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Guilty by Association: Examining The Netherlands' reluctant approval of the association of Overseas Countries and Territories in the Treaty of Rome negotiations

Galesloot, Tom

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Guilty by Association;

Examining The Netherlands' reluctant approval of the association of Overseas Countries and Territories in the Treaty of Rome negotiations



Thesis

MA International Relations: European Union Studies

Full Name: Thomas Christiaan Galesloot

Student ID: s3296164

Student Email: t.c.galesloot@umail.leidenuniv.nl

Supervisor: Mr.dr. A.I. Richard

Second Reader: Dr. M. Broad

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Table of contents:

List of abbreviations	3
0. Introduction	4
1. The Franco-Belgian association proposal and its historical context	7
1.1 Institutional and colonial context post-WW2	7
1.2 Franco-Belgian association proposal	9
1.3 The association plan's purpose and significance	11
1.4 The proposal's reception amongst the other four	14
1.5 Literature on Dutch position	16
1.6 Dutch political climate and actors	18
2. Early positioning under Stikker and Beyen	22
2.1 Stikker's reluctance towards (OCTs) integration	22
2.2 Beyen's initial lack of interest in OCTs	23
2.3 Venice: the turning point	26
3. Formal formulation and negotiation	29
3.1 Early civil service involvement	29
3.2 The basis for negotiations	32
3.3 Fearing the high financial and political costs	35
4. Conclusion	40
Bibliography	42

List of abbreviations:

ACCI	<i>Ambtelijke Coördinatie Commissie voor de Integratie (Coordinating Committee for Integration)</i>
Benelux	<i>Belgium, The Netherlands, and Luxembourg</i>
DA	<i>Dutch Antilles</i>
DNG	<i>Dutch New Guinea</i>
DWS	<i>Directie Westelijke Samenwerking (Directorate for Western Cooperation)</i>
ECSC	<i>European Coal and Steel Community</i>
EDC	<i>European Defence Community</i>
EDF	<i>European Development Fund</i>
EEC	<i>European Economic Community</i>
ELEC	<i>European League for Economic Co-operation</i>
EPC	<i>European Political Community</i>
EPU	<i>European Payment Union</i>
EU	<i>European Union</i>
FRG	<i>Federal Republic Germany</i>
KVP	<i>Katholieke Volkspartij (Catholic People's Party)</i>
MFA	<i>Minister for Foreign Affairs</i>
MS	<i>Member States</i>
MR	<i>Ministerraad (Dutch Council of Ministers)</i>
NATO	<i>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</i>
OCTs	<i>Overseas Countries and Territories</i>
OEEC	<i>Organisation for European Economic Co-operation</i>

PM *Prime Minister*

PVDA *Partij van de Arbeid (Labour Party)*

US *United States*

VVD *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy).*

WOG *Werkgroep Overzeese Gebiedsdelen (Committee Overseas Territories)*

0. Introduction

'Where is Europe?' Proved to be a prominent important question during negotiations for the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957. Four of the 'Six' founding members of the European integrational project, France, West-Germany (FRG), Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, still possessed overseas colonial holdings. Only tiny Luxembourg and West-Germany lacked such possessions. The question of what to do with these overseas countries and territories (OCTs) when the metropolitan mainland entered a customs union with its continental neighbours thus came a notable issue on the agenda. This debate becomes increasingly complex when one considers the vast array of different colonial arrangements between the Six and their colonies.

The European Union (EU) is the result of more than 90 years of negotiation, dialogue, trial-and-error, and evolution. In April 1951, the Six jointly established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). To make war "not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible", the Six created a common market for Coal and Steel under the supervision of supranational institutions.¹ In 1954, however, the French Parliament shut down a treaty for the establishment of a European Defence Community (EDC). Consequently, the idea for a European Political Community (EPC) was also abandoned. Although the integration project had thus suffered some setbacks, the Six returned to the negotiating table in the so-called *relance européenne* during the second half of the 1950s to eventually establish the European Economic Community in 1957.²

Research on the topic of the colonial question with regards to the EEC assigns different levels of importance to the issue. Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson have argued that the colonial question was instrumental to understand the construction and discourse of the ECSC, EDC, EPC, and eventually the European Economic Community.³ Moreover, France decided to hinge the future of the EEC on this very issue.⁴ Although others have

¹ Robert Schuman, 'Schuman Declaration', 9 May 1950, https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/history-eu/1945-59/schuman-declaration-may-1950_en.

² Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson, *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism*, Theory for a Global Age (London, 2014), 147.

³ Hansen and Jonsson, 148.

⁴ Hansen and Jonsson, 161; Giuliano Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*, trans. Richard R. Nybakken (Oxford, 2012), 45.

scrutinized the importance of the, they argue that the issue is blown out of proportion.⁵ Therefore, in order to assess these claims of its high saliency and importance made by Hansen and Jonsson, we must understand the national positions relating to the colonies in the negotiations for the Treaty of Rome.

To solve the colonial question, France, together in part with Belgium, issued a proposal to associate the OCTs to the new EEC. The Italian delegation supported such a proposal since it would benefit their colonies.⁶ However, not all parties agreed to or liked such a construction.⁷ Italy, for example, was, while supportive in principle, concerned with the possibility of free entry of workers into Europe from Algeria.⁸ Often cited objections from the Dutch and German delegations varied from accusations of neo-colonialism, high costs, and a potentially disruptive effect on trade.⁹ Eager to do away with their warmongering reputation, the Germans publicly denounced the proposal as neo-colonialist.¹⁰ Although, the behind-the-scenes Germany seemed to contradict such a firm condemnation, looking quite willing to engage with these OCTs.¹¹

Despite the importance of insight into national positions on the association of the OCTs, there unfortunately exists little in-depth research on the Dutch position. The Netherlands is often merely mentioned in passing, if at all, or is awkwardly lumped together with the Germans. This lack of attention is especially striking as the Dutch are often described as the most critical of the Six towards possible association.¹²

To fill this gap in the literature, this research will investigate the Dutch position on the colonial question of the EEC. Why did the Dutch delegation accept the association proposal, even though they initially objected to it? What were their objections and

⁵ Gary Marks, 'Scale, Community and "Eurafrica": A Response to Hansen and Jonsson', *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 50, no. 6 (November 2012): 1042–44.

⁶ Carol Ann Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', *Journal of Contemporary History* 4, no. 1 (January 1969): 76–77.

⁷ Frances Lynch, *France and the International Economy: From Vichy to the Treaty of Rome* (London, 2006), 176–77; Wim P. van Meurs et al., *The Unfinished History of European Integration* (Amsterdam, 2018), 42.

⁸ Megan Brown, 'Drawing Algeria into Europe: Shifting French Policy and the Treaty of Rome (1951–1964)', *Modern & Contemporary France* 25, no. 2 (3 April 2017): 197.

⁹ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 177; Marks, 'Scale, Community and "Eurafrica"'.
¹⁰ Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', 76–77.

¹¹ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 171–75.

¹² Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 177; Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 175; Anjo G. Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence: The Netherlands' European Policy during the Formative Years of the European Union, 1952-1973*, *European Policy* 42 (Brussels, 2009), 233.

considerations? By answering these questions, this research will further our understanding and knowledge of both the construction of the EEC (and subsequent integration efforts) and provide insight in the colonial dynamics of the Netherlands and its overseas countries and territories.

This research will be based on archival material from the Dutch National Archives (*Nationaal Archief*) located in The Hague. These archives contain material from a variety of ministries, the Dutch council of ministers, and personal archives of ministers. Most material is thus governmental in nature, with some exceptions. This confines the scope of research to the Dutch state-centric perspective since civil society is largely absent in these archives. This trade-off allows for thorough analysis of the Dutch governmental position during a state-centric negotiation.

This research will be organised chronologically. First, it shall provide an extended review of the literature and give the necessary historical background to the Dutch and the proposal's context. Second, it will dive into the Dutch views on the association issue as the Dutch stance, prior to the French proposal, on the issue will be assessed. This will serve as a baseline measurement. Third, it will show their position evolved considering the ongoing negotiations. Lastly, it will conclude that the Dutch were driven by economic motives and an unwillingness to accept political responsibility.

1. The Franco-Belgian association proposal and its historical context

1.1 Institutional and colonial context post-WW2

In the wake of the Axis defeat in 1945, Europe found itself in a dire financial and military situation.¹³ Europe had lost the status of world power to two new superpowers, the United States (US) and Soviet Union. Trust in between European neighbours was appallingly low.¹⁴ The years following the Second World War saw the creation of a flurry of international organisations with the explicit or implicit goal to prevent such a war from happening again. Guided by ideas of economic interdependence, cooperation and integration were chosen as the best form to achieve it.¹⁵ Robert Schuman's famous declaration articulates this sentiment perfectly; *"The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible"*.¹⁶

Additionally, Cold War dynamics are deeply rooted in the trajectory of European Integration.¹⁷ The US pushed for integration as it saw European integration as a vehicle to stop the spread of communism in Europe.¹⁸ This gave the integration project an additional geopolitical aspect and would also let Europe ascend back to being a global power in a bipolar world.¹⁹ The intentionality of the latter claim is disputed among scholars, though.²⁰ Within this frame the idea of European unity is meant to serve self-preservation and self-protection.²¹

Within the context of a heavily intertwined organisational framework, the EEC was conceived and embedded as Western Europe was host to a sprawl of new international organisations. The Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), the ECSC, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), amongst many others, were

¹³ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 78–79.

¹⁴ Garavini, *After Empires*, 46–47.

¹⁵ Kiran Klaus Patel, *Project Europe: A History* (Cambridge, 2020), 14–15.

¹⁶ Schuman, 'Schuman Declaration'.

