

Letter from Alfred Cahen to Charles Goerens (London, 16 December 1987)

Caption: On 16 December 1987, Alfred Cahen, Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU), sends a letter to Charles Goerens, President of the WEU Assembly, in which he outlines the activities of the Secretariat-General in the area of public relations. He would particularly like to attach greater importance to keeping the press and public informed.

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*Public relations activities of the WEU Secretariat-General**Letter from Mr. Cahen, Secretary-General of WEU,
to Mr. Goerens, President of the Assembly*

London, 16th December 1987

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During the very interesting debates held by the Assembly on 3rd December on the report by Mr. Burger on security and defence matters in WEU member countries, Sir Geoffrey Finsberg raised a number of questions concerning the secretariat's public relations and related tasks. As President of the Assembly, you told Sir Geoffrey that you wished to be able to provide an early answer to the questions he had raised and that you therefore wished the Secretariat-General to give you information on the subject as soon as possible.

I hasten to give you the following information.

My colleagues in the Secretariat-General and I are keenly aware of the importance of tasks linked with keeping the press and public informed. These tasks form a large part of the activities carried out by staff of the secretariat on behalf of the Council.

I intend to accord them growing importance. My proposals to the Council concerning the reorganisation of the administrative structures of Western European Union are directed in this sense, moreover, since they provide for a strengthened press and information section.

As soon as the Council has been able to finalise its decisions on this reorganisation, I shall, with its agreement, proceed to the necessary appointments. In this context, you will perhaps be surprised to learn that I have not yet appointed the grade A4 official already included in the present organogram. In point of fact, I considered it wiser to wait for the restructuring of the ministerial organs to have been completed so that I might recruit in an overall context allowing me to choose the best candidates while respecting the national balance. I would add that this restructuring of the ministerial organs might provide an opportunity for certain budgetary adaptations enabling me – even in the framework of the zero growth principle – to make available to the public relations section of the Secretariat-General the minimum financial resources without which such a section cannot really operate satisfactorily, thus making it of little use.

This being so, the Secretariat-General, acting on behalf and in accordance with the instructions of the Council, has been far from inactive in this connection, as the following should prove:

(a) A grade A official has been seconded from the political division to work wholly on press, information and public relations matters. He and his secretary form a small unit for this purpose and I am happy to say that it is giving me full satisfaction. Its work is sustained and amplified by the whole of the political division to whose services it may resort and also, when necessary, to those of the agencies for security questions.

(b) The small unit responsible for press, information and public relations matters answers the many requests for information from research institutes, firms, groups or interested persons. Information and explanations are given orally or by sending documentation. The information sent generally includes the WEU treaty, communiqués issued after ministerial meetings, a brief background document, articles on the reactivation of WEU that I have drafted for various reviews and, finally, a complete set of international press cuttings on certain events or aspects of WEU. We have received many letters of thanks, thus showing that in general those concerned are satisfied with this material.

(c) The same unit prepares a daily international press review intended first of all for the permanent representations to WEU but also for the various circles showing an interest in it. This press review is generally very much appreciated by its readers. I must specify that for budgetary reasons I unfortunately have to limit its circulation in spite of the growing number of requests for it received by my staff. Special issues of the review were circulated on particular occasions such as the adoption of the platform on European security interests by the Council of Ministers in The Hague on 26th and 27th October.

(d) An increasingly dense network of relations has been set up with the international press, including, but not exclusively, the press of WEU member countries. This network is the result of constant action by the press, information and public relations unit and the Deputy Secretary-General, members of the political division and myself. This involves a considerable amount of preparation, organisation and follow-up work which produces increasingly satisfactory results, as testified by the growing number of articles and commentaries on Western European Union and references to it in the spoken and written media.

(e) Noting the importance for the organisation of more intensive public relations action, I follow directly everything that is done in this area and am endeavouring in this connection to develop the following activities in person:

- more and more lectures in the various member states (see list at appendix), articles written either for specialised reviews or for the daily press (see list at appendix) and various contacts, in particular with the press with which I am careful never to refuse an interview, whether the journalists are from WEU member states or not. (In this connection, to quote only a few examples, I have been interviewed by the Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, United States, Canadian and Japanese press.)

I very much hope that you, the Presidential Committee and the Assembly as a whole will be convinced of my awareness of the need to develop, on behalf of the Council and on its instructions, the public relations action that I have embarked upon with my colleagues in the Secretariat-General and of my will to pursue it.

