

## Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 281 (London, 10 June 1976)

**Caption:** On 10 June 1976, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 281. The Council notes that all the countries in the Atlantic Alliance have a duty to contribute to security in the light of the increasing strength of the Warsaw Pact's forces, particularly by developing a competitive armaments industry that has sufficient means for research and production. The Council encourages any initiatives that promote cooperation and interoperability in the field of armaments. It welcomes the results obtained by the European Programme Group (IEPG) and points out that avoiding destandardisation is as important as promoting standardisation. These matters are dealt with in WEU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Eurogroup and the IEPG, and there is no need for a new list of armaments programmes to be drawn up. The Council has asked the Standing Armaments Committee to produce a descriptive analysis of the situation of the armaments industries in the WEU Member States so as to provide a clearer insight into the industrial and economic implications of the standardisation of armaments. Despite the difficulties involved in this cooperation, the Member States attach particular importance to these activities and will not let themselves be discouraged.

**Source:** Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 281. London : 10.06.1976 C (76)101. 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: 1975, 01/11/1975- 30/10/1976. File 202.411.19. Volume 2/4.

**Copyright:** (c) WEU Secretariat General - Secrétariat Général UEO

**URL:**

[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/reply\\_by\\_the\\_weu\\_council\\_to\\_assembly\\_recommendation\\_281\\_london\\_10\\_june\\_1976-en-5df5f814-682b-4a9d-ba21-465e4130d53a.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/reply_by_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_281_london_10_june_1976-en-5df5f814-682b-4a9d-ba21-465e4130d53a.html)

**Last updated:** 25/10/2016



# WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

C (76) 101

Original: English/French

10th June, 1976

## SECRETARIAT-GENERAL NOTE

### Assembly Recommendation 281

The Secretariat-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 281.

This reply, approved by all delegations, has now been transmitted to the Assembly.

011

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

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

Reply to Recommendation 281

1. The rapidly increasing strength of the Warsaw Pact's ground, naval and air forces, which exceed discernible defence requirements, compels the member countries of the Alliance, and hence the members of W.E.U., to maintain and improve the efficiency of their armed forces. Only a balance of power between East and West can guarantee the security of all members of the Alliance, in particular the European countries, and make possible a policy of relaxation of tension aimed at stability.

Since all member countries of the Alliance have an equal interest in security it must be the duty of each to make an adequate contribution towards meeting the requirements of the Alliance.

In the long term, the countries of western Europe will be able to make an effective defence contribution only if they have the means and capability of equipping their forces in keeping with modern standards. Special importance should therefore be attached to building and maintaining a sound and sophisticated armaments industry in Europe.

This industry can only survive and expand if it is competitive and has sufficient means for research and production. Its survival further supposes a better balance between the procurement and production of armaments on both sides of the Atlantic. Smooth co-operation within Europe in the field of armaments will moreover provide impulses for further European unification.

2. The W.E.U. Council support any actions which promote co-operation in the field of armaments and further interoperability, within the Alliance and particularly among the European members of that body.

3. The Council recall that guidelines for equipment collaboration were adopted by the Conference of National Armaments Directors of NATO in February, 1973 as a basis for its work.

/The Council welcome ...

The Council welcome the results achieved at the first meetings of the European Programme Group for co-operation in the field of armaments held in Rome and consider them to be a step in the right direction.

Avoiding destandardisation will be as important as promoting standardisation. The phasing-out of old weapons systems should be co-ordinated, so that the foundation is laid for joint new procurements on a more rational basis.

4. The problems involved in greater standardisation and co-operation in the field of armaments are being dealt with in W.E.U., NATO, the Eurogroup, and now also in the Programme Group for European co-operation in the field of armaments. All governments in the Alliance are at present seeking to participate as far as possible in joint multilateral projects in which national interests will also have to be taken into consideration. It is of great importance, therefore, that compensation mechanisms should be developed to take account of national interests on a case by case basis.

The programmes for armaments which are at present being planned and developed by the various members of the Alliance are discussed in the competent bodies. There is at this juncture no need for a new special list to be drawn up.

The member governments of the Alliance start from the assumption that a two-way transatlantic flow of trade in armaments cannot be established until the European NATO countries are able to bid on favourable cost-benefit terms. The European countries will seek to achieve this by undertaking joint projects.

5. The Council have instructed the Standing Armaments Committee, as a task for the immediate future, to produce a detailed outline programme for a study which, in the form of a descriptive analysis of the situation of the armaments industries in member countries, would help to give a clearer insight into the industrial and economic implications of the standardisation of armaments.

/6. Since co-operation ...

6. Since co-operation and standardisation in the field of armaments lead to a strengthening of the defence potential and rationalisation of procurement, the governments of all member countries attach particular importance to these activities. The competent political bodies are aware of the difficulties involved in co-operation in the field of armaments but will not let themselves be discouraged by delays or temporary failure.

7. The Council have forwarded the text of this Recommendation to the North Atlantic Council, as requested.