¹⁷ Patel, *Project Europe*, 21.

¹⁸ Meurs et al., *The Unfinished History of European Integration*, 28–29.

¹⁹ Patel, *Project Europe*, 14–17; Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 10–11.

²⁰ Garavini, *After Empires*, 46.

²¹ Meurs et al., *The Unfinished History of European Integration*, 47.

all competing for primacy over the others.²² Albeit that most organisations had a slightly different purpose. This meant that the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome were not only an exercise in diplomacy, but also a balancing act of keeping everybody at the table since real alternatives existed.²³ Moreover, the Dutch were not initially convinced of a 'Europe of the Six'.²⁴ Therefore, none of the parties involved could strong-arm others into acceptance, especially on 'hot potato' issues like the association of the OCTs.²⁵

The effects of the war not only hit European states on the mainland but also in their overseas countries and territories.²⁶ Africa remained largely under European control but outside of the African continent European empires were not holding up well.²⁷ However, outside of the African continent the European empires were not holding up so well. The Netherlands had brutally tried to suppress Indonesia after their declaration of independence, which had left the Dutch with a colonial trauma.²⁸ France committed equally atrocities in Indochina.²⁹ Internal cracks in the system of colonial and imperial rule had already existed but were now pushed to a critical breaking point.³⁰ The Second World War thus proved to be the catalyst for comprehensive changes to colonial rule in the international system.³¹

As decolonization is not a singular, definitive event but a process of reconfiguration, which is not irreversible or unstoppable.³² Stopping or slowing the decolonization process and retaining control over colonies was seen as the only way for Europe to stand among both the US and USSR. Retaining control, however, came at a huge cost. Something the exhausted European colonial powers could barely muster

²² Patel, *Project Europe*, 14–15.

²³ Patel, *Project Europe*, 14–15.

²⁴ Joris J. C. Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles: A Study of Dutch Foreign Policy* (The Hague, 1979), 163.

²⁵ Meurs et al., *The Unfinished History of European Integration*, 42.

²⁶ Martin Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires* (Malden, 2008), 234–35.

²⁷ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 71–73.

²⁸ Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 235.

²⁹ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 71–73.

³⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present*, *New Approaches to African History* (New York, 2002), 66.

³¹ Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact*, 61–63.

³² Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire*, *The Berkeley Series in British Studies* 4 (Berkeley, 2012), 6.

alone.³³ In addition, the loss of empire was seen as an unacceptable and stopping decolonization was framed in terms of survival of the metropolitan 'home country'.³⁴

1.2 Franco-Belgian association proposal

The idea for an association scheme originates with the French director of Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Overseas France, Pierre Moussa, as part of the *relance européenne*. Moussa was in turn tasked to devise a plan to include the French Union by the Minister for Overseas Territories, Gaston Defferre.³⁵ The history of the association goes back further and has historical roots in the 1920s. Frenchman Albert Sarraut, a member of the Pan-European Organization, who also held multiple ministerial posts in France and former governor of Indochina, proposed something similar to parliament back in 1921.³⁶

Complicating the exact origin of the proposal further, was the existence of the European League for Economic Co-operation (ELEC), a transnational forum for political and business elites founded in 1946. They advocated trade liberalisation and supported the idea of economic integration. In addition, according to some, the League was the most influential European lobbying group of its time, and their reports were regularly considered by policy- and decision-makers alike. The associations plan was therefore a rather European policy influenced by a transnational exchange of ideas.³⁷

The actual Franco-Belgian report was published in October 1956 and would serve as the basis of the negotiations as it tangibly set out French demands on association. It was finalized after France convened with a delegation of Belgian Ministers on the 27th of September 1956. Preliminary reports had showed little enthusiasm to the French plan among its other five partners, so French ministers attempted to bolster their position by teaming up with Belgium.³⁸ The report was mindful of 'the different economic structures'

³³ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 75–78.

³⁴ Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact*, 62–63.

³⁵ Laura Kottos, 'A "European Commonwealth": Britain, the European League for Economic Co-Operation, and European Debates on Empire, 1947–1957', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 20, no. 4 (December 2012): 497–515.

³⁶ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 51–52.

³⁷ Kottos, 498–512.

³⁸ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 176–77.

between the Six and their OCTs. Due to these differences, no simple inclusion into the common market was possible.³⁹ The report set out six principles with whom association should be achieved and under which the continued existence of the French Union be accomplished.⁴⁰

First, OCTs would benefit from their relationship with the European MS from the regime they establish through the treaty. Second, in return, the OCTs would apply the same preferential trade regime as with their 'mother country' to all other MS. Third, a transitional period would be introduced, in which the principles would be introduced in stages. Fourth, an investment fund, later dubbed the European Development Fund (EDF) of \$1 billion dollars to cover 'public investments demanded by the economic development of the overseas territories' would be established.⁴¹ Fifth, a possible common market between African countries of similar economic structures would be studied. Sixth and lastly, the possibility of a single common market between the European common market and the OCTs should be studied as well.⁴²

³⁹ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 155; Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 81.

⁴⁰ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 178–79.

⁴¹ Martin Rempe, 'Decolonization by Europeanization?: The Early EEC and the Transformation of French-African Relations', KFG Working Papers Series, no. 27 (May 2011): 9.

⁴² Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 155–56.

1.3 Its purpose and significance

The history of European Integration and European colonial activities in Africa has always been heavily intertwined, according to Hansen and Jonsson. Dating back to the interwar period, the notion of *Eurafrica* emerged. Although ambiguous in nature, the idea was built upon racist ideas of the ‘dark continent’ and the ‘white man’s burden.’⁴³ Some even find traces of fascist ideology in the origins of *Eurafrica*. In the post-WW2 period, the *Eurafrican* ideology had become a tool for maintaining imperial status quo by binding the African continent more firmly to Europe, and to progress, stabilize, and maintain the colonial system.⁴⁴

The importance of this link between European Integration and European colonial activities in Africa is disputed by scholars such as Gary Marks. He argues that *Eurafrica* had little effect on the course of European integration. The association was a subordinate event, not the primary business of the negotiations. According to Marks, the late inclusion of the OCTs in the negotiations is proof that its significance is limited.⁴⁵ Hansen and Jonsson argue that the late introduction and omission of the colonial issue from the Spaak report was intentional to smooth the early stages of negotiations.⁴⁶ Marks also accuses Hansen and Jonsson of disregarding the power politics at play between the Six.⁴⁷

⁴³ Hansen and Jonsson, 246.

⁴⁴ Brown, ‘Drawing Algeria into Europe’, 194–95; Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, 2001), 77.

⁴⁵ Marks, ‘Scale, Community and “Eurafrica”’.

⁴⁶ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 148.

⁴⁷ Marks, ‘Scale, Community and “Eurafrica”’.

The French were so adamant about the scheme, that it made it a necessary condition for them to join the EEC.⁴⁸ This move essentially stems from the fact it would solve both a legal problem and an economic/geo-political one.⁴⁹ The legal problem entails that it was feared it had to choose between joining 'a European union' and keeping its French Union, a framework of France's overseas departments, colonies, and territories.⁵⁰ It seemed impossible for France to comply with her obligations to both the EEC and the French Union.⁵¹ As joining a customs union without some sort of agreement would leave the French Union internally divided.⁵²

The French has a long history of balancing empire and their European involvement in integration and co-operation efforts. For example, French OCTs were not included within the ECSC framework. Even Algeria, a legally speaking constituent part of metropolitan France, was excluded due to the complexity of the issue.⁵³ While this exclusion was not regarded as incompatible with maintaining colonial ties, it does suggest that France viewed the EEC as of a different order of magnitude as the ECSC.⁵⁴

Megan Brown argues that France pushed so hard to inscribe Algeria into the EEC because the Algerian war had escalated. To maintain in control over this resource rich area, as oil was found in 1956, the supranational institutions of the EEC were deemed sufficient to anchor Algeria, and the rest of the French Union, to France. Moreover, the combination of the colonial crisis and the advent of the EEC was seen as an opportunity to funnel aid money to Algeria as a method to cover colonial expenses.⁵⁵

The second economic-geopolitical problem involved France increasingly being unable to make necessary financial investments overseas. Which in return meant it did not possess the same pre-war resources to rebuilt and to strengthen her economy on the mainland, especially in comparison towards her other European partners.⁵⁶ France was more susceptible to the effects of the drained state treasuries post-WW2 since

⁴⁸ Garavini, *After Empires*, 45.

⁴⁹ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 174–75; Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 80.

⁵⁰ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 149.

⁵¹ Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 80.

⁵² Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 174.

⁵³ Lynch, 175.

⁵⁴ Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage'.

⁵⁵ Brown, 'Drawing Algeria into Europe', 194–95.

⁵⁶ Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 80.

France financed its OCTs publicly while countries like Belgium for example financed its empire largely privately.⁵⁷ Dissociating herself with her colonies, however, was still inconceivable.⁵⁸ The motives for pushing for association can thus be seen as to share the burden of empire with its European partners, whilst retaining its empire politically and retaining the access to its resources.⁵⁹

Egyptian president Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal in July 1956, and the following Suez crisis was instrumental in displaying the necessity for cooperation.⁶⁰ The crisis was a humiliating experience for the colonial powers and was perceived as a direct challenge to European standing in the world.⁶¹ It served as a warning to what could happen if association plans fell through.⁶² In addition to the Suez crisis, an increasing number of colonies (Indochina, Morocco and Tunisia before the Treaty of Rome was signed) gained independence which gave a renewed urgency to co-operation as a means to maintain colonial and imperial rule.⁶³

Thus, to keep control over their colonies and to prevent the common market from driving a further wedge between the metropolitan mainland and the OCTs, the plan to associate was put forward as a middle ground solution to both its problem. Firstly, by association France was able to both satisfy to her obligations towards her OCTs in the French Union but also towards this new organisation. Second, this scheme allowed French to keep the benefits of empire without the large 'burden of empire' as it would be shared among her European partners.⁶⁴ Ultimately, the scheme arguably created a sort of 'collective colonialism' with all partners contributing and reaping some of the rewards.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 175.

