions, there will be no significant trade creation or trade diversion. The negative impact on customs revenues varies considerably but could be substantial for some countries in the two regions. Finally, the report point out that there is a risk that REPA=s distort regional integration processes especially in the short run. So, in most cases, the least developed countries have little to gain from regional agreements like the one the EU proposes (ECDPM/10/99:2).

Also, in a joint report produced by three research institutions, a word of caution is raised as the report argues in favour of global instead of regional solutions as the best way to counter the present negative trends in ACP foreign trade. Given the uncertainty surrounding the REPAs and the relatively underdeveloped state of regional cooperation within the ACP group, the validity of the EU=s regional trade approach needs to be questioned. The report argues that it is not an appropriate approach to put pressure on the ACPs in order to promote free trade agreements, at least not until the policy and institutional framework in the ACP regional blocks are in place, which they are not (ZEF/GEMDEV/ECDPM, 1999).

Finally, it is not to be neglected that the ACP countries strongly adhere to a status quo position on trade which means keeping the current non-reciprocal preferential system which is valid for all ACP countries. Therefore, the ACP negotiation mandate calls for improved non-reciprocal trade preferences from the EU in the future. Nevertheless, the ACPs take account of the wishes of the EU, accepting regional economic partnership agreements as one option, but with strong qualifications. This opening of the ACP mandate probably has to be explained by two circumstances. One is the simple fact that the ACP position is a product of internal compromises between ACP member states and regions. Also, it reflects a recognition that like in previous negotiations, the balance of power between the two parties is unambiguously in favour of the EU (ECDPM/4/98).

In spite of these objections, the EU pursues its liberalisation agenda in the negotiations with the ACP group. AWhat is extraordinary is that the Commission has offered no evidence whatsoever on the likely impact of the FTAs on some of the World=s poorest and most vulnerable regions=, Patrick Watts concludes (Watts, 1998:68). This final remark can serve as an adequate introduction to the empirical analyses of the paper.

5 The national positions

5.1 France

Among the EU member states, France no doubt is the most positive towards the Lomé Convention and towards the general idea of the European community having its own separate development aid programme. Various statements made by the Socialist Party during the 1990s have stressed the necessity of a >European= dimension to French policy towards Africa (Marchal, 1998:370). Compared with all other EU members, France has been almost uncritical towards the administration and also towards the results of the common European aid policy. To a large extent, it can be explained by the strong Africa focus of the Convention which is a natural consequence of the manifest influence which France has had on the development policy of the community since the start of the common European aid programme in 1958 (Lister, 1997, Grilli, 1993).

Neither is it to be ignored that the traditional view of the European Community has been identical with the picture France has had of itself and of its relations with the African countries during the cold war. In particular, Paris favoured the view that the French relations with Africa are based on mutual interests. Also, France has inspired the official EC/EU view that the Community is the >civilian super power of the World= which is exactly stressed by the Community=s strong relations with all developing countries and not only the ACPs (Green, 1996).

The strong French interests in proving that the European Union is a credible partner of the ACPs was stressed during the MTR which resulted in extraordinary additional French funding of the Lomé IVb (1995-2000) where the final size of the total EDF was decided during the EU Summit in Cannes in June 1995. The additional French funding made Paris the biggest financial contributor to the EDF instead of Germany which held this position until the summit. For the years 1995-2000, France contributes 24,3% compared with Germany=s 23,4% , the United Kingdom=s 12,7% while Denmark=s contribution is 2, 14%.

Concerning the French views on the future of Lomé after 2000, the French Ministry of Cooperation in 1997 issued a discussion paper which stressed the French open-mind to the future of the European-ACP dialogue (Prémiere, 1997). France=s concerns were concentrated on a number of topics. As a start, it was argued that the number of members of the Lomé Convention should not be extended to include other less developed countries such as for example Bangladesh or Cambodia. On the other hand, the French position acknowledges that the ACP members are a very diverse group of countries which might benefit from a split up of the present group of countries into a number of smaller and more homogeneous sub-regions in order to promote regional integration among the ACPs.

As to Sub-Saharan Africa, France advocates a dual level strategy where, on one level the whole region is treated as one entity while on the other, it operates with sub-regional entities in Africa (ibid: pp23). A regionalization of the existing ACP arrangement based on a common treaty will give a much more operational dialogue both on trade and aid. The logical outcome of these suggestions will be a number of negotiations between the Commission and the different sub-regions of Africa.

Basically, France wants to preserve the unique features of the Convention especially the link between aid and trade. As for the trade concessions, Paris finds it desirable that trade is still to be asymmetrical but in a way which makes it possible to differentiate between different areas of the ACPs especially as regards to promoting regional markets. Therefore, the new Convention should give special attention to the possibility to differentiate between regions.

5.2 Britain

Compared with France, the British have traditionally been far more critical towards Lomé. During the 1980s and especially during the 1990s, Britain has strongly criticised the lack of efficiency of the EC aid programmes. In the words of the current minister for development aid, Clare Short, the quality of EU=s performance Acould be much better≡ (Burnell, 1998:796). Because of the considerable size of the British contributions to the EDF and to the

other European aid budgets which went up from 12% in 1980 to about 30% in 1997 (DFID, 1998), London is very concerned about how and where the money is spent.

