


Spero S.Z. Paravantes, The issue of NATO ‘out-of-area’ operations: from West Africa to the borders of the Near East

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The issue of NATO 'out-of-area' operations: from West Africa to the borders of the Near East

At its inception, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) purpose was to provide multilateral support for its signatories threatened by third-party aggression.^[1] Its focus was on treaty-related actions in the Atlantic and Western Europe. As crises occurred in the early phases of the Cold War, questions surfaced in terms of how NATO should and could evolve to deal with them, even if they were of a non-military character, and if they took place outside of the areas of responsibility assigned to NATO by Article 6 of the Atlantic Charter. Arguments in favour of expanding NATO's mandate were justified as being part of the containment strategy, formulated in 1946 by American diplomat George F. Kennan, although Kennan himself had advocated political and economic containment.^[2]

In the mid-1950s, the limits of containment were tested when the USSR, under Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, began to play a greater role in the Mediterranean by establishing closer military and economic ties with Middle Eastern and North African nations. As a show of force to counter USSR presence in the region, NATO held numerous naval manoeuvres throughout the Mediterranean, outside its original treaty-established limit, i.e. the Atlantic and Western Europe^[3]. In 1952, naval exercises amounted to what became the largest armada to be assembled in the Mediterranean since the end of the Second World War under exercises Grand Slam and Longstep. During the autumn of 1952, exercise Mainbrace was the first large-scale naval exercise undertaken by one of NATO's two principal military commands, the newly established Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT).^[4] In 1957, NATO held major exercises ranging from Norway to Turkey, known as Operation Counter Punch, Operation Strikeback and Operation Deep Water, all of which incorporated more than 250 000 men, 300 ships and 1 500 aircraft.

The operations of the 1950s presented Western European Union (WEU) with an opportunity to expand its role and to encourage increased coordination and cooperation with NATO.^[5] The WEU Council reaffirmed that, notwithstanding the geographical limits imposed on NATO by Article 6 of the Atlantic Charter, its NATO interventions should not be limited to that area since it was committed to preserving a 'way of life'.^[6] In the 1960s and 1970s, however, NATO exercises on such a large scale ceased and were replaced by the Naval On-Call Force Mediterranean (NOCFORMED), a rapid response naval force designed to respond to Soviet incursions in the Mediterranean.^[7]

In the mid-1960s, the addition of a political agenda to NATO's military objectives added another dimension to the debate about out-of-area interventions. In 1967, a report to the North Atlantic Council by Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel laid the groundwork for significant changes to NATO's mandate. His paper 'Future Tasks of the Alliance', delivered in December 1967, recommended that NATO should have a political track to promote dialogue and détente between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries.

The fall of the dictatorships in southern Europe in the mid-1970s (Portugal – April 1974, Greece – July 1974 and Spain – November 1975) greatly benefited NATO in its bid to meet its strategic and political objectives as well. The fall of the dictatorships led to a decrease in public opposition to joint strategic initiatives with these countries, further increasing NATO's reach and further isolating the USSR in the Mediterranean. In April 1974, the dictatorship in Portugal fell, followed in July the Greek junta, which allowed NATO to continue relations with Greece with much less public and political opposition from other NATO members, as Greece had been a member of NATO since 1952.^[8] Spain began the process of re-acquiring democracy in November 1975, as King Juan Carlos engaged in a rapid process of democratisation. These democratic developments allowed way NATO to have easy access to the region around Gibraltar to patrol the North Atlantic and to provide more bases

for NATO actions in the Western Mediterranean. [\[9\]](#)

Within WEU (whose members were also members of NATO) NATO's 'out-of-area' interventions provided the opportunity for WEU to pursue their strategic objectives collectively, especially in regards to securing the supply of oil and pursuing stability in the Middle East. Out-of-area also assumed a prominent position in the articulation in Anglo-French relations in the 1960s and 1970s. The British supported NATO's expanded role, but the French, while not directly opposing it, pursued an independent course, not tying their policies or interests to those of NATO but considering them in their own strategic planning. After the resignation of General de Gaulle on 28 April 1969, his successor, Georges Pompidou, set about increasing cooperation with the US and Western Europe in the Mediterranean and Africa, and reconsidered British entry into the EEC, which had previously been vetoed twice. [\[10\]](#) Another factor that encouraged France to seek increased cooperation occurred when Algeria nationalised its oil in 1971. The French recognised their vulnerability to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the international organisation formed in Baghdad in 1960 to counter falling oil prices by regaining control over revenues in the major oil producing nations. The United Kingdom, along with many other Western states, were struck by the oil embargo, placed by the Arab members of OPEC on the states supporting Israel during the Yom Kippur War of 6 to 25 October 1973.