⁵⁸ Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 81.

⁵⁹ Rempe, 'Decolonization by Europeanization?: The Early EEC and the Transformation of French-African Relations', 09–10.

⁶⁰ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 157.

⁶¹ Hansen and Jonsson, 166.

⁶² Hansen and Jonsson, 157–58.

⁶³ Kottos, 'A "European Commonwealth"', 509–10; Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 179–80.

⁶⁴ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 174–75.

⁶⁵ Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', 78.

1.4 The proposal's reception amongst the other four

Before moving on to a more thorough investigation of the Dutch response, first a brief examination of the reception across the other prospective MS shall be given. As previously mentioned, the Belgians were consulted by the French beforehand and had influenced the association plans.⁶⁶ This meant they were on-board from the start. Moreover, Italy joined Belgium in support of the plan as they sought to maximize the benefits for their colonies.⁶⁷ In spite of this general supportive attitude, Italy did keep some reservations towards the scheme as they feared unchecked free movement of labour from Algeria and feared that the subsidies for the OCTs would come at the expense of their development aid.⁶⁸

Regardless of general support from Belgium and Italy for France's ambitions, overall support has been regarded as reluctant.⁶⁹ Initial reactions were hardly encouraging. Some points of contention were that the others did not want colonial responsibilities but also the uncertain economic effects of such an arrangement.⁷⁰ The Dutch and the Germans proved hardest to convince. Bonn's stance towards the plan deserves some extra attention in comparison with Belgium, Italy and little Luxembourg, as Bonn largely dictated the ability and constrains for the Dutch to object.⁷¹

West-Germany was sceptical from the onset and their objections originated from two angles, according to Gary Marks. First, German industry was leading in policymaking. Worries existed about the effects of a preferential trading regime to their economy. West-Germany had little pre-existing trade with France's OCTs and thus were concerned association might distort their trade. Moreover, it was feared that the French were using the EDF as side payment for their membership.⁷² Bonn was not willing to pay for France's

⁶⁶ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 176–77.

⁶⁷ Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', 77.

⁶⁸ Brown, 'Drawing Algeria into Europe', 197; Guido Thiemeyer, 'West German Perceptions of Africa and the Association of the Overseas Territories with the Common Market 1956-1957', in *L'Europe Unie et l'Afrique: De l'idée D'Éuroafrique à La Convention de Lomé I*, ed. Marie-Thérèse Bitsch and Gérard Bossuat, vol. 10, European Community Liaison Committee of Historians (Brussels, 2005), 272.

⁶⁹ Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 80.

⁷⁰ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 175.

⁷¹ Richard T. Griffiths, 'The Common Market', in *The Netherlands and the Integration of Europe 1945-1957*, ed. Richard T. Griffiths, NEHA-Series III 8 (Amsterdam, 1990), 200.

⁷² Marks, 'Scale, Community and "Eurafrica"'.

colonies.⁷³ Additionally, the Bonn government raised lots of technical inquiries into the details of the association.⁷⁴

These concerns prompted Bonn to propose a 'Marshall plan for Africa' to pay for these expenses. Economic development would be paid for by German capital in return for French commitments to abolish trade barriers.⁷⁵ As obsessed as the French are with grandeur and prestige, they rejected such ideas as it would effectively mean that Germany would pay for France's empire.⁷⁶ This rejection led the FRG to steer towards a smaller scheme with a smaller budget.⁷⁷

Second, they feared damage to their horrendous international image which they were trying to improve. Especially the opposition in West-Germany 'raised the cry of neo-colonialism'.⁷⁸ Although, behind-the-scenes FRG chancellor Konrad Adenauer was quoted as saying he believes in the 'superiority of Western civilization', and that it was inconceivable 'that Africa, as a black continent, could be independent alongside the other continents'.⁷⁹ This is not surprising, since most European politicians still subscribed to such beliefs. Moral objections are thus to be somewhat disregarded as a show for the public.⁸⁰

Ultimately, however, the Bonn government did not seriously make any principled objections and were seen as enthusiastic about the prospect of association due to geopolitical imperative to protect German trade and industry.⁸¹ Although they disapproved of France's 'antiquated and inappropriate' colonial policy which the FRG feared would drag them into conflict, they saw the geo-economic potential.⁸² Association

⁷³ Horie, 'French Presence in Africa', 85.

⁷⁴ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 171.

⁷⁵ Hansen and Jonsson, 222.

⁷⁶ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 177-78.

⁷⁷ Laurent, 'The Diplomacy of the Rome Treaty, 1956-57', 214.

⁷⁸ Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', 77.

⁷⁹ Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer: A German Politician and Statesman in a Period of War, Revolution and Reconstruction. Vol. 2: The Statesman: 1952-1967*, trans. Geoffrey Penny (Providence, 1997), 191.

⁸⁰ Thiemeyer, 'West German Perceptions of Africa and the Association of the Overseas Territories with the Common Market 1956-1957', 285.

⁸¹ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 172-73.

⁸² Thiemeyer, 'West German Perceptions of Africa and the Association of the Overseas Territories with the Common Market 1956-1957', 275.

was perceived to free Europe from dependence on either superpower.⁸³ So instead of outright rejection, a smaller, more limited form of association was put forward.⁸⁴

However, the supposed enthusiasm with which FRG accepted association is disputed. Others argue that the Bonn government was persuaded by power politics and economic and security benefits.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the Germans felt association was a colonial disaster waiting to happen.⁸⁶ The intensification of the Cold War and the Suez crisis seems to have pushed them towards acceptance, and gave the scheme legitimacy.⁸⁷ Moreover, Von Brentano, German minister for Foreign Affairs, although sceptical, believed Africa had to be shielded from the Soviet threat.⁸⁸ Even the high contribution to the EDF for the FRG, without any financial returns, were accepted in favour of Adenauer's famous '*Westbindung*'. In contrast to what Blücher had stated initially, Adenauer subordinated the economy to achieve German rehabilitation and integration with the West.⁸⁹

1.5 Literature on Dutch position

In most of the literature, The Netherlands and West-Germany are often awkwardly lumped together when talking about their positions and objections. Few works exist where the Dutch position is investigated in proper depth. Admittedly, the Dutch and Germans did often share concerns and regularly formed an alliance on issues. While opinions were often shared, it was not always to the same extent and for the same reasoning. For instance, The Netherlands is perceived to have come closer to a principled objection and was more critical and reluctant.⁹⁰

⁸³ Laurent, 'The Diplomacy of the Rome Treaty, 1956-57', 220.

⁸⁴ Laurent, 214.

⁸⁵ Marks, 'Scale, Community and "Eurafrica"'; Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', 77; Thiemeyer, 'West German Perceptions of Africa and the Association of the Overseas Territories with the Common Market 1956-1957', 278.

⁸⁶ Marks, 'Scale, Community and "Eurafrica"'.

⁸⁷ Rempe, 'Decolonization by Europeanization?: The Early EEC and the Transformation of French-African Relations', 10; Mathieu Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, trans. Andy Brown (Amsterdam, 2020), 135.

⁸⁸ Thiemeyer, 'West German Perceptions of Africa and the Association of the Overseas Territories with the Common Market 1956-1957', 284.

⁸⁹ Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, 134-37.

⁹⁰ Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 233; Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 175; Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 177.

Dutch opposition was tough, and they remained sceptical till the end, whereas the Germans wished to reach a compromise quickly. The Netherlands decided to follow Germany's willingness to compromise but only if it did not lead to excessive financial burdens.⁹¹ It is suggested that acceptance was done very reluctantly as it became politically untenable to keep refusing.⁹² Others suggest the Dutch restrained attitude is based on political misgivings as France and Belgium did not show any inclination towards modernising their colonial arrangements.⁹³

The Netherlands also had little commerce with France's OCTs, so there was little economic benefit in association.⁹⁴ The accompanying high price thus presented a diplomatic obstacle.⁹⁵ The Hague believed overseas investments should be financed privately rather than paid for with public funds.⁹⁶ In an attempt to recoup some of the costs, Dutch New Guinea (DNG) was to be included in the scheme.⁹⁷ Furthermore, due to the Dutch colonies having extensive trade with the US and other non-EEC countries, their association was feared to have disruptive effects on trade.⁹⁸

Additionally, both the Bonn and The Hague governments regarded the plan as a vestige of imperialism and a form of neo-colonialism and viewed the proposal as inappropriate in the current (de-)colonial climate.⁹⁹ They saw the Franco-Belgian report as designed to strengthen Paris's weakened colonial links and to provide them with extra-leverage over its African colonies. The size of the EDF was to be reduced and with greater supranational control to reduce France's influence over these funds.¹⁰⁰

However, this did not in fact mean the Dutch were against at large as they still retained some colonial holdings themselves. The Dutch government did not, however, want to get involved with other colonial projects fearing they would get drawn into their political conflicts. The Hague clearly feared the risk of connecting rapidly decolonizing

⁹¹ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 216.

⁹² Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 200.

⁹³ Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 235.

⁹⁴ Marks, 'Scale, Community and "Eurafrica"'.

⁹⁵ Laurent, 'The Diplomacy of the Rome Treaty, 1956-57', 213-14.

⁹⁶ Lynch, *France and the International Economy*, 177.

⁹⁷ Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 200.

⁹⁸ Meurs et al., *The Unfinished History of European Integration*, 24.