The general position of the UK aid policy has been to favour the poorest countries such as the African LDCs. In the middle of the 1990s, roughly 40% of British bilateral aid went to Africa. Based on the poverty focus, the British can accept a continuation of the Lomé treaty because it has a strong Africa focus even though it has been weakened during the 1990s. London has criticized that the European aid budget to an increasing degree has been oriented towards middle income countries and thereby away from poorer regions such as Africa (DFID, 1998). In order to make the aid more efficient, the British demand a much simpler Treaty including bureaucratic reorganization. Especially, the UK finds the organisational structure with 5 Commissioners responsible for external assistance is highly inadequate (Chalker, 1998:2).

In accordance with its historical traditions, Britain supports free trade in general including the trade with developing countries. However, in a transitional period until 2020 London will pressure for duty-free access to the European market for essentially all products from the least developed countries starting in 2005. Britain will seek to ensure that any Free Trade Areas between ACP regions and the EU are developmentally sound and compatible with WTO rules (DFID, 1998 and Chalker, 1998:3). As to the crucial question of a possible sub-regionalization of Africa the British position is open and thus supportive of the Commission's proposal.

5.3 Germany

Before the issuing of the Green Paper in late 1996, the majority of the German actors involved in development policy-making were in agreement that the EU-ACP agreement in its current form was outdated. Since spring 1997, the three involved ministries have been engaged in discussions on how to reform cooperation with the ACP countries. The Ministry of Development Cooperation (the BMZ) published a report arguing that it was in no way certain that the Convention has helped the ACPs promoting their economic development (Brüne, 1997:494).

So, when the new Social Democratic-Green government came into power in the fall of 1998, the debate on the issue was characterized by considerable pessimism. Nevertheless, the new minister of Foreign Affairs, Joschka Fischer (from the >Green=party), declared that the perception of Africa as a >lost continent= was totally wrong. He argued strongly in favour of regional cooperation within Africa involving a number of different sub-regions, such as East Africa and West Africa which, among other things should take on the responsibility for regional stability (epd,4/99:31-32).

As a result of the new government in late 1998, the Ministry for International Development Cooperation acquired the responsibility for the cooperation with the ACP countries. Therefore, it took some time before the new government developed a clear position on the future of the EU-ACP cooperation. During the spring 1999, it formulated a strategy which argued for easier trade access to the European market combined with a demand for a flexible approach on the trade issue depending on the level of development of the individual ACP-state (epd,7/8/99:12) which indicated an open mind towards a possible sub-regionalisation of the ACPs. Thereby, the German position indirectly came to support the proposal of the Commission.

5.4 Denmark

For a number of years, Denmark has had an pro-active policy on the EU's development policy including Lomé even though, the Danish contribution to the EU's development efforts only represents 6-7% of Denmark's total aid budget which is 1,0% of GDP (Strategies, 1996:120). On the one hand, Denmark has strongly criticised the lack of transparency of the development efforts of the EU and also, it has questioned the efficiency of the aid efforts including the so-called >Byzantine bureaucracy= in Bruxelles (ibid:143-148). On the other hand, the Danes feel that they have had considerable influence on the articles in the Maastricht treaty on development (i.e.130 u,v,y,w)

not least the explicit statements on poverty alleviation as the most important aim of the Union's development policy.

Likewise, Denmark managed to have some influence on the EU's preparations for the Lomé negotiations (Development Today/15/98:6). Therefore, the government is fairly content with the Commission's negotiating mandate. Also, Denmark is satisfied with the provision that trade cooperation after 2005 will be in the form of free trade agreements between the EU and regional trade areas which leaves open the possibility for individual ACPs not to participate which has been a Danish point. But there is no doubt that the Danish position is to support the establishment of regional and in Africa sub-regional free trade areas (Danida:1998:128-129).

Because of its strong emphasis on poverty alleviation, Denmark advocated that the future Convention shall be open to other LDCs outside the current members. Specifically, Denmark has mentioned Bangladesh and Cambodia as potential members of a future Lomé. The basic aim of this policy is to increase the share of EU aid to the poorest countries not least the African ones which will necessarily be at the expense of the Caribbean countries.

6 The determinants of the national positions

6.1 France

France's relationship with Africa south of the Sahara is unique not only in an European, but also in a global context. Since the ending of French colonial rule, Africa has been the second most important geographical region in the country's foreign policy only surpassed by the European Union. The unique status of Africa in French foreign policy can, to a large extent be explained by political-ideological arguments. One of the most important ones is the idea that France has a special global mission, a so-called >mission civilisatrice= which stresses the promotion overseas of French culture and French language.

The vision of a special French responsibility for cultural diffusion has been particularly strong in the case of Africa where it has been presented under such headings a >Eurafrique= or >France-Afrique= which pictured France and Africa as one single geopolitical entity (Martin, 1995:2). In 1958, president Charles De Gaulle picked up these ideas and introduced the project of >Communauté franco-africaine= (ibid:7) which resulted in a situation where France institutionalised and even expanded its influence in politics, economics and cultural matters in the continent after the political independence.

