

Recommendation 374 of the WEU Assembly on the reappraisal of global dangers to western peace and security (Paris, 2 December 1981)

Caption: On 2 December 1981, the Assembly of Western European Union (WEU) adopts Recommendation 374 on the reappraisal of global dangers to western peace and security. It notes that peace is seriously jeopardised by the accumulation in Europe of Soviet conventional and nuclear arms which the Atlantic Alliance does not have the means of countering. It recommends that the Council promote by all means at its disposal the re-establishment of the balance of military forces between East and West. It also calls for an examination of the action to be taken on the study conducted by the Standing Armaments Committee concerning European armaments industries, with a view to optimising military investment expenditure in the member countries. Finally, the Assembly recommends that the Council should urge the North Atlantic Council to hold consultations in the event of a crisis outside Europe.

Source: Assembly of Western European Union. 'Recommendation 374 on the reappraisal of global dangers to western peace and security (Paris, eleventh sitting, 2nd December 1981)' in Proceedings: Twenty-seventh ordinary session: Second Part, Vol. IV, Minutes: Official Report of Debates. Paris: Assembly of WEU. December 1981, p. 41-42.

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RECOMMENDATION 374***on the reappraisal of global dangers to western peace and security***

The Assembly,

Considering that the balance of forces that has ensured peace for thirty years is seriously jeopardised by the accumulation in Europe of Soviet conventional and nuclear arms which the Atlantic Alliance does not have the means of countering at the present time;

Considering that this situation calls for a significant and sustained effort by all the members of the Alliance so that the negotiations on the limitation of armaments may be conducted with determined vigour to allow a balance to be re-established at the lowest possible level;

Considering that this effort must seek to give the Atlantic Alliance the ability to deter any aggression, whatever means a possible aggressor may employ;

Welcoming the efforts made by the United States and by some European members of the Alliance to correct the imbalance;

Regretting that these efforts do not receive adequate backing and are not accompanied by a similar effort by certain other countries;

Considering that the moral cohesion and determination to provide itself with the means necessary for its defence are an essential part of the deterrent exercised by the Atlantic Alliance and that this determination is too easily being undermined by Soviet propaganda, which should and could be far more vigorously rebutted;

Recognising that decisions taken now to strengthen the defensive potential of Western Europe cannot take full effect for several years;

Considering also that present crises in many areas of the world not covered by the Atlantic Alliance constitute a serious threat to Western Europe's supplies of raw materials and energy ;

Considering that the development of Soviet naval power and the system of alliances that the USSR has elaborated in the last ten years increase the risks that these crises involve for international peace ;

Considering in particular that the evolution of the situation in the Near and Middle East can endanger the vital interests of Western Europe and that events in Egypt in October 1981 may constitute serious threats to peace ;

Considering that unless they are accompanied by meaningful consultations between the members of the Atlantic Alliance such crises may divide them and weaken the deterrent capability of the Alliance ;

Considering that Western European interests make it incumbent upon the member countries of WEU "to consult with regard to any situation which may constitute a threat to peace, in whatever area this threat should arise, or a danger to economic stability", according to Article VIII of the modified Brussels Treaty,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Promote by all means at its disposal the re-establishment of the balance of all military forces between East and West on the lowest possible level ;
2. Promote with no less determination the development of negotiations, particularly between the United States and the Soviet Union, on the limitation of armaments, including theatre weapons, with a view to re-establishing this balance ;
3. Ensure that its members respect the decisions taken by the North Atlantic Council on 19th December 1979 in the field of armaments ;
4. Examine the action to be taken on the study conducted by the Standing Armaments Committee on the European armaments industries with a view to gaining maximum efficiency from military investment expenditure in the member countries ;

5. Ensure that Article VIII of the modified Brussels Treaty is applied in all circumstances and, to this end, organise within WEU machinery to improve its means for crisis management ;
6. Urge the North Atlantic Council :
 - (a) to consult with each other in the event of a crisis outside Europe endangering international peace ;
 - (b) to strengthen the solidarity of the members of the Atlantic Alliance should one or several of them be compelled to engage their forces for the maintenance of peace and security in areas not covered by the treaty.