

Articles from the Treaty establishing the ECSC relating to agreements and concentrations (Paris, 18 April 1951)

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Treaty constituting the European Coal and Steel Community (Paris, 18 April 1951)

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[...]

CHAPTER VI – Agreements and concentrations

Article 65

1. There are hereby forbidden all agreements among enterprises, all decisions of associations of enterprises, and all concerted practices, which would tend, directly or indirectly, to prevent, restrict or impede the normal operation of competition within the common market, and in particular:

- (a) to fix or influence prices;
- (b) to restrict or control production, technical development or investments;
- (c) to allocate markets, products, customers or sources of supply.

2. However, the High Authority will authorize enterprises to agree among themselves to specialize in the production of, or to engage in joint buying or selling of specified products, if the High Authority finds:

- (a) that such specialization or such joint buying or selling will contribute to a substantial improvement in the production or marketing of the products in question; and
- (b) that the agreement in question is essential to achieve such effects, and does not impose any restriction not necessary for that purpose; and
- (c) that it is not susceptible of giving the interested enterprises the power to influence prices, or to control or limit production or marketing of an appreciable part of the products in question within the common market, or of protecting them from effective competition by other enterprises within the common market.

If the High Authority should recognize that certain agreements are strictly analogous in their nature and effects to the agreements mentioned above, taking into account the application of the present section to distributing enterprises, it will authorize such agreements if it further recognizes that they satisfy the same conditions.

An authorization may be made subject to specified conditions and may be limited in time. If so limited, the High Authority will renew it once or several times if it finds that at the time of renewal the conditions stated in paragraph (a) to (c) above are still fulfilled.

The High Authority will revoke or modify the authorization if it finds that as a result of changes in circumstances the agreement no longer fulfills the conditions set forth above, or that the actual effects of the agreement or of the operations under it are contrary to the conditions required for its approval.

The decisions granting, modifying, refusing or revoking an authorization shall be published along with their justification; the limitations contained in the second paragraph of Article 47 shall not be applicable to such

publication.

3. The High Authority may obtain, in accordance with the provisions of Article 47, any information necessary to the application of the present article, either by a special request addressed to the interested parties or by a regulation defining the nature of the agreements, decisions or practices which must be communicated to it.

4. Any agreement or decision which is prohibited by virtue of Section 1 of the present article shall be automatically void and may not be invoked before any court or tribunal of the member States.

The High Authority has exclusive competence, subject to appeals to the Court, to rule on the conformity of such agreements or decisions with the provisions of the present article.

5. The High Authority may pronounce against enterprises:

which have concluded an agreement which is automatically void;

which have complied with, enforced or attempted to enforce by arbitration, forfeiture, boycott or any other means, an agreement or decision which is automatically void or an agreement for which approval has been refused or revoked;

which shall have obtained an authorization by means of knowingly false or misleading information; or

which engage in practices contrary to the provisions of Section 1,

fining and daily penalty payments not to exceed double the turnover actually realized on the products which have been the subject of the agreement, decision or practice contrary to the provisions of the present article; if the object of the agreement is to restrict production, technical development or investments, this maximum may be raised to 10 percent of the annual turnover of the enterprises in question, in the case of fines, and 20 percent of the daily turnover in the case of daily penalty payments.

Article 66

1. Except as provided in paragraph 3 below, any transaction which would have in itself the direct or indirect effect of bringing about a concentration, within the territories mentioned in the first paragraph of Article 79, involving enterprises at least one of which falls under the application of Article 80, shall be submitted to a prior authorization of the High Authority. This obligation shall be effective whether the operation in question is carried out by a person or an enterprise, or a group of persons or enterprises, whether it concerns a single product or different products, whether it is effected by merger, acquisition of shares or assets, loan, contract, or any other means of control. For the application of the above provisions, the High Authority will define by a regulation, established after consultation with the Council, what constitutes control of an enterprise.

2. The High Authority will grant the authorization referred to in the preceding paragraph if it finds that the transaction in question will not give to the interested persons or enterprises, as concerns those of the products in question which are subject to its jurisdiction, the power:

- to influence prices, to control or restrain production or marketing, or to impair the maintenance of effective

competition in a substantial part of the market for such products; or

- to evade the rules of competition resulting from the application of the present Treaty, particularly by establishing an artificially privileged position involving a material advantage in access to supplies or markets.

In this appreciation, and in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination set forth in sub-paragraph (b) of Article 4, the High Authority will take account of the size of enterprises of the same nature existing in the Community, to the extent it deems justified to avoid or correct the disadvantages resulting from an inequality in the conditions of competition.

The High Authority may subject such an authorization to any conditions which it deems appropriate for the purposes of the present section.

Before taking action on a transaction concerning enterprises of which at least one is not subject to the application of Article 80, the High Authority will request the observations of the interested government.

3. The High Authority will exempt from the requirement of prior authorization those classes of transactions which, by the size of the assets or enterprises which they affect taken together with the nature of the concentration they bring about, must in its opinion be held to conform to the conditions required by Section 2. The regulation established for this purpose with the concurrence of the Council will also fix the conditions to which such exemption is to be subject.

4. Without limiting the applicability of the provisions of Article 47 to enterprises subject to its jurisdiction, the High Authority may obtain from physical or juridical persons who have acquired or regrouped or might acquire or regroup the rights or assets in question, any information necessary to the application of the present article concerning operations which might produce the effect mentioned in Section 1; it may do this either by a regulation established after consultation with the Council which defines the nature of the operations which must be communicated to it, or by a special demand addressed to the interested parties within the framework of such regulation.