Put briefly after the end of colonial rule, Africa became an important symbol of France's global role (Brüne, 1995:18). The Gaullist conception of a French >grandeur= indicating its global aspirations to be recognised as a great power expressed the interests of the political elite in maintaining the international prestige and power of the country. It was therefore important to prove that France was actually a world power and thus was capable and willing to act on a global scale. The activist policy in Africa served to prove that Paris was a great power (Alden, 1996:12-13), and accordingly, it was legitimate that France had one of the five permanent seats in the UN Security Council, to mention one illustration of its international power status.

Maintaining the >grandeur= of France and thus the status of France as a world power has probably been the most important foreign policy goal of Paris in the post-colonial period. Douglas Yates calls the goal, a >fantasy of grandeur= which, he argues has to be understood as a >tangible national interest= of the French political class. These interests are in a number of instances so strong that they outdo the economic interests of the country (Yates, 1997:2-3). Stefan Brüne is in agreement with the assessment that the influence of the political class and its narrow interests in a number of instances have been stronger than the tangible economic and other >national= interests of the country (Brüne, 1995:238-239). It can be illustrated by the costly arrangement with the CFA-Franc (Schraeder, 1995:542-544). For his part, Jean-Francois Bayart is more outspoken stating that, >Paris has never stopped considering its African policy simply an instrument within its power policy= (Bayart, 1996:26). Basically

French policy towards Africa has been Acommanded by non- or extra-African factors like the global aspirations...≡ (ibid) which is equivalent to argue that French Africa policy has primarily been Amotivated by a narrow conception of its national interests (.which) blatantly disregards African concerns and interests≡ (Martin, 1995:6).

If we turn to the possible economic interests of France in sub-Saharan Africa, the region no longer represents a primary national economic concern for France. Thus, Africa accounts for less than 5 % of France=s foreign trade and it receives less than 20 % of France=s direct international investments (FDI) which is far behind what Eastern Europe and Asia receive (Marchés tropicaux, 14 mars 1997). However, France still has a firm hold on selected, but very lucrative sectors of the continent such as mining including oil (Yates, 1997), agribusiness, building and public works, telecoms, insurance, banking and electricity. French companies hold an average of 20 % of parts of the markets on the continent (Marchal, 1998:360) .

Also, there are considerable French economic interests involved in Africa through the enormous development aid programme. Apart from the more or less explicit interests in preserving a sphere of influence in its former colonies (Schraeder, 1995:541, Brüne, 1995, 225,232), also commercial and economic interests have underpinned the bilateral aid programme. Peter Schraeder argues that Athe promotion of French economic supremacy in francophone Africa served as the second most important objective of French foreign aid policies during the cold war≡ (Schraeder, 1997). One indicator of this is the high level of tied aid which has been well above 60% until the end of the 1980s. Now, it is down to 40% which, according to the DAC Ais still above the DAC average, which is one third≡ (OECD, 1997/21:36). The high procurement rate has been one of the mechanisms used to distribute >dividends= to a selected group of French private companies (Conte, 1997).

It is remarkable that up until the mid 1990s, the French aid programme was marked by a high degree of stability and continuity. The 1995 budget reflected a conspicuous break with the past as dramatic cuts brought the aid/GDP ratio down from 0,64% to 0,55%. The cuts from 1995 onwards underline the trend that started in the beginning of the 1990s to give less and less priority to sub-Saharan Africa in French foreign policy. In 1995 Africa received 47,5% of total French bilateral aid which was down from 57% only 6 years before. The dramatic reduction in the relative disbursements was a direct consequence of the simultaneous growth of 9% in real terms in the disbursements to North-Africa and the Middle East in the same period (OECD/21:52).

Parallel to the cutbacks in bilateral aid from 1995 and onwards, there has been a 7% increase in the multilateral contributions of France. In this category, the aid channelled through the EU showed the sharpest rise in recent years. In 1997, the contributions to the common EU aid was up by no less than 26%, while the contributions to the international financial institutions and to the UN dropped by 15% and 3% respectively (OECD, 1997/21: 27ff). The priority given to Europe is a reflection of the slow >Europeanization= of French foreign policy which has been going on for some time and which has had negative consequences especially for Africa, but not so much for other regions such as North-Africa (Alden & Daloz, 1996:3).

Having outlined the general features of the French national interests in Africa, we now turn briefly to the actors involved in the French policy-making on Africa and in particular, we look into the French aid strategy. Several times, it has been referred to the so-called >political class= which is claimed to be decisive in influencing French Africa policy including the policy on the future of Lomé. It can be specified to an argument that Athe policy of Africa is a result of the African leaders and the political elite in France and especially the character of the personal links between these actors≡ (per. interview). Within the group, the president of the Republic is no doubt the most important actor and since the days of president de Gaulle foreign policy has been a >reserved sector= (>domaine réservé=) of the president meaning that the president is the de facto pre-eminent decision-maker in foreign policy and defence matters (Howorth, 1994: 200ff). Of course, the President does not operate in a vacuum. His points of view are influence by some of the actors mentioned above. It is characteristic that the French President since the days of de Gaulle have worked in close collaboration with the so-called >Africa cell= (cellule Franco-africaine) within the Elysée Palais which is considered to be *the* center of power when it comes to French Africa policy. It is worth noting that close personal friends or close relatives of the President has held the position as

advisor to the Presidency and thus as head of the Africa cell. Jacques Foccart, no doubt is the most well known example, but also the son of President Mitterrand can be mentioned.

