

# Draft reply by the French delegation to the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 358 on the future of European security (London, 23 January 1981)


**Caption:** On 23 January 1981, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates a draft reply from the WEU Council, prepared by the French delegation, to Assembly Recommendation 358 on the future of European security. The French emphasise that the coordination of WEU member countries' policies is one of the reasons for the Council's existence. Furthermore, they do not see the need for the systematic convening of meetings of the WEU Council before those of the North Atlantic Council (NAC). Finally, the French delegation rejects the Assembly's request to set up a working group to examine the measures to be taken to adapt WEU to the present requirements of European defence. This French draft reply is taken up almost in its entirety in the final reply by the Council (C (81) 74).

**Source:** Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-general's note. Recommendation 358 on the future of European security. London: 23.01.1981. WPM (81) 7. 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: 1980, 01/11/1980-30/06/1981. File 202.413.27. Volume 1/1.

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**URL:**  
[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft\\_reply\\_by\\_the\\_french\\_delegation\\_to\\_the\\_weu\\_council\\_to\\_assembly\\_recommendation\\_358\\_on\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_european\\_security\\_london\\_23\\_january\\_1981-en-49d68e83-b52a-45e1-9e0a-66a5b3d49af3.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft_reply_by_the_french_delegation_to_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_358_on_the_future_of_european_security_london_23_january_1981-en-49d68e83-b52a-45e1-9e0a-66a5b3d49af3.html)

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# WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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WPM (81) 7

Original: French

23rd January, 1981

## SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

### Recommendation 358 on the future of European security (C (80) 171)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith a draft reply, prepared by the French delegation, to Recommendation 358 on the future of European security.

This draft will be considered by the working group at its next meeting on 2nd February, 1981 at 3.15 p.m.

*Ref*

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London, S.W.1.

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Draft reply to Recommendation 358  
prepared by the French delegation

Among the various suggestions put forward by the Assembly in its proposal to set up a working group, two are matters of constant concern to the Council:

- the co-ordination of member countries' policies in its areas of responsibility is one of the reasons for the Council's existence. In this connection, it should not be thought that the functioning of the institution is no longer such as to fulfil the requirements of defence, disarmament or the development of armaments. The Council continue to be flexible and have sufficiently wide powers to embrace any debate relevant to the application of the modified Brussels Treaty.

- the follow-up to the study being conducted by the Standing Armaments Committee can more usefully be discussed when the study has been sent to the Assembly. In any case, the Council are still anxious to maintain the S.A.C.'s activities and, through it, to promote a true European armaments policy.

The three other suggestions introduce new elements, which the Council analyse as follows:

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- the participation of Ministers of Defence in Council meetings would certainly not be without its value. But recourse to this action would appear necessary only where matters which are the direct responsibility of Defence Ministers were to be discussed. Where this is not the case, their participation in essentially political discussions would probably be inadequate.

- the systematic convening of Council meetings before those of the North Atlantic Council would scarcely appear to offer any new advantages over the current practice.

- the participation of other countries in the achievement of the aims of the Treaty is primarily a matter for those countries themselves. It is therefore for them to take the necessary initiatives, since the Treaty sets out procedures for that purpose.

For all these reasons, the Council consider that the setting up of a working group recommended by the Assembly is not a necessity in present circumstances.

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RECOMMENDATION 358

on the future of European security

The Assembly,

Considering that the joint interest of all its members is to promote collective security so as to consolidate peace and promote detente and disarmament;

Considering that Europe has to face a threat that is now formidable because of the Soviet Union's superiority in many fields;

Considering that the Soviet Union's operations beyond the European continent extend this threat to the economic and political fields;

Considering that Europe's security can be guaranteed only by the cohesion and strength of the Atlantic Alliance and the resolve of its members;

Considering that the fulfilment of this requirement calls for close agreement between the European and American members of the Atlantic Alliance on their joint defence policy;

Considering that the situation requires the European element of the Alliance to make a greater effort to take part in joint defence and disarmament initiatives, particularly with regard to conventional weapons;

Considering that, to be effective, this effort implies close co-operation in the production of armaments;

Considering that the European Community has established solidarity between most European members of the Atlantic Alliance so that on many matters they are in a position to express joint views on questions which are outside the Community's purview;

Considering that the modified Brussels Treaty, with the North Atlantic Treaty, constitutes the basis of European security;

/Considering that ...



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Considering that the European Community is not in a position to replace W.E.U. in exercising that organisation's defence and armaments responsibilities but that steps should be taken here and now to face up to the requirements of European security,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

Set up a working group to examine measures to be taken by all member countries to adapt W.E.U. to the present requirements of European defence and instruct it to study in particular:

- (a) the co-ordination of member countries' policies in its areas of responsibility, namely defence, armaments and disarmament;
- (b) the participation of Ministers of Defence or their representatives in its meetings when matters which concern them are discussed;
- (c) the convening of meetings before those of the North Atlantic Council with a view to identifying the joint views of its members on matters relating to Europe's security;
- (d) the question of inviting all countries which are members of the E.E.C., have applied for membership or are European members of NATO, to take all steps and measures likely to promote the closest possible participation of their activities in the achievement of the aims of the modified Brussels Treaty;
- (e) the action to be taken on the study being conducted by the Standing Armaments Committee so that the outcome may be a true European armaments policy.

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