5. If a concentration should occur, which the High Authority finds has been effected contrary to the provisions of Section 1 but which it finds nevertheless satisfies the conditions provided in Section 2, it will subject the approval of this concentration to the payment, by the persons who have acquired or regrouped the rights or assets in question, of the fine provided in the second sub-paragraph of Section 6; such payment shall not be less than half of the maximum provided in the said sub-paragraph in any case where it is clear that the authorization should have been requested. In the absence of this payment, the High Authority will apply the measures provided hereafter for concentrations found to be illegal.

If a concentration should occur which the High Authority recognizes cannot satisfy the general or special conditions to which an authorization under Section 2 would be subject, it will establish the illegal character of this concentration by a decision accompanied by a justification; after having allowed the interested parties to present their observations, the High Authority shall order the separation of the enterprises or assets wrongly concentrated or the cessation of common control, as well as any other action which it deems appropriate to re-establish the independent operation of the enterprises or assets in question and to restore normal conditions of competition. Any person directly interested may take an appeal against such decisions under the conditions provided in Article 33. Notwithstanding the provisions of that article, the Court shall be fully competent to judge whether the operation effected is a concentration within the meaning of Section 1

of the present article and of the regulations issued in application of that section. This appeal shall be suspensive. It may not be taken until the measures provided above have been ordered, unless the High Authority should agree to the taking of a separate appeal against the decision declaring the transaction illegal.

The High Authority may at any time, subject to the possible application of the provisions of the third paragraph of Article 39, take or cause to be taken such measures as it may deem necessary to safeguard the interests of competing enterprises and of third parties, and to prevent any action which might impede the execution of its decisions. Unless the Court decides otherwise, appeals shall not suspend the application of such precautionary measures.

The High Authority will grant to the interested parties a reasonable period in which to execute its decisions, at the expiration of which it may begin to impose daily penalty payments not to exceed one tenth of one percent of the value of the rights or assets in question.

Furthermore, if the interested parties fail to fulfill their obligations, the High Authority shall itself take measures of execution and in particular may: suspend the exercise, in enterprises subject to its jurisdiction, of the rights attached to the assets illegally acquired; bring about the designation by judicial authorities of a receiver-administrator for these assets; organize the forced sale of such assets in conditions preserving the legitimate interests of their proprietors; annul, with respect to physical or juridical persons who have acquired the rights or assets in question by the effect of illegal transaction, the acts, decisions, resolutions, or deliberations of the directing organs of enterprises subject to a control which has been irregularly established.

The High Authority is also empowered to address to the interested member States the recommendations necessary to obtain, within the framework of national legislation, the execution of the measures provided for in the preceding paragraphs.

In the exercise of its powers, the High Authority shall take account of the rights of third persons which have been acquired in good faith.

6. The High Authority may impose fines not to exceed:

- 3 percent of the value of the assets acquired or regrouped or to be acquired or regrouped, against physical or juridical persons who shall have violated the obligations provided for in Section 4;
- 10 percent of the value of the assets acquired or regrouped, against physical or juridical persons which shall have violated the obligation provided for in Section 1; after the end of the twelfth month following the transaction, this maximum shall be raised by one-twenty-fourth per month which elapses until the High Authority establishes the existence of the violation;
- 10 percent of the value of the assets acquired or regrouped or to be acquired or regrouped, against physical or juridical persons which shall have obtained or attempted to obtain the benefit of the provisions of Section 2 by means of false or misleading information;
- 15 percent of the value of the assets acquired or regrouped, against enterprises subject to its jurisdiction which shall have participated in or lent themselves to the realization of transactions contrary to the provisions of the present article.

Persons who are the object of sanctions provided for in the present paragraph may appeal before the Court under the conditions provided for in Article 36.

7. To the extent necessary, the High Authority is empowered to address to public or private enterprises which, in law or in fact, have or acquire on the market for one of the products subject to its jurisdiction a dominant position which protects them from effective competition in a substantial part of the common market, any recommendations required to prevent the use of such position for purposes contrary to those of the present Treaty. If such recommendations are not fulfilled satisfactorily within a reasonable period, the High Authority will, by decisions taken in consultation with the interested government and under the sanctions provided for in Articles 58, 59 and 64, fix the prices and conditions of sale to be applied by the enterprise in question, or establish manufacturing or delivery programs to be executed by it.

CHAPTER VII – Impairment of the conditions of competition

Article 67

1. Any action of a member State which might have noticeable repercussions on the conditions of competition in the coal and steel industries shall be brought to the attention of the High Authority by the interested government.

2. If such an action is liable to provoke a serious disequilibrium by increasing the differentials in costs of production otherwise than through variations in productivity, the High Authority, after consulting the Consultative Committee and the Council, may take the following measures:

If the action of that State produces harmful effects for coal or steel enterprises coming under the jurisdiction of the State in question, the High Authority may authorize that State to grant to such enterprises assistance, the amount, conditions and duration of which shall be determined in agreement with the High Authority. The same provisions shall be applicable in case of a variation in wages and in working conditions which would have the same effects, even if such variation is not the result of a governmental act.

If the action of that State produces harmful effects for coal or steel enterprises subject to the jurisdiction of other member States, the High Authority may address a recommendation to the State in question with a view to remedying such effects by such measures as that State may deem most compatible with its own economic equilibrium.

3. If the action of the State in question reduces differentials in costs of production by granting a special advantage to, or by imposing special burdens on, coal or steel enterprises coming under its jurisdiction in comparison with the other industries in the same country, the High Authority is empowered to address the necessary recommendations to the State in question, after consulting the Consultative Committee and the Council.

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