Foccart had direct access to de Gaulle on an almost daily basis which gave him the influence equivalent to that of a minister (Brüne, 1995:66ff). He prepared all important decision documents on issues related to Francophone black Africa and, he coordinated all presidential briefings on Africa. In numerous cases, Foccart himself had the upper hand on decisions in Africa and often, he even personally made major decisions on France's Africa policy. It makes Andereggen conclude that with the exception of de Gaulle himself, no other Frenchman has left a greater mark on France's relations with Francophone black Africa than Jacques Foccart (Andereggen, 1994: 77, Brüne,1995:73-84). It was also characteristic that French policy-making on Africa was marked by strict secrecy. The existence and strong influence of the cellule franco-africaine is one of the basic explanations to the lack of fundamental changes which characterised French Africa policy up until the mid 1990s.

When Jacques Chirac became president in 1995, the traditional pattern with personal advisors to the President was repeated although, this time with two groups of advisors (Dossiers, No.6, 1995:20-21 & interviews). The situation with two advisors to the President, definitely complicated the question of competence and of the division of responsibility. Depending on the specific cases, there seems to have been a division of labour based both on geography and on subject matter (interview). However, the situation does not make it easier to make out what interests and attitudes were behind specific decisions including those on the French position on Lomé.

However, it is clear that in formal terms, the French position paper from 1997 was produced by the Ministry of Co-operation which traditionally has been considered as the Ministry of Africa within the French civil service. However, the ministry does not cover all African countries and in spite of its name, it does neither cover all developing countries. The OECD states the mandate of the ministry and its calling is in no way clear (OECD,1997/21:18). Since 1995, the Ministry of Cooperation has been under the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but that Ministry has usually kept a low profile in Francophone African affairs where it has been under strict observation and instruction from the Elysée. So, on narrow political issues, the Elysée and the cellule no doubt still make the important decisions. Due to the secrecy and the closeness of these decision making procedures we have to look for the possible national interests and combine them with the narrow personal interests of the central decision-makers.

If we turn to the French aid system, it might help us interpret the determinants of the French position in the current Lomé negotiations. However, with the number of ministries involved and with different categories of recipient countries, it is difficult to establish the goals of French aid. In the 1997-DAC Review, the situation was criticised and, the review suggested that more specific formulations of French aid goals, valid for co-operation with all recipients, would make it easier for outside observers to grasp and analyse the mechanisms of the French aid system (OECD, 1997/21:11). Also, there exist separate institutional ideologies which tend to result in defence of the recognised institutional interests and thereby a considerable conservatism (interviews). The existence of such strong bureaucratic interests is supported by Gordon Cummings who claims that the French aid system is characterised by conservatism, fragmentation and clientelism, of the ministries and bodies involved in development policy (some of which depend on the aid programme for their very existence) (sic!)... (Cummings, 1995:397).

The lack of transparency is not challenged by the French NGOs. Unlike most other European donor countries, the NGOs have played a remarkable limited, not to say insignificant role in French development policy towards Africa (interviews). The weak position of the NGOs is to some extent a reflection of the lack of public interest in development issues. However, public opinion surveys reveal that the public in general support the current levels of aid and it does not question the official priority given to Africa (Naudet,1997:177). The DAC committee within the OECD is surprised by the lack of popular interest in aid not least because the French taxpayers make a considerable contribution to development assistance (OECD,1997/21:9). In line with this, the political parties are low profiled on the Africa policy. So, maybe Jean-Francois Bayart is right when he argues that the French public is content with the myths with which it is fed and also (...) the fact that the Eternal Africa continues to be addressed on familiar terms (Bayart,1996:27).

As to the internal determinants of French Africa policy, the overall picture points towards conservatism and only limited changes. Nevertheless, things have been changing since the mid 1990s as mentioned several times. The EU has been one of the most important reasons for the recent changes because France wished to join the European economic union. That forced the government to abide to the so-called Maastricht criteria demanding that the public budget deficit is below a certain level. The government was forced to cut expenses including the dramatic cuts in the bilateral aid budget in 1995. Parallel with the efforts to keep the budget deficit down and thus the efforts to reduce public expenditures, the gradual change of French aid policy towards accepting a multilateralisation of the former strict Franco-African relations can be observed (Brüne, 1994:590, Cummings, 1995, Martin, 1995:11). One manifestation in Africa of this policy is the acceptance of structural adjustment and the 50% devaluation of the CFA-Franc in January 1994 which the IMF had demanded for years. The French budget squeeze also forced the French authorities to pursue the multilateralisation of the aid relationship to Africa.

So, the French situation in the late 1990s is characterised by two opposing pressures. One is the pressure to keep public expenditures down resulting in cuts in the aid budget. The other is the wishes and interests of the >political elite=. It still has an interest in keeping close relations with Francophone Africa and, if possible with the help of aid from the European Community. The dual pressure reflects a conflict between EU and Europe on the one hand and Africa on the other which are the two top priorities of French foreign policy. By the late 1990s, there is no doubt that the EU is the first priority. Nevertheless, France definitely has a national interest in keeping close relations with Africa and also in >proving= this with a fairly big aid programme, also if it has to be financed by the common European aid budget.

