

The conflicts in the Near and Middle East

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The conflicts in the Near and Middle East

Stability in the North Africa and Middle East regions^[1] had always been a matter of special concern to Western Europe. The redistribution of power in those regions following the first wave of decolonisation in the aftermath of the Second World War was swayed by a variety of ethnic, national and regional factors, particularly Arab nationalism. The Middle East had in fact always been a traditional area for rivalry and differences of opinion between France and the United Kingdom, as can be seen with regard to the Baghdad Pact^[2] and France's clandestine supplies of arms to Israel. At the beginning of the 1950s, both those European states were imperialist powers in decline, and each one accused the other of forcing it out of the Middle East.^[3]

France and the United Kingdom were to debate the changes in the Maghreb or the Middle East initially in the Standing Committee of the Brussels Treaty Organisation, then in the Council of WEU.^[4] This was particularly true of the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations over the Suez Canal.^[5] The failure of the talks with the Egyptian authorities led to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal by President Gamal Abdel Nasser on 26 July 1956. This turn of events brought France and the United Kingdom together, determined as they were to reopen the canal to shipping, including by military means. Paris and London went on to justify their expedition to their allies in the WEU Council, the British government saying it believed that *'the WEU forum offers a more intimate setting which lends itself to franker discussions'*.^[6] The coordination of the French and British operations was a failure, however, partly because of the ambiguous attitude of the United States and the threat of Soviet intervention in the crisis. France's military support for Israel and that country's involvement in the launching of military operations gave rise to fierce criticism in Britain, because of the adverse effect they could have had on London's Arab allies in the Baghdad Pact. In the end, relations between France and the United Kingdom emerged weakened from the Suez Canal crisis, with each side blaming the other for the failure of the operation.^[7]

Against this background, WEU turned into a forum in which the diplomatic rivalry between France and the United Kingdom was to continue, particularly in the 1960s. Tension in the Middle East mounted. Both countries adopted a position of 'neutrality' in the disputes between Israel and the Arab States.^[8] Both, however, sold weapons (not to mention uranium) to the Arab States and Israel. Although this was a subject which often came up at the bilateral level,^[9] it was only very rarely brought up in the WEU Council,^[10] following the adoption of recommendations and written questions adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly.^[11]

The Six-Day War (5–10 June 1967) between Israel and the neighbouring Arab countries (Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Jordan) was another subject of concern and discussion in WEU. The British were quite specifically required to give a lengthy explanation of their stance with regard to the conflict, as they were suspected of having taken part in the military operations. To help find a way out of the conflict, London argued for a larger United Nations presence in the region^[12] and called on the European countries to be united on this matter. The maintenance of seagoing shipping through the Suez Canal and security of supply in oil products made it vital that all the countries of Western Europe affirm their solidarity in the defence of their common interests.^[13] France, for its part, called

for the great powers to take responsibility. According to Paris, lasting peace in the Middle East required an approach which relied on freely negotiated solutions accepted by all the parties involved in the conflict. UN agreement to the solution negotiated would still be necessary, even if relations between the members of the UN Security Council remained difficult.^[14]

In fact, no solution to the conflict was found. Tension was at its highest in the region itself once the war was over. United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967 was not clearly respected by Israel,^[15] and Palestinian resistance organisations kept up their attacks on Israel, which took retaliatory action. A great deal of attention was devoted to the seriousness of the situation by the Council and Assembly of WEU.^[16]

The differences between the views of France and the United Kingdom burst into the open again on the question of whether it was expedient for the Council to take note of and debate the situation in the Middle East. It could have led to political crises, as with the empty chair policy pursued by France in 1969–1970. The United Kingdom called a meeting of the permanent representatives to the Council of WEU for 14 February 1969 to discuss the Middle East question,^[17] while the item was raised at the WEU Ministerial Council on 6 and 7 February.^[18] France considered that this was a *‘manoeuvre towards holding regular consultations on the Middle East in the framework of the Council of WEU’* in order to gradually establish ‘prior, compulsory consultations on specific subject’, a principle which they had formally rejected at the Luxembourg meeting.^[19] France reacted by sending no representative to the meeting on 14 February 1969,^{[20] [21]} and, more generally, stopped taking part in meetings of the Council of WEU until May 1970.^[22]