⁹⁹ Laurent, 'The Diplomacy of the Rome Treaty, 1956-57', 213-14; Cosgrove, 'The Common Market and Its Colonial Heritage', 77.

¹⁰⁰ Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 236.

empires with the EEC. This fear was fuelled by the recent trauma of Indonesian independence.¹⁰¹

Lastly, the literature makes short mention of the diverging views on trade policy, with the Dutch favouring a more open market whereas France preferred a rather more protectionist one, which fed grievances towards not only the association plans but to some other aspects of the common market.¹⁰² For the Dutch, it was not as self-evident for Africa to be included with Europe.¹⁰³ This nuance is lost in literature which does not sufficiently distinguish between German and Dutch opposition.

1.6 Dutch political climate and actors

Understanding the overall reluctance depicted in the literature, one must account for the Dutch political climate. The post-WW2 (1945-1958), political situation in is regarded as 'Rooms-Rood' (Catholic-Red). This is a nod to both the *Katholieke Volkspartij* (KVP) (Catholic People's Party) and the *Partij van de Arbeid* (PVDA) (Labour Party), which made up the backbone of the six coalition governments during this period. In this period of recovery and reconstruction, coalitions were made up of as many parties who were willing to join. This way of governance and coalition building was regarded as 'pacified democracy'.¹⁰⁴ This effectively meant that the government often possessed a larger majority than strictly necessary and remained politically stable in the thirteen years following the liberation of The Netherlands.

Few events or crises had a more profound impact on Dutch politics and foreign policy than the independence of Indonesia and the ongoing issues over New-Guinea shaped Dutch foreign policy.¹⁰⁵ The struggle had pushed The Netherlands into an international isolation and resulted in a denouncement from the UN Security Council.¹⁰⁶ The future of the Dutch colonies, and its accompanying world view, would split Dutch

¹⁰¹ Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 235.

¹⁰² Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 175.

¹⁰³ Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 199.

¹⁰⁴ Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*, 60-61.

¹⁰⁵ Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 30.

¹⁰⁶ Carla van Baalen et al., eds., *Het kabinet Drees- Van Schaik Anticommunisme, rechtsherstel en infrastructurale opbouw*, vol. B, *Parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland na 1945 3* (Nijmegen, 1992), 432-33.

politics.¹⁰⁷ On the one hand, you had those who believed the Dutch was still a global player and frenetically wanted to hold on to colonial holdings.¹⁰⁸ While on the other hand, there were those who believed the time of Dutch colonialism had passed and sought to reorient themselves towards Europe. According to them, there was more to gain politically and economically in Europe.¹⁰⁹

For most of the Rooms-Rood period, Willem Drees from the red PVDA was Prime Minister (PM). Almost perfectly coinciding with the Treaty of Rome negotiations, Drees led four different coalitions, from 1948 until 1958. Additionally, between 1946 and 1948 Drees held the office of deputy Prime Minister. Drees was the head of the 'Euro-sceptic' faction within his coalitions.¹¹⁰ He was generally reluctant toward integration, only supporting it if it did not harm Dutch interests.¹¹¹ Additionally, he was universally reluctant towards a Europe of the Six and favoured more Atlantic partnerships.¹¹²

In comparison to the PM, the Drees-led coalitions were not as consistent when it came to the position of Minister for Foreign Affairs. During the Rooms-Rood period, The Netherlands knew three different ministers of foreign affairs. Each of whom would have a profound impact on foreign policy.¹¹³ Moreover, the Foreign Affairs ministers generally enjoyed a lot of freedom from the Cabinet when it came to policy and negotiating.¹¹⁴

The first was Dirk Stikker, a businessman from the *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD) (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy). Stikker would strive for Atlantic cooperation and led The Netherlands to join NATO.¹¹⁵ Within the two Drees-led coalition government which he was part of, he was the sole minister from the VVD. He

¹⁰⁷ Duco Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld: Buitenlandse Politiek van Nederland*, 4th ed. (Houten, 2010), 180.

¹⁰⁸ Hellema, 185.

¹⁰⁹ Meurs et al., *The Unfinished History of European Integration*, 35.

¹¹⁰ Jan Willem Brouwer, 'Architect van de Europese Gemeenschap?; Jan Willen Beyen (1952-1971)', in *De Nederlandse Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken in de Twintigste Eeuw*, ed. Duco Hellema, Bert Zeeman, and Bert van der Zwan (The Hague, 1999), 204.

¹¹¹ Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 193.

¹¹² Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, 105.

¹¹³ Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*, 65.

¹¹⁴ Voorhoeve, 77.

¹¹⁵ Voorhoeve, 70.

resigned in 1952, after his own VVD put forward a (failed) no-confidence vote over his Indonesia and New-Guinea policy because he disregarded party policy on the matter.¹¹⁶

Instead of neatly succeeding one another, Johan Beyen and Joseph Luns essentially shared the position in the third Drees-led coalition, this time without the VVD (1952-1956). Whilst Beyen, an independent, held the actual office of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Luns (KVP) was formally a minister without portfolio. Luns would be responsible for bilateral relations and non-European affairs, while Beyen would be in charge over multilateral relations. This unique and awkward construction was the result of a conflict during the coalition negotiations.¹¹⁷ However, it did not work well as the two hated each other and would often get into (petty) conflicts.¹¹⁸ Although, they were to be equals, they would often be entangled in a battle for competences.¹¹⁹ The two almost perfectly embodied the split character of Dutch foreign policy and self-image, a true European and a nationalistic, colonial thinker.¹²⁰

Beyen was an outsider in The Hague, having previously worked as the director of the International Monetary Fund and having led the Dutch delegation at the Bretton Woods conference.¹²¹ While in office, Beyen proved to be avid European and is regarded as one of the founding fathers of the EU.¹²² Beyen has been called “Drees’ biggest mistake” due to his pro-integration views and leniency during negotiations. Moreover, Beyen introduced the so-called ‘Beyen-plan’, a plan to achieve a common European market, and is therefore accredited with the *relance européenne*. At the same time however, he would be on the receiving end of criticism from the Dutch parliament for acting too hesitant after the EDC failure.¹²³

Luns on the other hand was no stranger to Dutch politics. He became a member of the KVP at a young age. While working as a diplomat in London, NATO and United

¹¹⁶ Jan Bank, ‘Overal Een Ondernemer; Dirk Uipko Stikker (1948-1952)’, in *De Nederlandse Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken in de Twintigste Eeuw*, ed. Duco Hellema, Bert Zeeman, and Bert van der Zwan (The Hague, 1999), 181–89.

¹¹⁷ Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 179.

¹¹⁸ Brouwer, ‘Jan Willen Beyen (1952-1971)’, 201–3.

¹¹⁹ Kersten, ‘Joseph Antoine Marie Hubert Luns (1952-1971)’, 213–15.

¹²⁰ Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 180.

¹²¹ Brouwer, ‘Jan Willen Beyen (1952-1971)’, 200–201.

¹²² Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, 99–100.

¹²³ Brouwer, ‘Jan Willen Beyen (1952-1971)’, 201–7.

Nations, he criticized and was involved with Dutch politics.¹²⁴ He held surprisingly conservative nationalistic views and was profoundly in favour of Dutch Atlanticism and thus far less 'Europe-inclined' than Beyen.¹²⁵ Luns would take over the full office of MFA once the term was over and a new coalition was installed at the tail end of the Treaty of Rome negotiations in October 1956.¹²⁶

Lastly, Ernst van der Beugel (PVDA) was also intimately involved as both a high-ranking civil servant within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and eventually as state secretary for European Affairs under Luns from 1956 onwards.¹²⁷ Additionally, due to Van der Beugel's extensive network in The Hague, he was more involved than perhaps expected.¹²⁸ Most importantly, he became chairman of the *Ambtelijke Coördinatie Commissie voor de Integratie* (ACCI) (Coordinating Committee for Integration) and led the negotiations after Beyen departure.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Kersten, 'Joseph Antoine Marie Hubert Luns (1952-1971)', 211–12.

¹²⁵ Kersten, 224; Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 194.

¹²⁶ Kersten, 'Joseph Antoine Marie Hubert Luns (1952-1971)', 214–18.

¹²⁷ Brouwer, 199; Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, 128.

¹²⁸ Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, 95.

¹²⁹ Kersten, 'Joseph Antoine Marie Hubert Luns (1952-1971)', 220.

2. Early positioning under Stikker and Beyen

2.1 Stikker's reluctance towards (OCTs) integration

The formulation of the Dutch stance towards association and the colonial issue at large, consisted of two distinct stages. The first was the longest and lasted up until the Venice conference in May 1956. Here, the French made their demands and wishes concerning the inclusion of its overseas territories clear.¹³⁰ From Venice onwards, France changed its tone from 'offering' association informally to formally 'demanding' it.¹³¹ In this period, Dirk Stikker was MFA and later Johan Beyen. Both ministers held differing views on European Integration. The second stage starts after Venice as the Dutch then started to think more seriously about the colonial issue and established an interdepartmental committee to formulate an official position.

Under Stikker the OCTs were rarely talked about in regard to integration, only on a single occasion. In talks with the US Secretary of State, Stikker pushed for additional clauses for the Dutch Antilles (DA) in regard to the EDC. He wanted to keep control over who could station troops on the islands.¹³² Furthermore, the colonial issue was not an issue at all for the EDC and ECSC according to Stikker. Rather the lack of a proper payment arrangement was the key issue.¹³³

This seemingly confirms his aversion or lack of interest to integrate the colonies. It springs from Stikker's reluctance to take a hard stance in defending Dutch colonies, as he saw it as an obstacle for both international diplomacy and trade. As he heavily favoured intergovernmental Atlantic cooperation and preferred limited cooperation and would rather see increased cooperation with Scandinavia and the United Kingdom, rather than France, France's colonial issues were therefore not of particular concern to him.¹³⁴ Although, he was supportive of limited integration when it served economic

¹³⁰ Laurent, 'The Diplomacy of the Rome Treaty, 1956-57', 209-10.