So, as far as the aid element in Lomé is concerned, France just has to repeat its success from the start of the Lomé Convention when Aonly about 33 percent of EDF came from France (and) about 70 percent of the lucrative contracts in Francophone Africa were placed with French companies≡ (Andereggen, 1994). Or in the words of Enzo Grilli: A(The Lomé) Aid allocated to Sahel and Francophone West Africa is on average four times higher than to Anglophone West Africa≡ (Grilli, 1993:120-121).

Concerning the controversial proposal on regionalization and not least the sub-regionalization of sub-Saharan Africa, the French political elite obviously has no strong objections to this which no doubt is of secondary importance to the aid question. Therefore, the French position will be to support the Commission on the issue as long as the overall convention remains more or less intact. This also implies that the Elysée and the >cellule africaine= will leave the negotiations to the Ministry of Cooperation which, on its side has a bureaucratic interest in a Lomé V which will secure the existence of the Ministry which faces dramatic cuts in the French bilateral aid to sub-Saharan Africa.

6.2 Britain

British foreign policy interests in Africa have been declining since the 1950s and 1960s. So, for a number of years, Africa and the rest of the third world for that matter have been of marginal significance to British policy concerns in general (Hill, 1996). On the one hand, the picture is blurred as AAfrica has remained important to London politically as a source of prestige (as Britain=s ranking in the Bretton Woods institutions is increasingly challenged) and of electoral strength (many expatriates still have the right to vote in UK elections). The sub-Saharan region has also retained some significance in cultural terms≡(Cumming, 1996:495). Therefore, it is possible to argue that Britain has an Africa policy even though it is Arather ad-hoc≡ and it is Aessentially reactive rather than proactive≡...and Apragmatic to the extreme≡ (Stayn, 1996:262).

On the other hand, there is no doubt that Africa receives less and less attention from the British foreign ministry (the FCO) in the 1990s. A number of observers find that the FCO for long has had no serious interest in Africa (interviews) whereas the ODA (DFID) describes itself as AVery African centered organization≡ (interview). The lack of foreign policy interest in Africa is clearly manifested in the behaviour of the current foreign minister Robin Cook who has not even been inclined to see African foreign ministers visiting London (interview). Among the

different regions of the world, Africa south of the Sahara is also the least interesting and the least prestigious among the civil servants. If someone ends up with Africa as his or her professional responsibility Ayou just seem to be one of the guys that didn't make it careerwise≡ (interviews). This was true during the Linda Chalker years, and there as no indications that it has changed since Clare Short became the political head of DFID in 1997.

The shrinking foreign policy interest in sub-Saharan Africa has meant that for a number of years, development assistance to the region has been the most important instrument of British policy towards Africa. It resulted in a situation where it was not the FCO, but the department for development aid (the ODA/DFID) which was the main ministry on policy-making when it came to sub-Saharan issues. It was, in particular pronounced during the years with Lady Chalker as political head of the aid administration (ODA) when there was a general political acceptance that she spoke for the UK in Africa (Stayn, 263f & interviews).

Therefore, the motives of British aid policy become far more important than the foreign policy interests in sub-Saharan Africa. In general, the aid to Africa has been motivated by a combination of altruism and foreign policy and commercial objectives with a tendency that Athe developmental and commercial objectives are subsumed within domestic political considerations, and subservient to general political objectives≡, Oliver Morrissey et al. argue (Morrissey et al., 1992:2).

We now turn to the actors in Britain which can be expected to influence the policy on aid in general and on aid to Africa including the Lomé aid in particular. It is striking that in the 1990s neither the public nor the politicians in the UK take a strong interest in issues related to third world development. Among other things, it is reflected in a generally poor media coverage on Africa (Stayn, 1996:276). However, there is evidence indicating a sustained commitment to aid in the UK (Randel & German, 1998:145) which on the other hand exists along with a remarkable low level of knowledge of aid (Reality, 1996:188, DAC, 1997/25:30), and coming to EU aid, the level of knowledge is even lower (Randel & German, 1998:163).

The so-called development lobby which consists of more than 300 NGOs involved in development related activities do not take any particular interest neither in EU aid nor in Africa. However, it can be argued that the British NGOs have a fundamental interest in limiting the size of the British financial contributions to the EU including the EDF as it is easier to influence the bilateral aid.

Because development aid and thus indirectly Africa is not generally a matter of legislation in Britain, the Parliament does not play a role in this field (Burnell, 1991:5 & Morrissey et al., 1992:47). This point is supported by the fact that the NGOs prefer to present their ideas and suggestions to the government directly and especially to the development aid department (the ODA and now the DFID) and not to the MPs. Morrissey et al. conclude that AParliament has not been very effective on aid policy, while lobbies are active and their influence depend largely on the relationship with Whitehall and the government≡ (Morrissey et al., 1992:46).

This all ends up in a situation where it is only the ministries specifically the development aid department (the DFID) and to some extent the FCO, which are seriously involved in policy-making on aid and on Africa. The two institutions can be expected to have an institutional interest in the general features of the future arrangements between the ACPs and the European Union. The FCO can be expected to have an interest in maintaining British influence in Africa if it is possible and if it does not involve significant spending. But still, the regions is the least important to the FCO.

