

Final reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 269 on the state of European security (London, 11 November 1975)

Caption: In its note dated 11 November 1975, the Secretariat-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the Council's reply to WEU Assembly Recommendation 269 on the state of European security. Various points are raised, including the negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR) in Europe, the situation in Turkey, Greece and Cyprus, and the standardisation of armaments. Several French amendments (WPM (75)34/2) are incorporated concerning cooperation on armaments standardisation and the division of tasks between WEU and the Atlantic Alliance.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 269. London : 11.11.1975. C (79)149. 4 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: 1973, 01/06/1973- 30/11/1975. File 202.413.21. Volume 1/1.

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http://www.cvce.eu/obj/final_reply_by_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_269_on_the_state_of_european_security_london_11_november_1975-en-8447550b-14b8-4ec6-9232-7f5823507b58.html



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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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C (75) 149

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11th November, 1975

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 269.

The Secretariat-General circulates herewith the text of the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 269.

This reply, which has been approved by all delegations, has been communicated to the Assembly.

9, Grosvenor Place,
London, S.W.1.

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Reply to Assembly Recommendation 269
on the state of European security

1. Despite differences of interest and opinion which may be expected between free, independent countries, the Alliance is maintaining its fundamental solidarity in face of the challenges of the modern world. This solidarity was reaffirmed by the fifteen member countries in the Ottawa Declaration adopted on the occasion of the Twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty. It was further confirmed and reinforced by the communiqué issued after the Atlantic Summit which proclaimed that the member countries would stand by "the principles and the spirit of solidarity and mutual assistance which brought them together as Allies".

2. It is in the same spirit of solidarity that close consultations are maintained, both in the North Atlantic Council and between the allied delegations taking part in the M.B.F.R. negotiations in Vienna.

Reductions must not lead to a perpetuation of the present imbalance, but must result in a common ceiling for ground force manpower in the NATO guidelines area, to be reached by Soviet and American reductions in a first phase and the reduction of non-Soviet and non-American ground forces in a second phase only.

France has made known her reservations about the M.B.F.R. negotiations in which she is not taking part.

3. The study by General de Maizière reviews the main problems faced by the authorities responsible for defence in Central Europe. It highlights questions which are undeniably of immediate concern; for that reason, most of them are being studied within NATO and in the capitals.

4. The Council can assure the Assembly that the North Atlantic Council has been seriously concerned at the lack of progress in resolving the situation in Cyprus and at the effect of this state of affairs on the security of the southern flank of the Alliance.

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The North Atlantic Council has also discussed the freedom of air traffic in the area and has asked Greece and Turkey to lift the restrictions they have imposed.

5. Problems relating to the standardisation of armaments are at present being dealt with by various bodies.

In view of the need for intensified co-operation on armaments questions, both between European countries and within the Atlantic framework, consideration is at present being given to the tasks which might be taken on in this connection by the various bodies capable of dealing with this problem within the Atlantic Alliance and W.E.U. In these studies account is of course being taken of the need to avoid duplication and of the specific role of the Community of the Nine in the field of industrial co-operation.

It may be noted that a working group set up by Euronad is studying possibilities of improved co-operation between Europe and North America in the field of armaments.

This reappraisal should favour the establishment of effective co-ordination and thus avoid such problems as the development of incompatible systems within the Alliance. The aim is that the European countries should be able to identify their requirements and to use their own research, development and production capabilities.

The proposal that the member countries of NATO should allocate a set percentage of their military budget to research projects within the Organisation is an interesting one. However, as already stated, NATO's competence in this field is not exclusive and Europe's own capacities and the interests of its industry must be borne in mind.

6. In the view of its members, Eurogroup has an important part to play in fostering European co-operation in the field of defence. It should also be appreciated that the setting-up of a European Union may well have repercussions on questions of security and defence. It is too soon, however, to try to define exactly what powers the future European Union may have in this field.

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7. Clearly the problem of standardisation is closely linked with those of the joint production of armaments, and the maintenance in Europe of an adequate capacity to produce armaments.

In this context, it should not be overlooked that any discussion of production problems must take account of the competence of the E.E.C. in the field of industrial policy.

The question is therefore extremely complex. Member states of W.E.U. have made substantial contributions to the study of the problem, which will be discussed by the various bodies concerned over the next few months.

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