Shared concerns about Western Europe's increasing marginalisation in the region, especially in relation to the superpowers' predominant role, combined with increased Soviet activity there, and energy crises such as the oil shock of 1973, were reflected in the proceedings of WEU. For example, the Assembly called for recommendations dealing with security in the Mediterranean, but the WEU Council, stating that 'specialised international forums' (without specifying which forums these were) were already considering similar actions, declined to respond 'more fully' to the Assembly's request. [\[11\]](#)

These crises and political changes showed the volatility of the Mediterranean region, and Soviet intervention in the region contributed to the impetus to provide a framework through which NATO could expand its role. The British supported the expansion of NATO's mandates and pressed for the rest of the WEU members, not only to pledge political support but also to increase their military contributions. [\[12\]](#) For the French, as demonstrated by the removal of their armed forces from NATO's integrated command structure in 1966, NATO was too dominated by the US and UK to properly represent the interests of Western Europe. Therefore, while not opposing the expansion of NATO's area of interest, they maintained an independent but complementary course. This was later reflected in the WEU Assembly, with recommendations from the Assembly stating that France should be encouraged to play a greater role in the Mediterranean. [\[13\]](#) Where the British tended to align themselves with the US, NATO and Israeli position in the region, the French tended to assume a more neutral and at times pro-Arab stance, for example with de Gaulle declaring an arms embargo against Israel, on 2 June 1967, three days before the outbreak of the Six-Day War, and by the Pompidou government not supporting Israel during the Yom Kippur War of 6 to 25 October 1973. In so doing, the French avoided the OPEC oil embargo placed on many other western European states during the Yom Kippur war. For the British, aligning themselves with the US and Israel, did make them more vulnerable to energy shocks in the 1970s, and the fears over possible future shocks was the source of WEU assembly recommendations calling for peace in the region in order to secure access to energy. [\[14\]](#)

The presence of the USSR in the Mediterranean

In the 1950s, the USSR began to build up its naval and political presence in the Mediterranean and Middle East. This build-up was based on several considerations; as a response to NATO operations

such as Mainbrace, and Holdfast,^[15] the USSR's desire to extend its influence beyond the Black Sea into the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and the use of the Soviet's 5th Operational Squadron operating in the Mediterranean, whose main function was to prevent large-scale NATO naval advances into the Black Sea.^[16] The Soviets had also placed pressure on Turkey, as the Dardanelles were the Soviets' sole point of access to the Mediterranean.

The Suez Crisis (26 October to 22 December 1956) was one of the first events affected by the increased Soviet presence in the Mediterranean as the USSR's support of General Nasser allowed him the freedom to refuse Western assistance and financing. As a result of Nasser having accepted Soviet support, the US and Britain withdrew an offer to finance the building of the Aswan Dam, and on 26 July 1956, Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal.^[17] In response, the British and French (with the Israelis) invaded Egypt to reassert their control over the shipping route, which had been paid for and administered by the French and British since the mid-19th century. Though they achieved their initial military objectives, the United Nations, USA and USSR placed pressure on France and Britain to withdraw, which they did by 22 December 1956, but the Israelis remained until 7 March 1957. Britain and France suffered a political and strategic setback as they failed in their attempts to remove Nasser from power and to regain control of the Suez Canal. The crisis was therefore a victory for Soviet policy by demonstrating to the Arab world that Soviet political and economic support in combination with rising Arab nationalism, could assist Arab states in achieving its strategic, political and economic objectives. However, the Soviets' increasing role in the region forced WEU to reconsider Western Europe's position in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern affairs, and while acknowledging the political threat and possible need to confront Soviet expansion, the WEU Council also stressed the importance of achieving peace in the region.^[18]

In addition to the national, regional and ethnic dimensions of the many conflicts in the Middle East throughout the Cold War, Soviet intervention contributed to the redistribution of power in the region. USSR continued to support Nasser by supplying Egypt, in addition to Syria and Jordan, with weapons leading up to and during the Six-Day War from 5 to 10 June, 1967. They continued to support Arab nationalism, and provided economic, military and political aid to Libya in the late 1960s and early 70s as the country embarked on a nationalization campaign of Libya's oil. USSR also supported Nasser's successor, Sadat, before the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

In combination with the continuing Soviet influence in the region, the use of energy as a political weapon by OPEC, highlighted the need for the US and Europe (through NATO and WEU) to coordinate their Middle Eastern policy to respond to Soviet influence and Arab nationalism.^[19] The WEU Assembly pressed for a solution to the Yom Kippur War (of 6 to 25 October 1973) and the subsequent oil shock. The oil embargo placed on the nations supporting Israel by OPEC had caused oil prices to rise rapidly and significantly as supplies plummeted, and WEU examined the steps that could be taken to ensure European energy security, one of which was by placing an arms embargo on the combatant states.^[20] Additionally, the WEU Council affirmed WEU's commitment to strengthening the presence of NATO and France in the Mediterranean, and considered any further increases in Soviet naval forces and bases in the region as a threat to peace.^[21]

In 1974, the Soviets experienced a major setback in their Mediterranean policy when Anwar Sadat, who had succeeded Nasser as the leader of Egypt, established official relations with the US, refusing to accept any further Soviet assistance. The Yom Kippur War had shown that the US was a more reliable ally to its friends than the USSR was, and Arab victories against Israel had shown that a redistribution of power in the region was possible, despite Israel being militarily successful in the final phases of the conflict. Since only the US maintained diplomatic relations with all sides involved in the conflict, it was the US, not the USSR, which became the pre-eminent intermediary in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East.