Traditionally, the ODA (DFID?) has been considered as a weak organization compared with the other government departments in Whitehall. The only element pulling in the opposite direction is the fact that the department controls the aid budget which is of a considerable size. Due to the financial aspect and due to the low priority of Africa within the foreign policy priorities, British Africa policy to a large extent is determined by DFID. Therefore, disagreements between the DFID and the FCO can be identified on >political= issues such as good governance, promotion of democracy and peace making/peace keeping in Africa.

The comparatively weak institutional position of the ODA during the Conservative governments forced the department to cooperate with the development lobby. However, in the case of EU aid, the NGOs do not take a particular strong interest in lobbying or supporting the ODA/DFID. Because there are no strong business interests in the form and the size of the Lomé aid, the DFID is pretty much on its own in this particular case.

The crucial question then is: what are the institutional or bureaucratic interests of DFID in relation to the future of Lomé? As a starting point, it is a basic British interest to keep the amount of money going to the EU at the lowest possible level, as it is far more easy to control the spending of the bilateral aid. This is the reason for the British critique of the whole Lomé system. On the other hand, the poverty focus of British aid and the official poverty focus of the Lomé aid makes it difficult to attack the Convention too hard especially as the Lomé has such a strong Africa focus whereas the other EU=s aid programmes are directed towards middle income countries.

Concerning the future of the trade component including the issue of sub-regionalization of Africa in the Lomé V, it is not possible to find any significant national interests in this topic. Neither has it been possible to identify any actor which take a strong interest in the question apart from DFID which is forced to produce a position. Therefore, the position of London in this issue probably has to be explained by traditional British pragmatism and a touch of traditional free trade ideology. But basically, the above analysis has not contributed to an answer apart from pointing at the role of DFID which then claimed to have decided on the British position in the current negotiations. Of course, the conclusion underlines the theoretical argument that much European policy is the result of bureaucratic policy-making.

6.3 Germany

Compared with the two prominent, former colonial powers, Germany does not have strong historical links with Africa. Therefore, it is not surprising that the fall of the Berlin wall and the subsequent reunification of the two Germany=s in the 1990s did not change the foreign policy priorities of the now former Federal Republic vis-a-vis sub-Saharan Africa. During the 1990s, the first priority has been the same as it was during the Cold war and that has been to continue the European integration process. The second goal of the united Germany is the integration of Eastern Europe into the political and security structures of the West (Engel & Schleicher, 1998). As a consequence of the strong European focus, the third world and not least Sub-Saharan Africa comes far down the list of foreign policy priorities of Germany in the 1990s.

Because of the lack of any considerable national interests in Africa, German policy towards Africa as been equivalent with the development aid policy for a number of years. However, the expansion of the German aid programme during the cold was determined by a number of non-developmental considerations not least a strong desire to place the Federal Republic of Germany in the Western camp (Hofmeier, 1994:71). This drive meant that the Federal Republic, to a large extent adjusted its Africa policy to what Bonn expected other Western governments wanted Germany to do. The policy of adjusting the foreign policy to Western priorities was so strong and had such high priority within the policy-making circles in Bonn that Reinhardt Rummel talks about a Agroup discipline≡ within the Western alliance which was Ataken seriously by the Federal Republic≡ (Rummel, 1996:42).

The Federal Republic was particularly motivated to develop close policy coordination with France in order to Aovercome the tragic past≡ and to work towards establishing a united Europe which was and, in the 1990s still is the Aprime objective≡ of German foreign policy (Rummel, 1996:48 & 41). The two countries signed the so-called Elysée agreement of January 1963 which meant that they agreed upon yearly consultations on foreign policy issues. These consultations secured that Germany was always fully aware of the French policy priorities including those on Africa. And because Germany has no significant interests in the region, Bonn tended to follow French policy on Africa.

The lack of any significant political interests in Africa corresponds with the existence of very limited German economic interests in the region. The trade interests as well as the interests in foreign direct investments are almost insignificant (Marchés tropicaux, 15 mai 1998:1018 & Journalisten H, 1997:211). This observation makes Stefan Maier conclude: ADue to its material significance to the African governments, the development cooperation is no doubt the most important instrument of Germany=s Africa policy≡ (Maier, 1996:61). AGerman Africa policy since 1990 is primarily determined by ethical interests (Werteinteressen) and weaker interests related to security, economy and power politics≡, Maier argues (Maier, 1996:64).

Development cooperation does not figure prominently in the public debate. While there is a general desire to assist the Third World, the German public has little interest in detailed discussions about aid policy (Helmich et al., 1998:80). Irrespective of the low priority of Africa and of development aid as a public policy issue, public support for development cooperation has been relatively high during the 1990s. Thus, 87% of the Germans consider development aid to be important while surveys indicate that the knowledge about development cooperation is not very high and only 34% consider themselves to be well informed about aid spending (ibid:79).

The unification of the two Germanies, led to a situation where domestic concerns received very much attention in the public debates. The preoccupation with local German concerns represented the framework for the successive cuts in German development aid during the 1990s. The share of the BMZ of the federal budget was reduced dramatically during the decade (Engel & Schleicher, 1998). This had direct effects on the the German debate on the future of the EU-ACP cooperation where an attitude grew stronger that development aid was useless and has had no positive effects on reduction of poverty in the world.

