The Commission confirms that the possibility of establishing a new framework of fisheries relations between the Community and Morocco, remains the first priority of its action with regard to the common fisheries policy for 2000.

This position was expressed once again to the Moroccan authorities by the responsible Member of the Commission on the occasion of his visit to Rabat on 18 May 2000.

The Moroccan authorities confirmed their will to establish a new partnership with the Community in the fisheries sector, and they expressed their availability to open technical discussions in July 2000.

The Commission confirms the position which it has expressed over recent months in line with the directive for negotiation approved in October 1999 by the Council.

Subject: Appointment of senior Commission officials to positions of responsibility

- Andrew Cahn, Chef de cabinet to Neil Kinnock when the latter held the Commission transport portfolio, has left the Commission to take up a senior post at British Airways.

- Having worked on Mr Kinnock's staff, he has had access for many years to essential transport information and, in particular, played a key role in shaping and running European policy specifically where civil aviation is concerned.

- A temporary employment contract is, by definition, limited in time, and it would be unfair and/or inappropriate to prohibit a staff member from accepting a job offer affording high status and greater permanence.

In the light of the foregoing, does the Commission believe that the behaviour described above is consistent with the professional ethics which officials and other servants of the EC are required to observe?

As the Honourable Member notes, Mr Andrew Cahn was employed by the Commission under a temporary employment contract. The Commission has always taken the view that, provided that an envisaged activity is compatible with the relevant provisions, Articles 16 and 17 of the Staff Regulations, it would be unfair and inappropriate in principle to prohibit a temporary agent from accepting an offer in the private sector.

After a very thorough consideration of Mr Cahn's new appointment he was formally authorised to take up his new post. Naturally, that authorisation was, and continues to be, subject to his full and continued compliance with the terms and principles of the Staff Regulations. He must, consequently, avoid use of factual information about particular cases which have not yet been completed, acquired in the course of his duties in the Commission, notably cases which were current during the period between December 1997 and September 1999 when he was Head of Cabinet of the Commissioner responsible for Transport. Mr Cahn readily accepted that requirement.

Mr Cahn's new tasks as Director of British Airways' Directorate of Government and Industry Affairs have no connection with the duties which he exercised in the period from September 1999 to May 2000 when he continued to be Head of Cabinet of the Vice President responsible for administrative reform and consequently, engaged primarily in activities related to administrative reform.
After examination of all the relevant elements the Commission considered that Mr Cahn's duties in his new post were consistent with the professional ethics which a temporary member of staff has to respect under the present Staff Regulations.

As a matter of broader consideration, the Commission takes the view that the present general rules and principles relating to the external employment of temporary and permanent officials would benefit from greater precision in order to ensure consistency and practical guidance, as well as transparency, not least to facilitate more exchange of qualified personnel between national and Community administrations and between the public and private sectors. The Commission will therefore examine whether, on the basis of best working and ethical practices in the administrations of the Member States and of other international bodies, more precise rules and procedures can be proposed and, if so, what practical provisions and arrangements should be made.

(2001/C 89 E/069) WRITTEN QUESTION E-1669/00
by Christopher Huhne (ELDR) to the Commission
(29 May 2000)

Subject: Payment of contractors and suppliers

Further to Ms Schreyer's answer to my Written Question No E-0505/00 (1), will the Commission please give a comparable proportion of payments which were completed within the 60-day period for the four previous years (i.e. 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995)?


(2001/C 89 E/070) WRITTEN QUESTION E-1670/00
by Christopher Huhne (ELDR) to the Commission
(29 May 2000)

Subject: Payment of contractors and suppliers

Further to Ms Schreyer's answer to my Written Question No E-0505/00 (1), will the Commission please indicate the average period of payment across all departments from the date of receipt of the invoice to the date on which the Commission bank account was debited for payments made in the four previous years (i.e. 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995)?


Joint answer
to Written Questions E-1669/00 and E-1670/00
given by Mrs Schreyer on behalf of the Commission
(20 July 2000)

Performance and change in average payment times since 1995 (overall statistics) (1).

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