Also in 1974, NATO was confronted with a dual military and political crisis when Turkey invaded Cyprus. As a NATO member (it joined NATO in 1952) and having the largest military in the Mediterranean, Turkey was strategically vital to NATO strategy in the Mediterranean, and it remained in the Western sphere of influence. However, it had been in conflict with Greece (also a NATO member since 1952) over Cyprus since the 1950s, which placed a great strain on NATO's strategic unity in the Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, Cyprus was important for the defence and security of Israel and was therefore part of the US strategy in the Middle East, but it was also vital for British strategic planning, as Britain had maintained a significant naval presence on the island since it had had to remove its bases in Egypt after the Suez crisis. As a result of these concerns, the WEU Assembly proposed a series of recommendations designed to encourage its members to adopt common positions calling for peace in regard to Mediterranean and Middle Eastern issues such as Cyprus, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Israel, Afghanistan and the Iran-Iraq War.^[22]

As Afghanistan was one of the last states in the region where the USSR had maintained a significant political, military and economic presence, the Soviets believed that it was vital to retain it in their sphere of influence. Soviet troops assisted the pro-soviet government at suppressing an Islamic revolution. However, once it became apparent that the revolution against the pro-Soviet Afghan government was largely successful, Soviet troops remained in the country in a counter-revolutionary role. It was at this point that their presence was labelled as an invasion. The West then assumed a much stronger opposition to the continuing Soviet presence there, and the UN issued a resolution condemning the continuing Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The Afghan war, in combination with the Euromissile crisis, contributed greatly to ending the period of disarmament, and to a rapid re-escalation of tensions between the USSR and the West.^[23] The USA openly supported the Afghan resistance, but WEU debated whether or not it could intervene militarily by supplying weapons to the Mujahedeen. In 1981, the WEU Council affirmed that the crisis in Afghanistan was 'brought about by the Soviet military intervention', and emphasized the humanitarian nature of the crisis.^[24] While WEU members contemplated taking action, voiced concerns over increases in the Soviet presence and interventions in the Mediterranean and Middle East, and advocated coordinating a response with the United States.^[25] The secrecy around the issue of supplying weapons to the Afghan resistance, the Mujahedeen, was demonstrated by the reply of the WEU Council to a question from a British representative to the WEU assembly about the delivery of weapons to them. Though the Council acknowledged the need of the Afghan resistance 's need for arms, it did not provide detailed information in order to prevent the identification of specific weapons' sources.^[26] What was learned in 2010 with the declassification of British documents, was that the secrecy was a result of a secret meeting between US, UK, French and West German representatives about discretely supplying arms to the Mujahedeen. Though the Germans were legally prohibited from selling arms, the other three agreed to do so.^[27] This event was a good example of national policies influencing the WEU council and the distribution of information to the Assembly.

Issues of security regarding the supply of energy

The access to, security and transportation of energy had significant effects on British and French defence policy, not only within WEU but also within NATO. French and British energy concerns, while considering access to and security of uranium for nuclear weapons and reactors, were mainly focused on access to oil, and strategic competition over oil reserves remained intense throughout the Cold War.^[28] Securing access to these reserves was therefore of paramount concern for both Britain and France considering their low levels of domestic production (notwithstanding their oil reserves), particularly when compared to the US and the USSR. The Suez Crisis (26 October to 22 December 1956) was one of the first events affected by the increased Soviet presence in the Mediterranean as the USSR's support of General Nasser allowed him the freedom to refuse Western assistance and