In early 1995, the German Foreign Minister announced that Germany would reduce its contributions to the EU's development assistance by 30 % because of strong doubts of its efficiency. Hans Dietrich Genscher criticised the failure of the EU to make enough use of German companies in contracts awarded under the Lomé Convention. However, the reduction of the contributions to the the EU was the subject of different views within the Federal Government and between the different ministries involved and the political parties.

As a reflection of the limited political interest, the political parties in the German Federal Parliament have not been very active in debating issues related to Africa as such topics have no vote-maximizing consequences. This is further strengthened by the tradition in the Parliament for having consensus on the general principles underlying German policy on aid and on Africa. So, if development has been on the agenda of the Federal parliament it is due to the activities of small, but active groups within all political parties (Hofmeier & Schults, 1994:235).

The administrative structure dealing with aid to Africa and foreign policy issues related to the region, it is extremely complicated with no less than 6 ministries and a number of more or less independent organisations involved in implementing the policy (DAC, 1995/9:21,6ff). However, the three ministries mentioned above are the most important ones. In formal terms, the BMZ is secondary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but when it comes to policy-making on African affairs including EU-ACP relations, the BMZ has the upper hand which has been the reality since the 1980s. In cases where French interests are at stake, the Foreign Affairs ministry might try to put pressure on the BMZ in order to convince it to adjust its policy to the French positions (interview & Engel & Schleicher, 1998).

When it comes to policy-making on the EU-ACP, the BMZ no doubt is the most important actor among the German ministries even though, the department only has had the responsibility for the Lomé aid since the fall of 1998. If it accepted that there is an institutional inertia, it is important what the BMZ's standpoints have been on the Lomé issue. Back in 1997 when the BMZ did not have the institutional responsibility for the Lomé Convention, the ministry favoured a fundamental reform of the whole Convention based on an opinion that the ACPs did longer had a reasonable claim on special treatment within the EU. In agreement with this, the BMZ was against the existing discriminatory practice towards non- ACPs. Therefore, the it favoured regional agreements with the explicit aim of ending the discrimination of non-ACPs (Brüne, 1997:495).

So, once again, it is the Ministry for Development Aid, in this case the BMZ which is more or less on its own, when it formulates the German position on Lomé V. With no other actors involved in this process, the BMZ only has to take into consideration the domestic budget pressure and the French position on the renewal of Lomé. When that is done, the ethical motives behind German aid combined with the bureaucratic-institutional interests of the BMZ are the only determinants left to influence the German position. The combination of the relationship to France and the bureaucratic interests of the BMZ can explain the German positive attitude toward a Lomé V whereas, there are no basic interests involved in the trade and regionalization question. Therefore, the German position on this issue is so relaxed which indirectly supports the position of the Commission.

6.4 Denmark

Denmark has no strong historical ties to Sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, since the early 1960s when the development aid programme started, the Africa policy has been more or less identical with Danish development policy. It is a striking feature of Danish development aid policy that it has changed so little since its start in the 1960s. Probably, this has to be explained by the combination of the basic motives or interests in giving aid and the actors involved in policy-making on aid.

On the one hand, the unique situation also has to be explained by the weight of moral arguments in favour of aid in Denmark (Due-Nielsen & Petersen, 1995:36). Small and medium powers such as Denmark are sometimes called *humane internationalists* as their aid policy is determined by an acceptance of the principle that citizens of the industrial nations have moral obligations towards people and events beyond their borders; it implies a sensitivity to cosmopolitan values, ... (Stokke, 1989:10-11). The strength of the humane internationalism manifests itself most clearly in Denmark in the relative size of the aid budget which is the biggest within the OECD countries. Also, it shows itself in the strong focus on Africa which has received more than 50% of total Danish bilateral aid during the 1990s.

On the other hand, the existence of the limited number of participants in policy-making on aid. Over the years, this narrow group of actors has developed a common understanding of what are the problems of development aid and also, a consensus has developed on how to solve the specific problems involved in overseas assistance. Gradually, they have formed a so-called *policy-community* which has developed a basic interest in keeping political disagreements at the lowest possible level and which therefore, has turned political compromise into the hallmark of Danish development policy (Olsen, 1998).

In 1994, Denmark launched a new and comprehensive *Strategy for Danish Development Policy towards the Year 2000* in 1994. The key feature in the strategy is a concentration of bilateral aid on no more than 20 countries mainly located in Africa. Of course, the strong focus on Africa south of the Sahara is an expression of the focus on poverty alleviation which is basically a result of the moral motives behind Danish development aid. As a small state, Denmark has traditionally given priority to the multilateral aid which has manifested itself in an almost equal division between bilateral and multilateral aid most of which has been channelled through the UN system. From 1973, the Danish contributions to the common (and thus multilateral) EC development aid budget has been growing steadily in absolute figures. However, this is not necessarily an indication of Danish priority of the EU's development efforts but, rather it is a consequence of the general growth of the Danish aid budget which reached the crucial goal of 1% of GNP in 1992. In relative terms, the share of Danish multilateral aid which went to the EU fell from 18,6% in 1980-82 to 14,6% in 1992-94 (Plan of Action, 1996:72).