Anwar Sadat’s election as President in September 1970 marked a turning-point in the war of attrition between Israel and the Arab countries. Faced with Egypt’s economic difficulties, the new president wanted to bring about a normalisation and, possibly, peace with Israel. For this purpose he asked the Soviet Union to withdraw its military advisers in July 1972.^[23] As there were no further developments, Egypt and Syria, backed by Iraq, Jordan, Morocco and Algeria, launched a major military operation against Israel on 6 October 1973, taking advantage of the Jewish festival of Yom Kippur. The Arab attack took the international community by surprise.^[24] In addition to the military operations, the Arab States decided on 17 October to cut their output of oil for Europe and the United States. The fourth Arab-Israeli conflict ended on 24 October with the signing of a ceasefire.^[25]

On this conflict, the French stood by the position they had defended at the time of the Six-Day War, that the Israelis and Arabs had to live together, and considered that Israel’s occupation of territories belonging to the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Syria was a threat to peace. France supported compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967 and called for a policy of neutrality, non-aligned with either of the two blocs. From 3 June 1967, Paris had decided not to arm either of the parties to the conflict and to order a general embargo on arms sales.^[26] Subsequently, on 16 January 1969, as no solution had been found to the conflict, France proposed that the four permanent Western members of the UNSC should meet in New York at the end of the month to discuss what contribution each could make to establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, despite the lack of understanding in the Security Council.^[27]

The United Kingdom, meanwhile, had been having difficulties in its relations with the Arab countries

since the Six-Day War, especially with the United Arab Republic, which regarded London as siding with Israel's positions. London's move to convene a meeting of the Council of WEU on 14 February 1969 was therefore viewed with a great deal of distrust.^[28] The fact is that, both in 1956 and in 1967, defeat for Israel would have put the United Kingdom's political and economic interests at risk as Arab nationalism was seen as a threat to its interests in the region.^[29] From 1969–1970 onwards, London's approach changed. It considered that any influence it might have over the building of a dialogue between Israelis and Arabs could only be marginal and that the United Kingdom had nothing to gain from being associated with it.^[30] As they were keen to preserve their financial and industrial interests in the Arab countries, the British therefore deliberately opted for practical disengagement vis-a-vis Israel — an option made easier by the fact that in 1967, and still more in 1973, Israel had shown it was able to defend itself.^[31] In the complex pattern of alliances emerging in the Middle East, the United Kingdom was in the end seen as a 'friendly' country:^[32] its deliveries of oil from the Arab countries were not affected by the OPEC decision of 1973.^[33] France, too, which sought to promote good relations with the Middle Eastern countries by developing extensive cooperation with the Arab countries, was not put under an embargo.^[34]

Despite the civil war raging in Lebanon since April 1975, in which Syria had intervened several times,^[35] the signing of the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel on 17 September 1978 seemed to mark a break in the Arab–Israeli conflicts. The peace was short-lived. The war between Iraq and Iran broke out in September 1980. From June 1981, too, the Israelis and Palestinians confronted each other in southern Lebanon, Israel having bombed and invaded Beirut on 6 June 1982.^[36] France and the United Kingdom, as well as Italy and the United States, both contributed to the peace-keeping force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 1982 and 1983.

Relations between France and Israel became cooler during the presidency of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, because of the good relations he maintained with the Arab world. The United Kingdom, for its part, took a pragmatic stand. Since the end of the 1970s, its policy towards Israel had been consistent with the position taken on the situation in the Middle East by the Member States of the European Communities, that is to say, a belief that there could be a negotiated solution to any conflict.^[37] Britain supported the Venice Declaration adopted at the European Council of 1980. The Declaration proposed a joint Israeli–Palestinian (PLO) diplomatic approach to resolving the deadlock in the Middle East. London remained mindful of the threats of pan-Arabism and the importance of promoting trade relations with the Arab countries. This won it some severe criticism from American politicians.^[38]