¹³¹ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 167.

¹³² NA, 2.05.117 Inventaris van het code-archief van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1945-1956, no. 27342, Memorandum van Stikker, Verslag van besprekingen tussen Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken en Secretary of State Dean Acheson (3 April 1952).

¹³³ NA, 2.05.117 Inventaris van het code-archief van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1945-1956, no. 27342, Memorandum van Stikker, Uittreksel Uit Brief Z.E. Aan Dr. Boon (28 April 1952).

¹³⁴ Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 181.

interests.¹³⁵ The 1949 intergovernmental and tariff-reducing Stikker-Plan is a testament to this.¹³⁶

2.2 Beyen's initial lack of interest in OCTs

After 1952, Johan Beyen took over as the Dutch MFA after Stikker resigned. Beyen was, especially compared to Stikker, a strong proponent of European Integration. Beyen seemed generally disinterested in the Dutch overseas territories because Luns bore the responsibility of that part of the job, but also because Beyen was concentrated on achieving political and most importantly economic integration.¹³⁷ Beyen told the *Ministerraad* (MR), that the Dutch should accept the EPC to gain the much sought-after common market.¹³⁸ This thought was echoed in a review of the Conference of Rome Economic Working group meeting. Where the 'Dutch-school' is described as: 'Free movement of goods stimulates the other and must take precedence'.¹³⁹

However, in neither MRs after the Conference, which negotiated the EPC and EDC, none of Beyen's colleague ministers, not even Minister Kernkamp for Overseas Territories, asked him about the colonies.¹⁴⁰ Additionally, this is backed up by the omission of the OCTs from the list of issues to be discussed at a future stage, nor was there any mention of them in the Dutch draft articles.¹⁴¹ This indicates that colonial holdings were still a national affair for the Dutch and European governments.

December 1953 seems like the first time Dutch diplomats, civil servants, or other high-ranking officials, were made aware to the systematic lack of proper attention to the question of OCTs. Informal talks took place with French high-ranking officials. While both sides participated on their own behalf, this meeting did seem to result in a sort of

¹³⁵ Bank, 'Dirk Uipko Stikker (1948-1952)', 186–93.

¹³⁶ Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*, 160.

¹³⁷ Brouwer, 'Jan Willen Beyen (1952-1971)', 201–9.

¹³⁸ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 505, Ministerraad 1337 (2 October 1953).

¹³⁹ NA, 2.06.077 Ministerie van Economische Zaken // D. G. voor de Buitenlandse Economische Betrekkingen, no. 1026, Nabeschouwing Economische Werkgroep Ter Europese Integratie Conferentie (10 October 1953).

¹⁴⁰ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 505, Ministerraad 1337 (2 October 1953); NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 506, Ministerraad 1338 (9 October 1953).

¹⁴¹ Nabeschouwing Economische Werkgroep Ter Europese Integratie Conferentie (10 October 1953).

awakening to the colonial question regarding European integration and the OCTs. During this notably candid talk between the two sides, the French laid out why the current draft treaty for the EPC was unacceptable to them. The French OCTs had to be included into the EPC as well. Without them, entrance was impossible as the French Republic was 'one and indivisible'. At the end of this overview note on the talk, it is suggested that the Dutch participant would engage in further in-depth study of the topic.¹⁴²

One of the Dutch attendees, governor of Suriname Dr. Pos, relayed some of his new concerns to Willem Kernkamp, the Minister for Overseas Territories. Kernkamp forwarded these to the following MR on the 28th of December 1953. This would mark the first time such issues would be shared and discussed in ministerial circles. Pos asked to be informed as to what the relation between European Integration and Overseas Territories would be. Kernkamp states that The Netherlands would not include them without prior consultation and approval. Lastly, Beyen admitted to Kernkamp that the OCTs, although they are so tightly connected with France, have received little attention so far in the negotiations.¹⁴³

Pos went on, in a personal capacity, to join a committee for the study of issues regarding overseas territories (sometimes referred to as 'Committee Outre-Mer'), which fell under the *Europese Beweging in Nederland* (Dutch European Movement). This was an influential civil society group trying to sway public opinion and influence public policy.¹⁴⁴ During the first meeting of this subcommittee on the 12th of April 1954, Pos put forward the issue of the possible changing nature of Dutch responsibilities overseas, bilateral to European. In preparation for a next meeting, its members would prepare some observations and collect information regarding this issue.¹⁴⁵

However, this seems to have fallen to deaf ears as in the next two documents sent to the MR for discussion, Beyen made little mention of these matters. Both memos showed annoyances with France's nationalistic foreign policy and Beyen's preference

¹⁴² NA, 2.19.109 Europese Beweging in Nederland en Voorgangers 1946-1986, no. 226, Enkele aantekeningen naar aanleiding van een 7 t/m 9 december 1953 e Parijs gehouden bespreking over "Europese Integratie, de Franse Unie en de Nederlandse Overzeese Rijksdelen" (21 December 1953).

¹⁴³ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 514, Ministerraad 1385 (23 December 1953).

¹⁴⁴ Segers, *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present*, 106.

¹⁴⁵ NA, 2.19.109 Europese Beweging in Nederland en Voorgangers 1946-1986, no. 226, Notulen bijeenkomst Commissie ter bestuderingen vraagstukken der Overzeese Gebieden (15 April 1954).

for supranationalism as a safeguard against France, but it also shows that the MFA was more engaged with the association and relation with the United Kingdom than with the OCTs as there is no mention of them. Moreover, it affirmed Beyen's wishes to form a bloc as the Benelux (Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg) in the negotiations to stand up to France and Germany.¹⁴⁶ In the second memo, Beyen acknowledges the presence of the European Movement. This confirms he was aware of their work but also confirms he remained somewhat disinterested in what they had to say.¹⁴⁷

The colonial issue would remain 'the big unspoken' for quite some time. Memos summarizing past integration discussions do not mention it.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, even in the memo discussing the Benelux's initiation to resume integration talks, there is no mentions of the OCTs. It does show Beyen's unwavering support and enthusiasm for the European Integration project, especially regarding the supranational integration and the prospect of a customs union.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, in a separate document meant for Spaak and Bech, Beyen suggested a few topics for thought and discussion. Again, he remains silent on the colonial question.¹⁵⁰

The next intergovernmental Messina Conference was coming up. The Dutch delegation included, amongst others, minister Beyen, Van der Beugel, and a certain Theo Bot.¹⁵¹ Bot was both the head of the *Directie Westelijke Samenwerking* (DWS) (Directorate for Western Cooperation) which fell under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but he was also part of the Committee Outre-Mer of the Dutch European Movement.¹⁵² Thus, he was aware of the colonial issues awaiting the negotiations. Therefore, Beyen must

¹⁴⁶ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Nota betreffende het beleid der Nederlandse Regering t.o.v. de Europese Samenwerking (19 November 1954).

¹⁴⁷ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Nota inzake de Europese Integratie (24 March 1955).

¹⁴⁸ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Aantekening Voor Drs E.H. van Der Beugel Betreft: Integratie (1 April 1955).

¹⁴⁹ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Nota betreft Benelux-initiatief tot hervatting van de integratie-besprekingen (14 April 1955).

¹⁵⁰ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Onderwerpen Ter Discussie Voor Spaak / Berch (23 May 1955).

¹⁵¹ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Nederlandse Delegatie Conferentie Messina (23 May 1955).

¹⁵² NA, 2.19.109 Europese Beweging in Nederland en Voorgangers 1946-1986, no. 226, Uitnodiging Voor Bijeenkomst "Commissie-Outre-Mer" (18 May 1955).

have also been aware of this. However, these colonial issues were left undiscussed by in Messina.¹⁵³ The next conference in Noordwijk also made no mention of them.¹⁵⁴

Until now, the formation of a Dutch stance on the colonial issue regarding European Integration is thus largely marked by either tactical or deliberate omission. By all accounts, Beyen was aware of, at least France's, problems surrounding OCTs and entrance to a political or customs union, either through Bot, Pos or Kernkamp. In a later statement, Beyen states he underestimated France's seriousness of the gravity of the issue.¹⁵⁵ Its omission from the agenda so far, could have been a tactical omission to restart the integration discussions and get the common market. His strategy could have been to leave the hardest issue for last, so people would not get discouraged right away. Similarly, the colonial issue was kept out of the Spaak report for a similar reason.¹⁵⁶ An alternative explanation could be that Beyen simply did not care nor want those territories to get included, so therefore he gave it little thought and kept quiet on purpose.

2.3 Venice: the turning point

During the Conference of Venice at the end of May 1956, French MFA Christian Pineau formally introduced the issues for France to join a common market without her overseas countries and territories. He made it clear that it was simply impossible for France to join without them.¹⁵⁷ Pineau was steering towards a committee to be set up to negotiate the association of her OCTs. Minister Spaak of Belgium was confident this issue would be resolved easily and not pose an obstacle for the negotiations.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18711, Resolutie aangenomen door de Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken van de Staten-Leden van de EGKS bijeen te Messina op 1 en 2 Juni 1955 (2 June 1955).

¹⁵⁴ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18712, Verslag van de Conferentie der Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken der zes landen, leden der E.G.K.S., gehouden te Noordwijk op 6 september 1955 (9 September 1955).

¹⁵⁵ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 627, Ministerraad 1802 (31 May 1956).

¹⁵⁶ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 148; NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18715, Verslag van de Conferentie der zes Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken van de Leden Staten der EGKS op 29 en 30 mei 1956 te Venetië (30 May 1956).