By acting in this way, I can assure you that I am responding to the will of the governments of the seven member states as expressed at Council level. Further testimony to this is that the Council wishes a booklet to be prepared on the stages in the reactivation of Western European Union. This project is now being studied and should very soon be brought to fruition, thus forming a further element in the public relations effort.

I trust that the information contained in this letter will meet the desire for information of you yourself, Sir Geoffrey, the Presidential Committee and the Assembly as a whole.

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(Signed) Alfred CAHEN

Articles

« La défense européenne : perspectives nouvelles ouvertes par la réactivation de l'Union de l'Europe occidentale », publié dans *L'annuaire européen*, Vol. XXXIII, 1985, sous les auspices du Conseil de l'Europe, Strasbourg.

« L'UEO pour quoi faire ? », publié dans *Studia diplomatica*, Vol. XXXVIII, 1985, n° 6, Bruxelles.

« La coopération politique européenne et la sécurité », publié dans *L'Europe et la sécurité européenne* par le European Political Studies Group.

« The WEU and NATO », publié dans *Estrategia*, n° 1, printemps 1986, Lisbonne.

« Un rôle nouveau pour l'UEO ? », publié dans *L'Europe en formation*, numéro spécial sur « L'Initiative de défense stratégique : guerre ou paix des étoiles ? », n° 262 bis, hiver 1986, Paris.

« Western European Union », published in *NATO's Sixteen Nations* of June 1986, volume 31, n° 3.

« Le processus d'intégration européenne et sa dimension de sécurité ; remarques introductives », publié dans *Revue d'intégration européenne*, 1986, IX, n°s 2-3, Canada.

« Relaunching Western European Union – Implications for the Atlantic Alliance », published in *La Revue de l'OTAN*, n° 4, August 1986, Brussels.

« Quelle place pour l'Union de l'Europe occidentale ? », publié dans *Le Monde Atlantique*, September 1986, n° 36, Brussels.

« La coopération politique européenne et la sécurité », publié dans « Textes et Documents » – Collection *Idées et Études*, 1986, n° 334 du ministère des affaires étrangères, Bruxelles.

« L'Europe et « sa dimension sécurité » : l'heure est-elle venue ? », publié dans *Le Soir*, 27 November 1986.

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“ Possibilities for an Independent European Defence ”, publié dans *Vite*, 15 April 1987 (Congress Brochure).

« Dimension européenne de la sécurité et solidarité atlantique – L’Union de l’Europe occidentale réactivée peut-elle rencontrer ces deux exigences ? », publié par l’Agencia EFE, Madrid.

« L’Europe et sa sécurité », publié dans *La libre Belgique*, March 1987, Brussels.

« La dimension européenne de la sécurité : les expériences de la coopération politique à Douze et de la réactivation de l’Union de l’Europe occidentale, » à publier dans *Les mélanges Gorielly*, Bruxelles.

« L’Europe et sa sécurité : le grand débat », publié dans *La libre Belgique*, July 1987.

“ Western European Union – An essential part of the building of Europe ”, publié dans *The European*, September-October 1987, United Kingdom.

“ Why a reactivated Western European Union ? What is Western European Union ? ” to be published in *The Army Quarterly and Defence Journal*, United Kingdom.

Conferences

1985

14 October – Brussels

« Pourquoi l’UEO ? » à l’Institut royal de relations internationales.

23 October – Brussels

« L’IDS et l’UEO », colloque organisé par le Centre d’études de défense.

26-27 October – Lisbon¹

« L’UEO et la sécurité européenne » à l’Institut des études stratégiques du Portugal.

8 November – Brussels

« Sécurité, relations Est-Ouest et identité européenne » à Réalités européennes du présent.

10 November – Brussels

« Le rôle de l’UEO dans le contexte de la construction européenne et de la solidarité atlantique » (conférence Olivaint).

21 November – Brussels

« Quel rôle pour l’UEO ? » à l’Institut royal de défense.

6 December – Brussels

« L’UEO et la construction européenne », au Mouvement socialiste européen.

17 December – London

“ WEU : where is it going ? ” au Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House.

1986

23 January – Bruges

« Dimension européenne de la défense », au Collège d’Europe.

28 January – Madrid

« L’UEO vue dans la perspective du processus de construction européenne et de l’Alliance atlantique » à l’Institut diplomatique de Madrid.

13 March – Liège

« La sécurité de l'Europe, les technologies nouvelles et l'Union de l'Europe occidentale » à Études et expansion.

18 April – Monaco

« La dimension européenne de la sécurité » à l'Académie de la paix.

23 April – London¹

« L'Union de l'Europe occidentale : problèmes et perspectives », à l'International Institute for Strategic Studies.