The WEU Member States had extensive exchanges regarding their positions and informed their partners in the Council, both the permanent representatives and at the ministerial level. Fresh clashes in the Middle East in 1973 and afterwards prompted the WEU Assembly to attempt, once again, to act as a driving force in the work of the Council. On 18 October 1973, as a matter of urgency, it adopted a draft recommendation calling on the WEU Council to hold an emergency meeting at ministerial level to consider the steps to be taken to ensure the security of Europe and ways of imposing a possible joint embargo on arms deliveries to the warring sides. The Member States were reluctant to act, on the grounds that '*the various aspects of the Near-East conflict have been, and still are, under discussion in a number of international bodies*'. Consequently, no emergency meeting was needed.^[39] The

Assembly, however, continued to produce reports and issue recommendations on the various conflicts affecting the Mediterranean region. The French and British members of the Assembly were conspicuous for their commitment in the debates and everyone highlighted the importance of stability in the Mediterranean region for the security of Western Europe.^[40]

[1] Discussions as to the geographical definition of the Middle East have been going on since the 1950s. Although this no doubt reflects a more present-day situation, we have therefore adopted the definition supplied by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which includes Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Iran, Israel/the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and Syria. North Africa includes Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. Available at: <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/afrique-du-nord-moyen-orient/> [consulted on 6 December 2014].

[2] The Baghdad Pact was signed between Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and the United Kingdom on 24 February 1955.

[3] KYLE, Keith. La Grande-Bretagne, la France et la crise de Suez. In: *Histoire, économie et société*. 1994, 13th year, No 1. La France et la Grande-Bretagne devant les crises internationales. p. 79.

[4] France found itself facing growing instability in Morocco and Tunisia, both countries then being in the throes of political crisis, with the former having to deal with the deposition of the Sultan and the latter a prey to the growing influence of extremist movements. See Council of Western European Union. *Minutes of the 166th meeting of the Permanent Commission, held on Thursday, 8 October 1953 at 2, Eaton Place*. *Op. cit.* p. 8.

[5] Council of Western European Union. *Minutes of the 58th meeting of the Council of Western European Union held at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 4th September 1956*. 10.09.1956. CR(56)24. Copy No 91. 6 p. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Subjects dealt with by various WEU organs. Year: 1956. File 421.00. Volume 1/1; Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of the 63rd meeting of the WEU Council, 31 October 1956*. VII. Other business. CR(56)29. p. 3. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Subjects dealt with by various WEU organs. Year: 1956. File 421.00. Volume 1/1.

[6] *Telegram from the Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Paris on the Suez Crisis (28 August 1956)*. The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Foreign Office, Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906–1966. AFRICA (J): Egypt (JE). Suez dispute: referral to UN Security Council; action by international bodies. 09/08/1956-04/09/1956, FO 371/119174; Council of Western European Union. *Minutes of the 58th meeting of the Council of Western European Union held at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 4th September 1956*. 10.09.1956. CR(56)24. *Op. cit.*

[7] KYLE, Keith. La Grande-Bretagne, la France et la crise de Suez. *Op. cit.* p. 97; LUCAS, Scott. *Britain and Suez: The Lion's Last Roar*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. 1996, pp. 113–117. ISBN 07190 45800. See also: *Note from the Directorate-General for Political Affairs. Paris, 10 November 1956. Top secret*. In: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Committee for the Publication of French diplomatic documents. *Documents diplomatiques français: 1956*, Volume III, 24 October–31 December. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1990. Document No 158. pp. 271–277.

[8] Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 281st meeting of WEU Council held in The Hague on 4th November 1965*. CR(65)17. Copy No 9. 04.03.1966, pp. 34–37; 40–41. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU)' Series. 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 14. Serial mark EU.40.1.3. The Hague (November 1965). 1960–1969; Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 324th meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level in The Hague on 4th and 5th July 1967*. CR(67)15. Part I. Copy No 9. 30.11.1967, pp. 41–48; 52–54. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU)' Series. 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 16. Serial mark EU.40.1.3. The Hague (July 1967). 1960–1969.