¹⁵⁷ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18715, Projet de Procès-Verbal de La Conférence Des Ministres Des Affaires Etrangères Des Etats Membres de La C.E.C.A. Venise, Les 29 et 30 Mai 1956 (8 June 1956).

¹⁵⁸ Verslag van de Conferentie der zes Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken van de Leden Staten der EGKS op 29 en 30 Mei 1956 te Venetië (30 May 1956).

Beyen concluded in a MR meeting that a new stage of the European Integration had dawned. Beyen suggested he previously thought France was not serious about its OCTs and the EEC and that they presently made the issue salient. Moreover, he states that there must be contact with the overseas territories about the issue.¹⁵⁹ Till now, the issue had remained a sidenote for Beyen. With this acknowledgement, he ushered in a sort of transitional period between the conference of Venice and the formal Franco-Belgian proposal in October later that year. However, Beyen remained uncommitted to the issue as he did not mention it at all during an OEEC meeting discussing the common market in mid-July.¹⁶⁰

Following the MR meeting, the DWS wrote up a memorandum discussing the two issues for The Netherlands with association of its own OCTs. The first identified problem is that The Netherlands would get involved in political problems in the OCTs of other MS, such as the ongoing conflict in Algeria. But such collective involvement would also be welcome in a way, as the other MS would in effect be choosing the Dutch side in the conflict with Indonesia over their claims over Dutch New Guinea, therefore reaffirming Dutch sovereignty.¹⁶¹

A second issue brought up is there was no single arrangement possible due to the current multiplicity of different relationships between OCT and metropole. For The Netherlands this meant that there was a fundamental difference between Surinam and the Dutch Antilles on one side, and Dutch New Guinea on the other. The first two were both economically and political relatively independent, whereas Dutch New Guinea is politically and economically dependent. Dutch New Guinea however is of little importance for the Dutch economy. While The Netherlands could unilaterally take Dutch New Guinea with them into the EEC, Surinam and the Dutch Antilles must make such a

¹⁵⁹ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 627, Ministerraad 1802 (31 May 1956).

¹⁶⁰ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 10891, Vergadering van de Raad van de O.E.E.S. op ministerieel niveau op 17, 18 en 19 juli 1956 (26 July 1956).

¹⁶¹ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18808, Memorandum betreft: De inschakeling van de Overzeese Gebieden bij de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (23 June 1956).

decision independently.¹⁶² These conclusions are backed up by a separate memo, discussing the judicial, economic, and financial implications more in-depth.¹⁶³

In contrast to these severe political issues, the first memo also was positive about the economic and social possibilities such an association could bring. For example, it would guarantee access to a bigger market, but would also provide additional labour from these territories. But the most impactful passage from this memo is the announcement of an interdepartmental committee for the formulation of the Dutch position of the association question. Led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the committee would consist of representatives from different directorates of the ministry but also of representatives of the ministries of Overseas Territories, Economic Affairs, Finance and General Affairs.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Memorandum betreft: De inschakeling van de Overzeese Gebieden bij de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (23 June 1956).

¹⁶³ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18808, Memorandum betreft: Nederland en de Overzeese Rijksdelen in verband met de Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt (6 July 1956).

¹⁶⁴ Memorandum betreft: De inschakeling van de Overzeese Gebieden bij de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (23 June 1956).

3. Formal formulation and negotiation

3.1 Early civil service involvement

On the 17th of July 1956, the newly set up interdepartmental *Werkgroep Overzeese Gebiedsdelen* (WOG) (Committee Overseas Territories) held its first meeting. Although not officially confirmed, Theo Bot seemed to be the de facto leader of the group as he would be the person designated to reach out to the Ministry of Overseas Territories, and their meetings were held in his office. It was decided that they would first spend some time collecting the necessary information about internal relations before moving on to policymaking.¹⁶⁵ With the establishment of this committee, which falls under the ACCL, the second phase of the formation of a Dutch stance towards the OCTs in relation to the EEC began as the civil service became properly involved.

In the next meeting on the 28th of July, the actual subjects of the topic, Surinam, and the Dutch Antilles, still were not consulted. There were yet to receive a copy of the Spaak report for instance.¹⁶⁶ Beyen instructed Bot to do so as soon as possible on the 31st of July.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, even in a report of the month July from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the colonial issue was still not mentioned when discussing the progress of European integration.¹⁶⁸ Two months between Venice and this instruction implies an attitude of indifference to their opinion and the issue at large. Although it was known that Surinam and the Antilles had to join on their own volition, they were not involved in the decision-making process as other national departments were.

After gathering the necessary facts about the situation, a report was submitted to the WOG about the financial and economic feasibility and desirability for both The Netherlands as well as the OCTs. Here, some of The Netherlands' major point of contentions first came to light. It is noted that import and export duties made up a large

¹⁶⁵ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 6745, *Werkgroep Overzeese Gebiedsdelen: informeel overzicht van de besprekingen op 17 Juli 1956* (18 July 1956).

¹⁶⁶ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18808, *Werkgroep Overzeese Gebiedsdelen: korte samenvatting van de besprekingen op 28 juli 1956* (1 August 1956).

¹⁶⁷ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18808, *Brief Beyen betreft: betrekken van Overzeese Gebiedsdelen bij Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt* (31 July 1956).

¹⁶⁸ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 10891, *Directoraat-Generaal voor Economische en Militaire Aangelegenheden, Directie Economische Aangelegenheid: verslag over de maand juli 1956* (8 August 1956).

part of government budgets in the OCTs and the increase in exports and overall economic benefits of association would be minimal.¹⁶⁹ A later letter to the governor of DNG, casted doubt on whether the fund meant to cover this budget gap was sufficient.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, all OCTs wanted to reserve the right to impose certain import duties to protect their economies as they were very basic. For instance, New Guinea's economy was largely built upon crude oil.¹⁷¹ Additionally, a secondary report showed how reliant the DNG economy was on The Netherlands. More than half of all exports went to The Netherlands and excluding oil this figure rose to over 70%.¹⁷² Financially and economically speaking the report therefore passes a negative judgment about the effects of association.¹⁷³

So, the essential take-away from the report is that the Dutch felt the impacts of association to be too uncertain as the exact terms needed to be decided on a case-by-case basis. This made a clear, calculated rational assessment nearly impossible. If need be, it suggests making the concession of the establishment of an investment bank, but it would only be used occasionally and on certain conditions. However, it rather preferred the whole scheme delayed if possible until a more clear and defined assessment could be made.¹⁷⁴

Moreover, the second more economically in-depth report shows why the Dutch were weary for the high financial costs of association, and the low economic returns it would bring about. As previously mentioned, DNG was already very dependent on The Netherlands with limited potential for expansion. Surinam would potentially even suffer economic consequences as its economy was largely based around the export of Bauxite,

¹⁶⁹ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 6750, Nota van Ministerie van Overzeese Rijksdelen Afdeling Financiële- en Economische Zaken betreffende voorlopige algemene conclusies m.b.t. deelneming van de Nederlandse Overzeese Rijksdelen aan de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (15 August 1956).

¹⁷⁰ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 6750, Brief directeur van Financiën, J.G. Rozenboom, aan Gouverneur Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea betreffende opneming van Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea in de E.G.M. (16 August 1956).

¹⁷¹ Voorlopige algemene conclusies m.b.t. deelneming van de Nederlandse Overzeese Rijksdelen aan de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (15 August 1956).

¹⁷² NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18808, Een Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt Een de Overzeese Delen van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden (16 August 1956).

¹⁷³ Voorlopige algemene conclusies m.b.t. deelneming van de Nederlandse Overzeese Rijksdelen aan de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (15 August 1956).

¹⁷⁴ Voorlopige algemene conclusies m.b.t. deelneming van de Nederlandse Overzeese Rijksdelen aan de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (15 August 1956).

from which 80% was exported to the US. Furthermore, the Dutch viewed Surinam as a valued outlet for their own exports due to their preferential trading regime. The advantage gained by the latter, would be lost to European competitors by the association scheme. For the Dutch Antilles however no such preferential treatment existed, and the report saw no real downside or upside for their association.¹⁷⁵

A later memo from the Ministry of Finance reaffirmed that association would be bad for both Dutch trade policy and from a financial perspective, but additionally it suggested such an EDF would be the end of, or at least interfere, with already established Dutch development aid. This memo also questioned if development responsibility should even be collectivized and argued that it mainly was a national responsibility. It however did not totally shy away from a certain level of financial solidarity, but it should remain chiefly national affair.¹⁷⁶

The last memo minister Beyen would submit, together with Jelle Zijlstra (Minister of Economic Affairs), to the MR for discussion was a memo on the preparations for the conference of Paris. It was composed by Van der Beugel and Linthorst Homan, head of the Dutch delegation and ACCI member. In it they discussed that The Netherlands would keep its wait-and-see attitude towards the whole ordeal as France was yet to provide them with sufficient details. However, they did see some possibility for success as France's current internal political and colonial woes would favour integration. Although acknowledging that some concessions must be made, they were optimistic about reaching an agreement.¹⁷⁷

To sum up, the WOG had made great strides towards collecting and interpreting relevant information about colonial ties and relations under Beyen's (and Van der Beugel's) watch. Whilst a large, thorough overview report was written and sent after this last memo on the 29th of September 1956, Beyen would no longer be in a reasonable

¹⁷⁵ Een Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt Een de Overzeese Delen van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden (16 August 1956).

¹⁷⁶ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 6750, Nota van Ministerie van Financiën. Directie Buitenlands Betalingsverkeer betreffende enige beschouwingen over de eventuele inschakeling van de Franse en Belgische Overzeese Gebiedsdelen in de Gemeenschappelijke Markt (21 August 1956).