Humane internationalism presupposes the existence of strong moral and political sentiments in the population. Since the mid 1970s, the support of the Danish aid programme has been over 60% of the adult population and in 1997, 73% in 1997 being positive towards the current level of ODA at 1% of GDP (Udvikling, 1997:3). If these polls can be assumed to measure the public attitudes, it may be concluded that there is a considerable public support of the official priority given to Africa in the bilateral aid. As for the multilateral aid channelled through the EU, there are no indications that the level of knowledge is greater in Denmark than in rest of the 15 member countries where it is low (cf. Randel & German, 1998:163).

In spite of the - indirect - support from the public of Africa in the development aid policy, Africa does not figure prominently on the Danish public agenda. On the other hand, measured by the budget appropriations, there is no doubt that Africa was on the *policy agenda* which is the key agenda when it comes to the so-called *real* policy (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). That Africa neither figures on the media agenda nor on the public agenda (Olsen, 1998) is also a manifestation of the strength of the policy community and of the weight of morality on this particular policy issue.

Of course, the growing aid budget has made it far more easy to make compromises. Thus, the aid administration could expand its activities and its number of employees which next, made promotion for ambitious civil servants much easier. Also, the strong NGO sector benefitted considerably from growing transfers from the public aid budget while the business sector was secured a high return rate by the choice of sectoral priorities in the recipient countries. Finally, the parliament and the political parties did not have an interest in politicising the aid issue as that was not an issue which would secure a seat in the next parliament.

In such a situation with a, in reality, >depoliticised= aid policy, the aid administration is forced to formulate the concrete policies and the operational guidelines for the policy. The different aid strategies, one from 1988 and the new one of 1994 were both the result mainly of the initiatives and the work of the administration which has also been successful in balancing the views and the demands of the different actors not least the NGOs and the business community (Olsen, 1998). The strong, not to say dominating position of the aid administration is even more pronounced when it comes to EU development aid policy including the renewal of the Lomé Convention. On this point there is very limited interest from the policy community in exerting influence the specific content of a future treaty which, it has to be stressed is not very important in the overall Danish aid budget.

Therefore, and because of the moral basis for Danish aid, the Danish aid administration has been largely on its own formulating the Danish position which is in favour of a fairly big financial protocol. This position is to be explained by the simple fact that the >others= pay for the EDF which gives high priority to a geographical region which is the most important one for Danish development policy namely sub-Saharan Africa. As to the trade discussion, it is somewhat puzzling that Denmark (or to be specific the Danish aid administration) supports the position of the Commission on the issue of sub-regionalization considering that the proposal is so strongly opposed by the ACPs.

Probably, the Danish position has to be explained by the fact that the Danes think that all LDCs should have the same concessions as the ACPs. Also, the Danes are satisfied with the concession in the Commissions negotiating mandate which makes it possible for the ACPs to choose not to be a member of a REPA. However, the Lomé Convention is not important to Denmark, and the trade component is of even lesser significance. Therefore, the Danish position is in reality to support the proposal of the Commission.

6.5 The Commission, DG VIII

(missing)

7 Concluding remarks

The above analysis of the determinants of the European position in the current negotiations on the future of the Lomé Convention has given a relatively clear picture of the situation. First, it is striking how little popular and political interest there is in the question of a future Lomé agreement in the form of a Lomé V. Of, course, it is one important explanation to why the policy positions on the issues in the negotiations are the result of bureaucratic policy making which almost inevitable gives institutional interests a prominent role. When the national aid administrations go into negotiations with DG VIII, it only strengthens the tendency to bureaucratic policy making.

It is only France which has any real or national interests in the character of the future relationship to the ACPs and especially in the relationship to sub-Saharan Africa. In the current situation, the French interests are mainly in a continuation of the Lomé Conventions as a symbol. And here is the aid component the most important. On this point, the French position is basically in agreement with most members states= aid administrations which obviously express the EU members= psychological satisfaction from providing aid to the poor, as John Ravenhill argued back in 1985. The differences between the European countries only appear when the discussion touches upon the actual amount of money to be channelled into the future EDF and the distribution of the burden among the member states.

As to the trade part and especially to the proposal of sub-regionalization with reciprocity in trade, there are no strong European interests involved in the question. Therefore, the Commission and its >mercantilistic= attitudes have had the possibility to influence the final negotiating mandate including the controversial suggestion of sub-regionalization. Returning to the question=What are the determinants of the EU=s position the current negotiations

with the ACPs on trade and REPAs ?A. Based on the empirical analysis, the answer is that the idea was fostered within DG VIII and it reflects certain attitudes in Bruxelles which none of the member countries have an interest in challenging. So, rephrasing the formulation of Helge Hveem: The DG VIII has chosen the option of sub-regionalisation because no one else bothered. Therefore, the mercantilist attitudes in Bruxelles contributed to creating the idea on REPA=s and trade which are the least important questions in the future Lomé Convention.

Of course, it is not to be neglected that the proposal of giving up non-reciprocity in the future trade arrangement is strongly inspired by the WTO rules on the topic. Anyway, maybe the proposal of sub-regionalization can also be interpreted as an expression of the lack of ideas in Europe on how to proceed with the extremely intricate problem of promoting development in Africa with European involvement.

List of references

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