[9] *Memorandum by Lord Dundee on the supply of defensive missiles to Israel and Arab countries (2 October 1962)*. The

National Archives of the UK (TNA). Cabinet: Memoranda (CP and C Series). C Series. 101–150. Record Type: Memorandum. Former Reference: C(62)150. Title: Supply of Defensive Missiles to Israel and Arab Countries. Author: Dundee. 02/10/1962, CAB 129/110/50; Mr Couve de Murville, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Mr Couture, Managing Director-General for the Government, Atomic Energy Commissariat. Secret: Paris, 4 April 1963. In: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Committee for the Publication of French diplomatic documents. *Documents diplomatiques français: 1963*, Volume I, 1 January–30 June. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 2000. Document No 125, p. 352; Mr Jacques Roux, Ambassador of France in Cairo, to Mr Couve de Murville, Minister of Foreign Affairs: Cairo, 5 May 1965, 10.30 a.m. T. Nos 694 to 698. In: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Committee for the Publication of French diplomatic documents. *Documents diplomatiques français: 1965*, Volume I, 1 January–30 June. Brussels; Bern; Berlin; Frankfurt/M; New York; Oxford; Vienna: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2003. Document No 205. pp. 545–546.

[10] Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 324th meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level in The Hague on 4th and 5th July 1967*. CR(67)15. *Op. cit.* p. 45.

[11] Council of Western European Union. *Minutes of the 405th meeting of the Council of Western European Union held on 3rd November, 1970 at the Centre européen, Kirchberg, Luxembourg*. CR(70)20. Copy No 46. 16.12.1970. pp. 21–22; National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1970, 01/11/1970-18/03/1971. File 202.32.11. Volume 2/2; Council of Western European Union. *Text received by telephone in London at 6p.m. Paris, 18th October, 1973*. 1 p. National Archives of 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, 01/10/1973-04/06/1974. File 202.413.999.08. Volume 1/1; Council of Western European Union. *Secretary-General's note. Written Question 225 put to the Council by a member of the Assembly*. London: 01.04.1981. C(81)68. 2 p. National Archives of 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, 01/11/1980-05/05/1981. File 202.413.999.12. Volume 1/1.

[12] Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 324th meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level in The Hague on 4th and 5th July 1967*. CR(67)15. *Op. cit.*; Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 329th meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level in London on 12th and 13th October 1967*. CR(67)20. Part I. Copy No 8. 23.01.1968, pp. 24–28; 31–32. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU)' Series. 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 16. Serial mark EU.40.1.3. London (October 1967). 1960–1969.

[13] Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 329th meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level in London on 12th and 13th October 1967*. CR(67)20. *Op. cit.* p. 26.

[14] Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 329th meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level in London on 12th and 13th October 1967*. CR(67)20. *Op. cit.* pp. 31–32.

[15] French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Directorate for Political Affairs, Africa-Levant. Subdirector for the Levant. *Speaking points (Meeting of the Council of WEU). Re Situation in the Middle East: Paris, 4 February 1969*. 6 pp. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU)' Series. 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 18. Serial mark EU.40.1.3. Luxembourg (February 1969). 1960–1970. pp. 1–2, 5. The declaration was adopted by the UN Security Council on 22 November 1967. In order to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East, the resolution called for 'Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict' and 'respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force'.

[16] Western European Union. *Draft Minutes of the 361st meeting of the Council held at ministerial level on 6th and 7th February 1969 in Luxembourg*. CR(69)3. Part I. Copy No. 5. 12.02.1969, pp. 60–65. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU)' Series. 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 18. Serial mark EU.40.1.3. Luxembourg (February 1969). 1960–1970; Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 423rd meeting of WEU Council held at ministerial level on 1st July 1971 in London*. CR(71)14. 2 p. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Foundation and expansion of WEU. Year: 1971, 01/09/1970-30/11/1972. File 131.4. Volume 1/1; Assembly of Western

European Union. Recommendation 157 on the situation in the Middle East (Paris, sixth sitting, 15 June 1967). In: *Proceedings; Thirteenth Ordinary Session, First Part, Volume II: Minutes: Official Report of Debates*. Paris: Assembly of WEU, June 1967, p. 52; Assembly of Western European Union. Recommendation 158 on the situation in the Middle East (Paris, sixth sitting, 15 June 1967). In: *Proceedings; Thirteenth Ordinary Session, First Part, Volume II: Minutes: Official Report of Debates*. Paris: Assembly of WEU, June 1967, p. 54.