¹⁷⁷ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18713, Nota van de heren Van der Beugel en Linthorst Homan ter voorbereiding van de Conferentie van Zes Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken van de K.S.G. (25 September 1956).

position to either forward it to the MR or to act upon its content, as on the 13th of October his tenure as the Minister of Foreign Affairs would end.¹⁷⁸ In his time, the WOG had identified some of the financial and economic difficulties association would bring. However, fundamental questions raised by their preliminary reports on where aid and development responsibilities should lie, on either a national or European level, would remain unanswered by Beyen. This wait-and-see attitude is explained by Beyen's overall lack of interests in the issue, overall reluctance to act quickly, and that it is said he was lenient in the negotiations as he felt a common market had to be achieved at (almost) all costs.¹⁷⁹

3.2 The basis for negotiations

As mentioned above, there would be one final, definitive memorandum published before the start of the upcoming Conference of Paris where France and Belgium were expected to present their finalized proposal. This document would provide the definitive basis for the Dutch position during the negotiations and is the culmination of all the work done by the Committee Overseas Territories and its members.¹⁸⁰ The annex of the memo discusses three options for association and what these would mean for The Netherlands.¹⁸¹ Additionally, because the memo was partly written by Van der Beugel, it deserves extra attention as Van der Beugel would largely be left in charge by the new MFA Luns of the upcoming EEC negotiations.¹⁸² Therefore, the next section shall provide a thorough inspection of this influential document.

Starting with the six-page preface, the memorandum addresses what it expects the French position to be: financial-economic contributions to a EDF from EEC MS, and

¹⁷⁸ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 6750, Nota inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956); Brouwer and Bos, *Parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland na 1945. Deel 6, 1.*

¹⁷⁹ Brouwer, 'Jan Willen Beyen (1952-1971)', 207; Brouwer and Bos, *Parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland na 1945. Deel 6, 220.*

¹⁸⁰ Nota inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸¹ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 6745, Bijlage van Nota van Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Werkgroep Gemeenschappelijke Markt- Overzeese Gebieden inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸² Kersten, 'Joseph Antoine Marie Hubert Luns (1952-1971)', 220.

a certain level of European collectivization of the OCTs. Subsequently, this would bring European responsibility and involvement in political issues, something the Dutch wanted to carefully avoid. It is also mindful for the precarious position France found itself in both politically and economically as its empire form the backbone of its economy.¹⁸³

Next, it asked the question of what the goal of France was: is the scheme restricted to essentially Africa and the actual goal is to keep Africa for Europe itself? If the answer would be yes, then the question arises, whether this is even attainable through association and to what extent a shared say would accompany the shared responsibility. But if it would not be restricted to Africa, then the solution to the colonial problem could be found in a possible association scheme. Lastly, it judged the answer to be no, and that France most likely wanted to convert national bilateral agreements with OCTs to shared EEC relations.¹⁸⁴ This shows the Dutch were not blind to the issue and shows a, though unenthusiastic, willingness to face reality and compromise.

What follows is a 20-page report with elaborate information about Dutch, French and Belgian OCTs. When it comes to the Dutch OCTs, it echoes the previously mentioned political and economic dependence of DNG and the relative political independence and autonomy of Surinam and the DA. Moreover, it reaffirms the small economic benefits to association for the Dutch OCTs. Regarding the French OCTs, strong trading links exist with France, so association was seen to safeguard these links. France could decide the fate of its *Territoires d'Outre-Mer* and *Départments d'Outre-Mer* but had no say over Morocco and Tunis. The situation surrounding Algeria was far from certain in this respect. The Belgian government was also in control whether their OCTs were to join the EEC or not. The memo sees little benefit for The Netherlands by association in relation to trade as there is little trade with these OCTs. In contrast, it is even speculated that The Netherlands would get a relative competitive edge if association falls through.¹⁸⁵

Lastly, the annex of the report discussed the three theoretical possibilities of inclusion of the OCTs into the EEC. The first (A) was a full trade liberalisation, equal to

¹⁸³ Nota inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸⁴ Nota inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸⁵ Nota inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

other MS. This meant no trade barriers at all. The second option (B) was partial trade liberalisation. This option would allow OCTs to retain some restriction to protect their economies from heavy competition from EEC MS. The last option (C) was no association or participation in the common market at all. This annex is very clear that association makes no economic sense for The Netherlands and would therefore prefer option C.¹⁸⁶

Nevertheless, the report accepts this to be infeasible for the French so it concludes that option B would be best for the Dutch OCTs as their economies would be shielded from fierce, possibly disruptive European competition and they would retain their import duty income. If during the negotiations, however, it would become clear that association truly would be unavoidable, then option A would be preferred.¹⁸⁷ The original report suggested a few conditions for the Dutch negotiating delegation to focus on if complete association was impossible: a case-by-case procedure, and that protective trade barriers were to be kept to a minimum. Perhaps unilateral trade barriers could even be beneficial as raw materials could be imported more easily into the Common Market.¹⁸⁸

This report is indicative of the Dutch stance toward association, disregarding the actual negotiation dynamics, as it shows how the Dutch made decisions based more on simple economic cost and benefit analysis rather than geopolitical and idealist motives.¹⁸⁹ In comparison, for France one of the reasons of association and integration in general was their desire to keep Europe relevant as a third force next to the US and USSR superpowers.¹⁹⁰ This difference in foreign policy philosophy is also a consequence of their diverging views on trade policy and fits within Dutch trade-oriented foreign policy tradition. France employs a protectionist trade policy, whereas The Netherlands had a far more open trade policy.¹⁹¹ Its OCTs were already relatively open to trade with and

¹⁸⁶ Bijlage van Nota van Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Werkgroep Gemeenschappelijke Markt-Overzeese Gebieden inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸⁷ Bijlage van Nota van Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Werkgroep Gemeenschappelijke Markt-Overzeese Gebieden inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸⁸ Nota inzake het vraagstuk van de betrekkingen van de Gemeenschappelijke Markt met de Overzeese Gebiedsdelen der Leden-Staten (29 September 1956).

¹⁸⁹ Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 198.

¹⁹⁰ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 166.

¹⁹¹ Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 190–92; Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*, 163.

therefore benefit little from association, as shown by the memos. Moreover, The Netherlands was not dependent on imports from the OCTs so did not need association to protect it. Subsequently, the additional costs and responsibility therefore did not seem sufficiently appealing.

3.3 Fearing the high financial and political costs

Based upon the facts, calculations and assessments made in this last report, the Dutch went to the Conference of Paris where all was supposed to be revealed by France and Belgium. This time the delegation was headed by Joseph Luns and would be accompanied by thirteen others, amongst who Bot, Linthorst Homan and Van der Beugel.¹⁹² However, due to time constraints discussion on the colonial issue was once again pushed to a future meeting. Nevertheless, the Franco-Belgian rapport was received by the Dutch government and was discussed in a memo from the ACCI, which was later sent to the MR.¹⁹³

Here, Dutch dissatisfaction was expressed over the fact they were excluded from prior consultation as the third colonial power among the Six. Moreover, the Dutch were caught by surprise over the fact that the association went further than simple harmonisation of trading regimes and that it tried to establish a Eurafrican Common Market. But most importantly, a principal disagreement with the French-Belgian logic for association was exposed here in the discussion of their rapport. The French and Belgian rapport appeals to two different issues. The first concerns the association of the OCTs based on country/territory specific arrangements. This would be acceptable to the Dutch provided that all EEC MS would enjoy equal treatment and there would be some reciprocity in trade liberalisation. However, the special preferential treatment of agricultural goods as per the proposal was categorically rejected by the ACCI. Lastly, the full geographical extent of the association scheme was still unclear.¹⁹⁴ Even the

¹⁹² NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18713, Nederlandse Delegatie Ministersconferentie (15 October 1956).

¹⁹³ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 10891, Nota inzake de Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt en de Overzeese Gebieden der Leden-Landen' (29 November 1956).

¹⁹⁴ Nota inzake de Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt en de Overzeese Gebieden der Leden-Landen' (29 November 1956).

ambassador in Paris could not figure out if Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria would be included for instance.¹⁹⁵ The second issue concerns the collectivization of development and financial responsibilities. Additionally, the associated risk of getting involved with colonial issues was heavily feared, and the high costs were seen as an issue.¹⁹⁶

The foremost issue of this rapport was the false linkage of these issues according to the memo. The collectivization of responsibilities was presented as a compensation for non-discriminatory treatment by these OCTs. The connection between these two issues changed the association scheme from a solution for a practical issue to an extensive economic and political program, which consequences are so great they were unable to be effectively overseen and required additional in-depth study. It thus became a political question, unable to be answered by the civil service.¹⁹⁷

On the 22nd of November 1956, the Dutch, in combination with the German delegation, held some preliminary discussion with the French and Belgians.¹⁹⁸ Mister Linthorst Homan pointed out that a definitive association scheme was not possible to be drawn up now as its implications were still incalculable. The Netherlands therefore insisted on the treaty to prescribe a study done by a community institution after which they would propose a solution to the colonial issue. The Dutch were not disapproving in principle of association in a limited economic manner, but they did not like the wider and deeper collectivization as its scope was too large.¹⁹⁹

The MR was warned by Van der Beugel that this issue would soon take centre stage in the negotiation. He also affirmed that an answer to the second issue was no precondition for the Dutch for the establishment.²⁰⁰ Thus it was decided that the Dutch delegation would try to work towards an agreement without the inclusion of such deeper

¹⁹⁵ 'Brief van Pim van Boetzelaer van Oosterhout Aan Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken' (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, 27 December 1956), 10891, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979).

