

**Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the ‘Proposal for a Council Directive on tax exemptions applicable to the permanent introduction from a Member State of the personal property of individuals (Codified version)’**

COM(2008) 376 final — 2008/0120 (COD)

(2009/C 77/31)

On 18 June 2008, the Council of the European Union decided to consult the European Economic and Social Committee, under Article 262 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, on

*Tax exemptions applicable to the permanent introduction from a Member State of the personal property of individuals (Codified version).*

Since the Committee unreservedly endorses the content of the proposal and feels that it requires no comment on its part, it decided unanimously, at its 447th plenary session of 17 and 18 September 2008 (meeting of 17 September), to issue an opinion endorsing the proposed text.

Brussels, 17 September 2008.

The President  
of the European Economic and Social Committee  
Dimitris DIMITRIADIS

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**Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the ‘EU-Africa Strategy’**

(2009/C 77/32)

In a letter dated 11 July 2007, Commissioner Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, asked the European Economic and Social Committee to draw up an exploratory opinion on

*The EU-Africa Strategy.*

The Section for External Relations, which was responsible for preparing the Committee’s work on the subject, adopted its opinion on 17 July 2008. The rapporteur was Mr Dantin.

At its 447th plenary session, held on 17 and 18 September 2008 (meeting of 18 September 2008), the European Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion by 89 votes to none, with no abstentions.

**1. Conclusions and recommendations**

1.1 In the globalised context of this new century, **there is a need for considerable evolution in the relations between Europe and Africa, by drawing on the lessons of the past**, in particular by working towards a partnership based on equal rights and obligations. After decades of cooperation and development aid, extreme poverty in Africa is worsening and deepening; the fruits of misdirected growth, characterised by low job creation, are unevenly distributed and therefore entrench inequalities; over 55 % of the sub-Saharan population lives on less than a dollar a day; over 70 % of the total number of jobs are in the informal subsistence sector, and over 57 % of them are in agriculture. The picture that emerges is one where decent and productive jobs are dramatically scarce.

1.2 The stakes are high, especially in terms of Africa’s development and stabilisation, but also in terms of Europe’s security and ability to achieve steady sustainable growth.

1.3 **The development policies** followed up to now by the European Union pursuant to the various agreements (Lomé, Yaoundé, Cotonou) and the funding devoted to them **have not achieved the desired results**, especially as regards creating decent jobs. That said, **this state of affairs cannot continue**, and change being indispensable, the Committee welcomes the success of the EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon on 8-9 December 2007.

1.3.1 It particularly welcomes the fact that employment is treated as a cross-sector issue.