[17] Council of Western European Union. *Secretary-General's note*. London: 12.02.1969. C(69)16. Copy No 61. 2 p. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1970, 01/01/1969-31/12/1969. File 212.00. Volume 1/1.

[18] Western European Union. *Draft Minutes of the 361st meeting of the Council held at ministerial level on 6th and 7th February 1969 in Luxembourg*. Op. cit.

[19] *Embassy of France in Britain. Incoming cable. Circular No 74. Re Middle East question: Paris, 11 February 1969. Urgent*. 3 p. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU) Series.' 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 11. Serial mark EU.40.1.2.EXC. Special Council meetings on the situation in the Middle East. 1960–1969.

[20] France did not take part in the meeting called at the United Kingdom's request on 14 February, but it was not until 19 February that the French Ambassador to London, Geoffroy Chodron de Courcel, confirmed that France would no longer take its seat on the WEU Council. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Directorate for Political Affairs, Europe. Subdirector for Western Europe. *Collective slip No 35a: Paris, 19 February 1969*. 7 p. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU) Series.' 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 11. Serial mark EU.40.1.2.EXC. Special Council meetings on the situation in the Middle East. 1960–1969.

[21] Council of Western European Union. *Secretary-General's note. Letter from the French Ambassador the Secretary-General dated 11th February 1969. Letter from the French Ambassador to the Secretary-General dated 12th February 1969*. London: 12.02.1969. C(69)17. Copy No 59. 3 p. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1970, 01/01/1969-31/12/1969. File 210.00. Volume 1/1; Council of Western European Union. *Secretary-General's note. Letter dated 16th February 1969 from the French Ambassador in London to the Secretary-General*. London: 17.02.1969. C(69)28. Copy No 59. 2 p. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1970, 01/01/1969-31/12/1969. File 210.00. Volume 1/1.

[22] It has not been possible to establish the exact date of the end of the 'empty chair policy', but it can be estimated as having been between May and the beginning of June, according to certain documents: Council of Western European Union. *Secretary-General's note*. London: 21.04.1970. C(70)64. Copy No 76. 2 p. National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954–1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1970, 01/01/1969-31/12/1969. File 212.00. Volume 1/1. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Directorate for Political Affairs, Africa-Levant Subdirector for the Levant. *Speaking points (Meeting of the Council of WEU). Re Situation in the Middle East: Paris, 1 June 1970*. 5 p. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Archives Centre in Nantes. Archives repatriated from the Embassy of France in London. 'Western European Union (WEU) Series.' 1953–1992 (2002). 378PO/UEO/1-389. Number 31. Serial mark UEO.1.2.Bonn. Ministerial meeting, 5 and 6 June 1970. 1970–1974.

[23] *Guerres israélo-arabes*. Available at http://www.larousse.fr/encyclopedia/groupe-homonymes/guerres_isra%C3%A9lo-arabes/125298 [consulted on 13 March 2015].

[24] Ibid. This fourth war, however, was the result of a lack of a compromise as a direct outcome of the Six-Day War. Resolution 242 had actually mandated Mr Jarring to bring the countries concerned to the negotiating table. Although the Egyptians agreed to recognise Israel according to the terms of Resolution 242, on condition that it withdraw from the occupied territories, Israel refused to subscribe to Mr Jarring's aide-mémoire.

[25] Ibid. The cuts in exports caused the first oil crisis, which is discussed in the subsection on 'energy supply issues'.

[26] Statement by Mr Jobert, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the National Assembly, on the Middle East conflict: 17 October 1973. In: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. General Secretariat of the French Government. *La politique*

étrangère de la France: Textes et Documents, 2e semestre 1973. Paris: La Documentation française, 1973. pp. 141–148. The French move mainly penalised Israel, which then turned to the United States. At the time France had no arms sales contracts with the Arab countries involved in the war.