5 May – Paris

« L'UEO », à la Maison de l'Europe de Paris et Foyer de rencontres internationales.

16 May – Brussels

« L'Europe et sa sécurité. Quelles options ? » à l'American and Common Market Club.

21 May – SHAPE¹

« L'UEO dans l'Europe et dans l'Alliance atlantique », à l'Association des officiers du SHAPE.

26 May – Lisbon

“ The Western European Union ”, à l'Institut de défense nationale.

27 June – Rome

« La sécurité européenne et l'UEO », à l'Istituto affari internazionali.

18 September – Leicester

“ Creating a European Defence Union : the role of WEU ”, à l'Université de Leicester.

20 September – Brussels

« La dimension sécurité dans l'Europe de demain », au Cercle du Champ de Mars.

25 September – London

“ WEU, the European construction and the Atlantic solidarity ”, au Mid-Atlantic Club.

9 October – Brussels

“ The security of Europe : challenges and options ”, à l'Association anglo-belge de Belgique.

13-23 October – États-Unis²

Washington

- Washington Institute of Foreign Affairs – Center for Strategic and International Studies
- School of Advanced International Studies de l'Université John Hopkins

New York

- Council on Foreign Affairs
- Institute on Western Europe de l'Université de Columbia

Cincinnati

- Council on World Affairs

Boston

- Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis
- Center for European Affairs et Center for International Affairs de l'Université de Harvard.

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Pittsburgh

- World Affairs Council
- University Center for International Studies de l'Université de Pittsburgh.

6 December – Toledo

“ Fora on discussion on Western Defence Policy ”, à l'Associacion de Periodistas Europeos.

1987*6 January – Rome*

“ European unification and the European security dimension ”, au Collège de défense de l'OTAN.

10 April – Brussels

« Perspectives de l'UEO », à la Maison de l'Europe à Bruxelles.

23 May – Amersfoort

“ WEU en het Europese Veiligheidsbeleid in het kader van de Atlantische solidariteit ” pour Stichting Vredespolitiek (SVP).

15 June – The Hague

“ Europees Veiligheidsbeleid na Reykjavik ” pour Young Europeans for security.

30 June – London¹

« L'Europe et sa sécurité : à quoi sert l'UEO ? », à la Belgo-Luxembourg Chamber of commerce.

3 September – Steyning

“ The contribution of WEU to the defence of Europe ”, à Wilton Park Conferences.

11 September – Cambridge

“ The WEU and the European arms cooperation process ”, à la Standing Conference of Atlantic Organizations.

25 September – Brussels

“ The security of Europe in the framework of an evolving transatlantic relationship – what rôle for the WEU ? ”, au Centre for European Policy Studies.

18 October – Bocholt

“ International organizations and the defence of Europe : the rôle of the WEU in arms procurement and control ”, au Europa Institut Bocholt pour Young Europeans for security.

23 October – Maastricht

“ Western Europe's quest for security : a 'Third Force' or a viable partner ? ”, à l'Institut européen d'administration publique.

28 October – Utrecht

“ De rol van de gereactiveerde WEU ”, à la Utrechtse Studentenvereniging voor Internationale Betrekkingen.

25 November – Bonn

“ Die WEU im Dienst Europas und der Atlantischen Solidarität ”, à la Deutsche Gesellschaft für auswärtige Politik.

28 November – London

“The revival of Western European Union and the process of European integration”, au European Movement.

11 December – Brussels

«La dimension européenne de la politique de sécurité» à la table ronde du Groupe d'études politiques européennes de la Fondation universitaire.

14 December – Newcastle upon Tyne

“The emergence and the rôle of the WEU”, au Fulbright Colloquium, à l'Université de Newcastle.

Forthcoming conferences in 1988

4 January – Rome

«L'unification européenne et la dimension de la sécurité européenne», au Collège de défense de l'OTAN.

12 January – Brussels

«État actuel des efforts pour une réforme de l'UEO», à l'Union européenne démocrate chrétienne et au Parti populaire européen.

11 February – Birmingham

A l'International Affairs Society de l'Université de Birmingham.

26 February – Dayton (Ohio)²

A un symposium sur les relations Est-Ouest organisé par l'Université de Dayton.

13-16 March – Washington²

“WEU and West European perspectives on strategic and theater defence” pour un colloque marquant le cinquième anniversaire de l'IDS organisé par l'Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis.

1. Although the title appearing on this list is in French, the conference was given in English.

2. Due to the limitations of the WEU budget, the cost of the round trip London-United States-London and expenses, was borne by the organisations which had invited me to speak.