

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 359 on the state of European security (London, 29 April 1981)

Caption: On 29 April 1981, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the Council's reply to Recommendation 359 of the WEU Assembly on the state of European security. The Council particularly focuses on the consequences of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan for the security of Western Europe and North America and welcomes the close consultations held by the allied countries on the matter, as well as the cohesion, solidarity and resolve achieved in the light of the Soviet Union's demonstrated lack of restraint in the use of military force. The Council emphasises the efforts made by the Member States of the Atlantic Alliance to strengthen their defence posture and to find solutions to the new challenges that threaten their strategic and economic interests.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 359. 29.04.1981. C (81) 69. 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: 1980, 01/11/1980-30/06/1981. File 202.413.27. Volume 1/1 .

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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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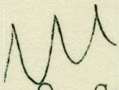
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 359

(C (80) 171)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 359.

This reply, approved by the Council at their meeting on 29th April, 1981, has been forwarded to the Assembly (CR (81) 6, IV, 1).


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

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Reply to Recommendation 359
on the state of European security

1. The Council wish to underline their continuous awareness of the allied dimension of all security issues. It is their common judgement that the security of western Europe and North America can be adversely affected by the situation developing outside the NATO Treaty area, such as Afghanistan and the Middle East. Alliance members have accepted the new challenge, which poses a threat to their strategic and vital economic interests. Hence, at their meeting in Brussels in December 1980, the ministers of the member countries of the integrated military structure endeavoured to draw the consequences applicable as regards the sharing of defence efforts within the zone defined by the North Atlantic Treaty. The foreign ministers of the Alliance, meeting in Brussels on 11th and 12th December, recalled that "genuine détente must be worldwide in scope and indivisible". A still greater cohesion and awareness within the Atlantic Alliance was thus reached and the practice of frank and timely consultations on a broad range of issues was strengthened.

2. The Council, further, wish to emphasise that a number of events, among them the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, have led the members of the Alliance to agree on several measures to strengthen their defence posture. The capability of the Alliance to deter any aggression was thereby considerably improved. In particular, NATO members declared their readiness to take the necessary steps in case NATO allocated forces of the United States or other member countries had to be diverted elsewhere with a view to safeguarding vital interests of the Alliance outside its Treaty area. Provisions are being made in order to improve host nation support by member countries and facilitate the reception of reinforcement forces.

/3. ...

3. The Council share in general the intentions and underlying concerns of the Assembly's recommendation. In particular the Council note the importance which the Assembly rightly attached to the close and intensive consultations provided for by the allied countries which participated in the decision of 12th December, 1979 in the field of both defence and arms control and disarmament. The cohesion, solidarity and resolve thus achieved in the field of security policy are particularly indispensable against the background of the Soviet Union's demonstrated lack of restraint in the use of military force and its continued build-up of military capabilities. They represent, at the same time, the necessary prerequisite for the success of arms control negotiations, the aim of which is to improve security by attaining a stable balance at the lowest possible level.

In this context, the Council note with satisfaction the close and fruitful consultations which have taken place among the Allies who participated in the decision of 12th December, 1979, on theatre nuclear forces (TNF). This decision, combining in a parallel and complementary approach both modernisation and an arms control offer, highlights the conviction of member States as enunciated in the Harmel report, that peace and stability are best preserved by a policy based on deterrence, defence and détente. The Council welcome the fact that, as a result of the continuous implementation of both elements of the December decision, serious preliminary discussions towards agreed limitations of TNF could be started between the Soviet Union and the United States and will be resumed at a date to be set through mutual consultations. These discussions serve to continue the SALT process which is of great importance for the achievement of a stable balance in the nuclear field and for the stabilisation of East-West relations in general.

/In view of ...

In view of the challenge to international peace and security and of the need to preserve the basis for détente, member States expressed their particular satisfaction about the new United States' Administration's resolve to even further intensify and strengthen the machinery of consultation between the United States and its European Allies, especially on security-related issues.

4. The Council reaffirm the support given by member governments to the proposal submitted by the French delegation in Madrid on 9th December, 1980, which aims at the adoption by the Madrid follow-up meeting to the C.S.C.E. of a concrete and substantial mandate for a Conference on Disarmament in Europe to be held in the framework of the C.S.C.E.

The objective of this conference will be, in a first phase, to agree upon new militarily significant, verifiable and binding confidence-building measures, applicable to the whole of the European continent from the Atlantic to the Urals and thereby to contribute to the improvement of the security of States in Europe.