¹⁹⁶ Nota inzake de Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt en de Overzeese Gebieden der Leden-Landen' (29 November 1956).

¹⁹⁷ Nota inzake de Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt en de Overzeese Gebieden der Leden-Landen' (29 November 1956).

¹⁹⁸ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, 168.

¹⁹⁹ Nota inzake de Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt en de Overzeese Gebieden der Leden-Landen' (29 November 1956).

²⁰⁰ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 649, Ministerraad 1869 (3 December 1956).

and political ties, merely focussing on the economic issues.²⁰¹ In a later memo from the ACCI and sent by Luns and Zijlstra to the MR, objections to the scheme included the swift and steep increase in financial cost over the first years. However, this is nuanced by the fact that The Netherlands would most likely benefit greatly by the establishment of a Common Market. Some of the costs could thereby be indirectly recovered. The political implications of association were still loathed. Yet, The Netherlands wanted to create a functioning treaty and it would be a 'cardinal sin' if the necessary compromises would not be made.²⁰²

To this end, it provided a few pointers for the Dutch delegation. First, the exception for the agricultural goods was simply unacceptable for The Netherlands and was seemingly non-negotiable but there was room to negotiate a work-around solution. Secondly, association would be acceptable if it would not become a 'European Marshall-plan for the African territories' as both the financial and political consequences of the scheme were nearly impossible to oversee. Once more, it rejected the link between pragmatic economic and economic-political association made by France and Belgium. If the French were not willing to accept this division, the Dutch would insist on total omission of the issues from the treaty. In return, this would be impossible for the French so the Dutch would push for delaying association and letting the EEC institutions deal with the matter. In sum, the Dutch wanted to prevent deeper political involvement at (almost) all costs, especially since its implications were extremely uncertain. According to the memo, this uncertainty is extra prevalent because of their trauma of Indonesia.²⁰³

In letters to Luns from the ambassador in Bonn, Arnold Lamping, he states that the Germans were also warried to accept political association.²⁰⁴ They even denounced it internally as a colonial project, which Germany, free of colonial stain, do not want to

²⁰¹ NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 10891, Brief van Minister van Overzeese Rijksdelen aan Gouverneurs van Nederlands-Nieuw-Guinea, Suriname, en Nederlandse Antillen: Europese Gemeenschappelijke Markt. Deelneming van de Overzeese Rijksdelen en Gebieden in de E.G.M. (7 December 1956).

²⁰² NA, 2.10.54 Ministerie van Koloniën en opvolgers (1859-) 1945-1963 (-1979), no. 10891, Nota betreffende de integratie van Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken (14 January 1957).

²⁰³ Nota betreffende de integratie van Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken (14 January 1957).

²⁰⁴ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 28660, Brief van Arnold Lamping Aan Luns (18 January 1957).

be associated with.²⁰⁵ Through these letters Luns knew he could count on the German delegation for support. However, at a later stage, it would become clear the Germans were in fact hiding behind the Dutch as they spearheaded the attack on France and thereby spent precious political capital.²⁰⁶

During a minister conference in Brussels on the 4th of February, the German delegation had proposed a compromise solution: no exception to agricultural goods, a limited timeframe which could be extended after four years, and a limited financial contribution, only meant for additional costs. A parliamentary committee for Foreign Policy of the Dutch lower chamber did warn for higher costs than the returns if Dutch OCTs were to be included under such scheme but were overall supportive.²⁰⁷ Luns proposed postponing the association till an EEC institution could study its effects properly.²⁰⁸ However, Luns quickly shifted position and seemed pleased with the German plan as it largely met Dutch wishes, especially on the agricultural goods. Moreover, it kept the responsibility for 'core' expenses at the national level with only additional expenses, such as social and economic infrastructure investments on top of existing programmes, collectivized and elevated to a European level.²⁰⁹

During a conference of government leaders later that month in Paris, attended by Drees, Luns and Van der Beugel, the compromise was further developed but not finalized.²¹⁰ In a report of the conference by Van der Beugel, he states some points of contention were the size of the proposed investments, and the term length of the association. The Dutch were seemingly piggybacking on the Germans fighting French demands for more than purely economic association and a larger fund. What eventually was agreed upon by the PMs and presidents, included: association in principle, a principal agreement on shared investments, and a first term length of 5-years.

²⁰⁵ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 28660, Brief van Arnold Lamping Aan Luns (19 January 1957).

²⁰⁶ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 28661, Brief van Arnold Lamping Aan Luns (16 February 1957).

²⁰⁷ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 659, Ministerraad 1901 (7 February 1957).

²⁰⁸ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18713, Conference Des Ministres Des Affaires Etrangères, Project de Proces-Verbal (4 February 1957).

²⁰⁹ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 660, Ministerraad 1903 (12 February 1957).

²¹⁰ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18713, Annexes de Conférence Des Chefs de Gouvernement (20 February 1957).

Additionally, investment fund size would be drastically smaller than proposed. The Netherlands would contribute \$70 million, but \$35 million would be recouped through DNG's participation. These agreements would be added to the treaty in the form of a convention added as an annex.²¹¹

Drees was content about the fact that Surinam and the DNA were kept out of the association scheme as this potentially would have been disastrous for their economies.²¹² Moreover, the MR was generally content with the reached agreement as Luns proudly presented that he managed to initially get more fund allocated to DNG than Belgium to Congo. Furthermore, it would reduce political involvement to a minimum by only financing 'additional' investments instead of 'core' investments.²¹³ The treaty (article 133) would only include principles for association relating to trade and commerce instead of the previously proposed politico-economic scheme.²¹⁴

In the final MR before the signing of the treaty, Luns mentions that there would be little talk concerning the contents of the treaty in Rome. Here, the MR approved the current treaty, without having seen the document due to time constraints, and decided they would not accept major changes if they were proposed.²¹⁵ This marks the end of negotiation discussions within Dutch government. As shown, although well prepared, they got constantly caught by surprise. Moreover, they had shown deep disagreements with the French, but the benefits of a common market were simply too great to pass up on.

²¹¹ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18713, De Ministersconferentie in Parijs over de verdragen voor de Gemeenschappelijke Markt en Euratom (22 February 1957).

²¹² NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18713, Uittreksel Ministerraad 15-02-1957 (25 February 1957).

²¹³ NA, 2.05.377 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Ministerraadstukken, no. 664, Ministerraad 1915 (7 March 1957).

²¹⁴ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18714, Memo van Prof. Dr. J. Kymmell betreft.: Het verdrag voor de Gemeenschappelijke Markt in verband met de behandeling in de Ministerraad van a.s. Maandag (15 March 1957).

²¹⁵ NA, 2.05.118 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-archief 1955-1964, no. 18714, Uittreksel Ministerraad 22-03-1957 (22 March 1957).; Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 200.

4. Conclusions

To conclude, European powers such as France started to look for alternatives way of continuing their colonial rule post-WW2. For instance, by sharing the burden of empire through international organisation like the EEC. Research on European integration is split on the importance of the colonial issue to the process of integration. Moreover, little research existed on the Dutch government's stance towards the issue. This research shows that, at least for The Netherlands, the issue only became salient after France raised concerns. This casts doubt on the claim by Hansen and Jonsson that the African question has always been at the heart of integration discussions. Granted, the issue took centre stage near the tail end of the negotiations, however *Eurafrica* was not as self-evident for the Dutch as Hansen and Jonsson might suggest. Although, it also raises doubts over Marks' objections to them as the powerplay between the parties is never the primary motive.

An official stance and position towards the possibility of association was only formulated after France made it a pre-condition to their accession a common market at the Conference of Venice in May 1956, as membership of the EEC without the inclusion of its OCTs was incompatible with its obligations to the French Union. Before this moment, both Beyen and Stikker did not seek to extend European integration to include OCTs. Moreover, Stikker was less enthusiastic about retaining empire at large and was less continental-inclined. Beyen, on the other hand, was a strong proponent of European Integration but had shown little interest in complicating integration by including OCTs. Early thinking about the issue was driven by members of the civil society group *Europese Beweging in Nederland*. Its member either were or would influence prominent members of the Dutch government and civil service.²¹⁶

A rapport by the Committee Overseas Territories laid out the Dutch position in detail. It argued that economic benefits for Dutch OCTs would be limited or even be adverse. Additionally, the financial contributions to a EDF were deemed too high and could rise uncontrollably. But most importantly, a serious fear existed of getting involved with political issues through the association scheme. The scheme strayed too far from

²¹⁶ Nabeschouwing Economische Werkgroep Ter Europese Integratie Conferentie (10 October 1953).

the economic and political necessity but had taken on a far larger political form, which became too complex to reasonably assess its implications. The Dutch explicitly rejected becoming politically involved as they were still reeling from their recent experiences in Indonesia.

Why then did the Dutch end up accepting association? The Dutch foreign policy tradition, especially regarding European Integration, has always focussed on (economic) self-gain over idealism.²¹⁷ Drees perhaps being the best example of this, only supporting integration if it explicitly served national interests.²¹⁸ By working with the Germans, they managed to get the proposed exception for agricultural goods scrapped and through a German alternative proposal, got the overall size of the EDF reduced and its scope limited. That proposal was subject to a cost-benefit analyse which reduced to the issue to simple economic instead of an ideological choice. Thus, the Cold War had, although acknowledged, not influenced policy. Simply put: the costs (after recouping some of it through Dutch New Guinea inclusion) would remain limited and the large economic potential of a common market would outweigh the remaining cost. In sum, the Dutch were driven to object to association by aversion for potential colonial conflict but were ultimately driven by profit to reluctantly accept it.

²¹⁷ Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 198.

²¹⁸ Griffiths, 'The Common Market', 193.

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T.C. Galesloot, s3296164

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