

Final communiqué of the Paris Summit: excerpt on the European Council (9 and 10 December 1974)

Caption: The idea of the establishment of a European Council prevails at the Paris Summit of the Heads of Government of the nine Member States of the European Communities in December 1974.

Source: Bulletin of the European Communities. December 1974, No 12. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. "Meeting of the Heads of Government", p. 7-8.

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Meeting of the heads of Government of the Community (Paris, 9 and 10 December 1974)

Communiqué

1. The heads of Government of the nine States of the Community, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the President of the Commission, meeting in Paris at the invitation of the French President, examined the various problems confronting Europe. They took note of the reports drawn up by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and recorded the agreement reached by these Ministers on various points raised in the reports.
2. Recognizing the need for an overall approach to the internal problems involved in achieving European unity and the external problems facing Europe, the Heads of Government consider it essential to ensure progress and overall consistency in the activities of the Communities and in the work on political cooperation.
3. The Heads of Government have therefore decided to meet, accompanied by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, three times a year and, whenever necessary, in the Council of the Communities and in the context of political cooperation.

The administrative secretariat will be provided for in an appropriate manner with due regard for existing practices and procedures.

In order to ensure consistency in Community activities and continuity of work, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, meeting in the Council of the Community, will act as initiators and coordinators. They may hold political cooperation meetings at the same time.

These arrangements do not in any way affect the rules and procedures laid down in the Treaties or the provisions on political cooperation in the Luxembourg and Copenhagen Reports. At the various meetings referred to in the preceding paragraphs the Commission will exercise the powers vested in it and play the part assigned to it by the above texts.

4. With a view to progress towards European unity, the Heads of Government reaffirm their determination gradually to adopt common positions and coordinate their diplomatic action in all areas of international affairs which affect the interests of the European Community. The President-in-Office will be the spokesman for the Nine and will set out their views in international diplomacy. He will ensure that the necessary concertation always takes place in good time.

In view of the increasing rôle of political cooperation in the construction of Europe, the European Assembly must be more closely associated with the work of the Presidency, for example through replies to questions on political cooperation put to him by its Members.

5. The Heads of Government consider it necessary to increase the solidarity of the Nine both by improving Community procedures and by developing new common policies in areas to be decided on and granting the necessary powers to the Institutions.
6. In order to improve the functioning of the Council of the Community, they consider that it is necessary to renounce the practice which consists of making agreement on all questions conditional on the unanimous consent of the Member States, whatever their respective positions may be regarding the conclusions reached in Luxembourg on 28 January 1966.
7. Greater latitude will be given to the Permanent Representatives so that only the most important political problems need be discussed in the Council. To this end, each Member State will take the measures it considers necessary to strengthen the rôle of the Permanent Representatives and involve them in preparing the national positions on European affairs.

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