[27] *Background note from the Foreign Office on the Middle East for the WEU Ministerial Meeting in Luxembourg on 6–7 February 1969*. The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Foreign Office, Eastern Department and successors: Registered Files (E and NE Series). MIDDLE EAST. Discussions. Western European Union (WEU) ministerial meeting. 01/01/1969-31/12/1969, FCO 17/727 (Former Reference Dep: NE 2/29).

[28] The British had to reassure the United Arab Republic's ambassador to the UN that there was nothing particular about that meeting apart from the refusal of the French to take part in it, which was tied to their European policy, not their Middle East policy. The United Kingdom was not trying to align the Europeans against the French on the Middle East. The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Foreign Office, Eastern Department and successors: Registered Files (E and NE Series). MIDDLE EAST. Discussions. Western European Union (WEU) ministerial meeting. 01/01/1969-31/12/1969, FCO 17/727 (Former Reference Dep: NE 2/29).

[29] SEDGWICK, Mark J. Britain and the Middle East: in Pursuit of Eternal Interests. In COVARRUBIAS, Jack and LANSFORD, Tom (eds). *Strategic Interests in the Middle East. Opposition or Support for US Foreign Policy*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, pp. 3–25 (p. 16).

[30] *Memorandum by George Brown on Arab attitudes and British economic interests in the Middle East (London, 7 July 1967)*. The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Cabinet: Memoranda (CP and C Series). C Series. Papers: 121(67) — 140(67). Record Type: Memorandum. Former Reference: C (67) 123. Title: Arab Attitudes and British Economic Interests in the Middle East. Author: George Brown. 07/07/1967, CAB 129/132/3, pp. 1–2.

[31] *Memorandum by George Brown on Arab attitudes and British economic interests in the Middle East (London, 7 July 1967)*. The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Cabinet: Memoranda (CP and C Series). C Series. Papers: 121(67) — 140(67). *Op. cit.* p. 6.

[32] For an understanding of the pattern of alliances and confrontations and a definition of 'hostile', 'neutral' and 'friendly' countries, see SCHEMEIL, Yves. Une nouvelle stratégie de coalition? L'exemple du cartel pétrolier. In: *Revue française de sciences politiques* [online]. Vol. 30, No 2, 1980 [consulted on 17 March 2015], p. 365. Available at: http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/rfsp_0035-2950_1980_num_30_2_393894.

[33] VAÏSSE, Maurice. *La puissance ou l'influence? La France dans le monde depuis 1958*. Paris: Fayard, 2009. (660 p.)

[34] Ibid.

[35] For further information on the course of the civil war in Lebanon, see: http://www1.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/005/article_2874.asp and http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/proche-moyen-orient/chronologie-du-liban-1943-2012_492580.html [consulted on 18 March 2015].

[36] Israel had already invaded southern Lebanon in March 1978, following a Palestinian attack in Tel Aviv, but it withdrew in June after the United Nations Interim Force (UNIFIL) was sent to Lebanon. Available at: http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/proche-moyen-orient/chronologie-du-liban-1943-2012_492580.html.

[37] SEDGWICK, Mark J. Britain and the Middle East: in Pursuit of Eternal Interests. *Op. cit.* p. 17.

[38] Ibid. pp. 17–18.

[39] Council of Western European Union. *Extract from minutes of 465th meeting of WEU Council held on 24th October 1973. I. Letter dated 18th October, 1973, from the President of the Assembly to the Chairman in Office of the Council*. CR(73)15. 3 p. National Archives of 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, 01/10/1973-04/06/1974. File 202.413.999.08. Volume 1/1.

[40] Mr Jung produced two reports without recommendations on 'Security and the Mediterranean', on 7 November 1973 and 21 May 1974; Assembly of Western European Union. Recommendation 256 on European security and the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean (Paris, ninth sitting, 4 December 1974). In: *Proceedings: Twentieth Ordinary Session, Second Part, Volume IV: Minutes: Official Report of Debates*. Paris: Assembly of WEU, December 1974, p. 28; Assembly of Western European Union. Recommendation 288 on security in the Mediterranean (Paris, fifth sitting, 16 June 1976). In: *Proceedings: Twenty-second Ordinary Session, First Part, Volume II: Minutes: Official Report of*

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