

Minutes of the meeting of the Coordination Committee (Luxembourg, 5 March 1953)


Caption: Minutes of the first meeting of the Coordination Committee (Cocor) of the ECSC Special Council of Ministers, held in Luxembourg on 5 March 1953. The minutes are approved at the meeting held on 17 April.

Source: Conseil de la Communauté européenne du Charbon et de l'Acier - Secrétariat. Compte rendu de la réunion de la Commission de Coordination du Conseil de Ministres tenue à Luxembourg le 5 mars 1953, CM/COCOR/(53) PV.1. Luxembourg: 09.03.1953. 6 p.
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Minutes of the meeting of the Council of Ministers Coordination Committee held in Luxembourg on 5 March 1953

The following were present at the meeting:

Germany:

Dr Rust, Under-Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs

Mr von der Groeben, Deputy Assistant Under-Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs

Dr Herbert Muller, Legation Councillor (Class I), Foreign Office

Belgium:

Mr Daufresne de la Chevalerie, Adviser at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade

Mr van der Meulen, Head of the Private Office of the Minister for Economic Affairs, Director-General at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Small Trades

France:

Mr François Valéry, Assistant Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Edouard Rerolle, Ministry of Industry

Mr André Thiery, Ministry of Economic Affairs

Italy:

Prof. Saraceno, Government Adviser on Industrial Production

Mr Franco Bobba, First Legation Secretary

Mr Enrico Gambelli, Economic Attaché

Luxembourg:

Mr Pierre Elvinger, Government Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Jérôme Anders, Government Adviser, Ministry of Economic Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr Th. C. Hyzen, Assistant Director at the Ministry of Economic Affairs

Mr S. Meyer, Head of the Germany Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr M. M. Maas, Assistant Director at the Ministry of Economic Affairs

Issues discussed: The agenda is attached in an annex.

The meeting was preceded at 9.45 by a short preliminary discussion during which it was decided that members of the Committee could on this occasion be accompanied by observers, until the question of a possible increase in the number of members representing the countries was finally settled. It was agreed by

common accord that each country should have only one vote in the Coordination Committee, regardless of its number of delegates.

The meeting was opened at 10.00 by the Belgian delegate, Mr Daufresne de la Chevalerie. The Chairman described the background to the establishment of the Committee and reminded everyone that its task was primarily to prepare for meetings of the Council. The Committee members were not deputising for the ministers and it was not their responsibility to take definitive decisions. They had to be senior civil servants with a good overall view, but they were not meant to carry out detailed studies of technical issues. To that end they were authorised to set up committees which, being composed of qualified officials, would be known as 'technical committees' rather than 'sub-committees'.

Item I: Adoption of the agenda.

The agenda was adopted and it was decided to combine items IV (setting up of the Common Market Technical Committee) and VIII (preparation of work for the sixth meeting of the Council) in a single item.

A discussion ensued on whether the Common Market Technical Committee needed to be set up immediately; the interpretation of the minutes of the Council meeting on 2 and 3 February was relevant here. It was decided that irrespective of whether the committee should be set up permanently at present, it needed to meet immediately on an ad hoc basis in order to examine items III–VI on the agenda for the next Council meeting. The Chairman noted that the technical committees were assigned their duties by the Coordination Committee, to which they were required to report; it was therefore irrelevant whether the committee was standing or ad hoc.

After a short break, the question of the composition of the Coordination Committee was discussed. A number of Governments wanted the number of delegates to be increased from 2 to 3 for each country. However, the Coordination Committee's rules as adopted at the fifth meeting of the Council in accordance with a working group's proposals specifically provided for only 2 members per country, and it was therefore felt that the composition could not be changed without the Council's consent. The issue would not, however, come before the Council until its meeting after next. In the meantime the Governments would settle the question of their delegations' composition themselves.

Item II on the agenda: Relations between the OEEC and the Community.

It was pointed out first of all that the question of the coal allocation for the second quarter of 1953 was a matter of urgency, and it therefore appeared necessary for the High Authority to inform the Council of the state of play in its talks with the OEEC and the measures envisaged. The Committee addressed a recommendation to that effect to the Council; the recommendation is set out in an annex (Doc. CM/COCOR/(53) S. 29).

The Committee took the view that in addition to this practical matter, consideration should also be given to the organisation of cooperation between the Member States on issues concerning the OEEC, and the Community's position in relation to the OEEC. Questions of powers and responsibilities arose here. The Committee decided to hold a meeting of its Technical Committee on Commercial Policy Issues on 17 March in Paris, and instructed a drafting committee to prepare the technical committee's brief for that meeting. The brief is set out in an annex (Doc. CM/COCOR (53) S. 37).

The Chairman noted that the existing Committee on Commercial Policy Issues had been set up as a technical committee of the Coordination Committee under paragraph IV of the Coordination Committee's rules, as adopted at the fifth meeting of the Council in accordance with a working group's proposal. He therefore felt that the technical committee was subject to the same rules of procedure as the Council. The technical committee had originally only been set up in order to examine issues arising from paragraphs 14 and 20 of the Convention on the Transitional Provisions, but it would now be for the Coordination Committee to judge whether it was appropriate to extend this task further or to give the committee additional new terms of reference.

The meeting was adjourned at 13.00 and resumed at 15.45.

Item IX on the agenda: Any other business.

The German Delegation had sent the Council of Ministers' secretary a letter dated 11 February 1953 raising the question of the representation of the Council members in the committees of the Common Assembly. After discussion, the Coordination Committee proposed to ask the Council secretary to contact the secretary of the Common Assembly on the subject of this letter. A report drawn up by the Committee on this matter had been sent to the Council and is set out in an annex (Doc. C/S (53) 32).

The Committee also pointed out that at the High Authority's request the question of a statute for the High Authority and the Court under Article 29 had been removed from the agenda for the meeting of the Council of Ministers. It recommended that the High Authority should be reminded to come back to this item in the near future. The Chairman of the Committee would inform the Council President accordingly.

Item VI on the agenda: Switzerland.

The Committee decided to ask the Committee on Commercial Policy Issues to examine Switzerland's replies to the Member States' notifications concerning derogations from the most-favoured-nation clause. In order to prepare the work, the Governments were requested to forward copies of the notes they had received from the Swiss Government to the Council Secretariat.

Item III on the agenda: Follow-up to letters sent to the Council by a number of trade unions.

The first question was whether the Coordination Committee was competent to deal with this issue. The answer had to be in the affirmative, given that at its fifth meeting the Council had decided that a drafting committee should put proposals before it at its sixth meeting. Since it was the Coordination Committee's job to prepare for meetings of the Council, the Chairman felt that it should assume the task in question here. After discussion, the Committee decided to report to the Council. The report is set out in an annex (Doc. CM/S (53) 33).

Item V on the agenda: Organisation of cooperation between the Member States' customs administrations.

The Committee decided to make the existing working group of government tariff experts from the Member States into a technical committee. A meeting of this Technical Committee was to be held on 9 March 1953 in Luxembourg.

Item VII on the agenda: Meeting of the Committee on Commercial Policy Issues.

This item had already been taken with agenda item II.

Observation:

The Committee decided that minutes of its meetings would not be drawn up, but the Secretariat was to draft a summary report to be distributed to members.

The meeting closed at 16.30.