

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3806/02

by Karin Junker (PSE)

to the Commission

Subject: Commission and Member State ICT projects in developing countries

Access to global communication, in particular to modern information and communication technology (ICT), can play a crucial role in enhancing sustainable economic and social development in the ACP countries and make an important contribution to the democratic forming of opinions.

Speeding up the introduction of ICT can considerably improve the chances of sustainable development and aid EU development cooperation in fundamental areas such as fighting poverty, health, education, training, the environment and strengthening the private sector.

The Commission and the Council understand the importance of ICT, as emerged from the Commission communication COM(2001) 770 and the Council of Development Ministers' Decision of 30 May 2002 on the Commission communication. In its report, the Commission outlines the current programmes and future activities, albeit in a very general way.

At the Palermo Conference in April, the Italian Government outlined its ICT initiative for developing countries. Italy has made more than USD 100 million available for projects to advance e-government in five developing countries.

What specifically is the Commission doing for developing countries, especially for ACP countries in terms of ICT?

What programmes and activities are there and of what nature?

What are other Member States doing for developing countries with regard to ICT?