

Draft reply by the United Kingdom delegation to the WEU Council to Recommendation 194 on the international trade in armaments (London, 13 February 1970)

Caption: In a note dated 13 February 1970, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the draft reply by the United Kingdom delegation to the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 194 on the international trade in armaments. The Council, like the Assembly, would welcome an international agreement to control the international arms trade. The WEU Member States will continue to scrutinise the merits of each application for the supply of arms. The Council also considers that the Agency for the Control of Armaments (ACA) is not authorised to draw up a list of all the armaments exported and the effects that these exports might have on world peace unless the Protocols governing the Agency are amended. The ACA is not informed of the destinations of exports outside WEU, and the United Kingdom is excluded from the control of exports.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 194 on the international trade in armaments . London: 13.02.1970. WPM (70)16. Copy N° 53. 3 p. Archives nationales de Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954-1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1968, 01/11/1968-30/10/1970. File 202.413.16. Volume 1/1.

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http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft_reply_by_the_united_kingdom_delegation_to_the_weu_council_to_recommendation_194_on_the_international_trade_in_armaments_london_13_february_1970-en-90fc9a0c-a3bd-4832-a33c-7b985ee094e8.html



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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Recommendation 194 on the international trade in armaments (C (69) 170)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith a draft reply, prepared by the United Kingdom delegation, to Assembly Recommendation 194 on the international trade in armaments.

This draft will be considered by the working group at a forthcoming meeting.

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Draft reply prepared by the United Kingdom delegation
to Recommendation 194

1. The Council take note of the views expressed in the Assembly's Recommendation and would welcome international agreement on effective measures to control the international arms trade. In their view, however, the primary requirement for the implementation of an effective international agreement is the active support of all major supplying countries; the attitude of recipient countries would also be a key factor. Past experience, both within the United Nations and outside, suggests that such an effective agreement will be very difficult to reach. Pending an effective agreement, member governments of W.E.U. will follow their practice of carefully scrutinising each individual application for the supply of arms on its merits.

2. As regards an Arbitration Tribunal capable of providing a peaceful settlement of international conflicts, there already exists, as the Assembly are aware, at The Hague, the International Court of Justice, a principal organ of the United Nations.

/3. The Council ...

3. The Council consider that the Agency is not authorised by the texts governing its activity to perform the tasks mentioned in paragraph 3 of Recommendation 194.

The position is as follows:

1. By virtue of Article VII of Protocol No. IV, the Agency only has authority to direct its attention to the armaments listed in Annexes II, III and IV of Protocol No. III.
2. The Agency is normally informed only of the quantities of armaments to be exported (Article XXII of Protocol No. IV), without details of their destination outside W.E.U. The last sentence of Article XXII is concerned only with cases where levels of stocks appear abnormal.
3. Article XXII of Protocol No. IV excludes the United Kingdom from the control of exports.

The role which the Assembly would like the Agency to play in this matter would therefore involve amendment of the actual texts governing the activities of the Agency, that is, of the Protocols themselves.