financing. As a result of Nasser having accepted Soviet support, the US and Britain withdrew an offer to finance the building of the Aswan Dam, and on 26 July 1956, Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal. [29] In response, the British and French (with the Israelis) invaded Egypt to reassert their control over the shipping route, which had been paid for and administered by the French and British since the mid-19th century. Though they achieved their initial military objectives, the United Nations, USA and USSR placed pressure on France and Britain to withdraw, which they did by 22 December 1956, but the Israelis remained until 7 March 1957. Britain and France suffered a political and strategic setback as they failed in their attempts to remove Nasser from power and to regain control of the Suez Canal, but they did succeed in acquiring a treaty that would guarantee to keep the canal open at all times to ships of all nations. In the aftermath of the Suez crisis, and continuing in the 1960s, an aspect of WEU's role for Britain was the UK's attempt to increase the coordination of its energy policies with the six EEC members. For France, the threats to the country's energy supply began in 1971 when Algeria nationalised its oil and gas reserves. This shock to French energy supplies was followed by the embargo placed by Arab oil-producing nations on states supporting Israel during the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Though France was exempt from the embargo since it did not support Israel directly, the fear over depleting oil reserves caused rationing to take place in France nonetheless. The embargo rapidly raised energy prices in Britain as supplies diminished, and emphasised how closely energy supplies and security were linked. It also showed how energy could be used as a weapon and linked energy and security policy in the Mediterranean region with the rest of the world, highlighting the need to coordinate policy between themselves, WEU, NATO and the US for security and access to oil. [30]

Despite attempting to create a unified Mediterranean security policy, Western Europe remained vulnerable to oil being used as a political weapon by Arab oil-producing states (Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates plus Egypt, Syria and Tunisia) in times of turmoil in the region. Their awareness of this was demonstrated by debates within and recommendations from the Assembly calling on WEU members to increase and maintain strategic stockpiles of oil, and by recommendations from the Council for WEU members to coordinate action to encourage peace and security in the region. [31]

Changes in technology such as super tankers capable of bypassing the Suez Canal, together with developments in non-Middle Eastern sources of oil such as in the Irish and North Seas, in North Africa and the USSR and with deep water oil drilling, reduced but did not eliminate the pressure to guarantee access to Middle Eastern oil. The French and British usually dealt with their energy concerns on a unilateral basis, using WEU as a forum to inform the members of their actual or intended courses of action. However, the WEU Council did endorse an Assembly recommendation to enhance and maintain stability in the Gulf area in order protect Western European energy interests. [32]

[1] Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty of April 4, 1949 (also referred as Washington Treaty). For detailed information about the North Atlantic Treaty, see section 1, 'The Relationship between the WEU and NATO'.

[2] While he was Ambassador to the USSR, Kennan argued that although the USSR could not be defeated by force of arms, it could be contained. As a strategy, containment took on a military nature and it is important to note that Kennan himself later lamented the fact that it was so, saying that he had intended 'containment' to be economic and political. However, the analysis contained within Kennan's Long Telegram came to dominate US planning, to justify US military expansion throughout the Cold War and to explain NATO's increased activity in zones not mandated by the Atlantic Charter. Formally titled *The Sources of Soviet Conduct*, published in *Foreign Affairs* magazine in July 1947. Full text available at: <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm>

[3] As did other Western powers such as France, the UK and the USA, for their own strategic and economic reasons.

[4] The other Command was the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

[5] Recommendation 78 of the WEU Assembly on defence outside the NATO area (7 June 1962, Paris, 6th sitting) in Proceedings, Eighth ordinary session, first part, Vol. II, minutes, official reports of debates. WEU Assembly, Paris, June

1962, p. 45.

[6] Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 78 on defence outside the NATO area (London, 6 November 1962), Western European Union Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987, Year 1962, 01/04/1962 -18/05/1976. File 202.413.6 Volume 1/1. However, it should be noted that actual out-of-area interventions never took place between 1954 and 1982, since this would have required a modification of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. As a result, NATO's out-of-area presence in the Mediterranean was simply a presence, maintained and at times augmented in response to the Soviet presence in the region.

[7] NOCFORMED was activated 43 times between 1970 and 1991. Source: www.jfcnaples.nato.int

[8] Note that Portugal and Spain did not join WEU until 1990, and Greece in 1995. Greece joined the EEC in January 1981, and Spain and Portugal joined in January 1986. Also note: the European Economic Community (EEC) was renamed the European Community (EC) after the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993.

[9] At the height of the Cold War, NATO had 16 member nations with a collective strength of 5 252 800 military personnel.

[10] See section 2, The Nuclear Question, for details about the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated command structure.

[11] Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 241 on oil and energy problems (25 April 1974), Western European Union Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987, Year 1973, 01/11/1973 -05/05/1981. File 202.424.40 Volume 1/1.

[12] 'Recommendation 254 of the WEU Assembly on security and the Mediterranean (20 June 1974, Paris, 5th sitting) in Proceedings, Twentieth ordinary session, first part, Vol. II, minutes, official reports of debates. WEU Assembly, Paris, June 1974, p. 46. see also: Débat sans passion sur la défense en dehors de la zone de l'OTAN', from *Le Monde* (3 June 1965).

[13] Ibid. The WEU Assembly and Council continued to encourage 'defence outside the NATO area' into the 1970s, for example: Recommendation 254 of the WEU Assembly on security and the Mediterranean (20 June 1974, Paris, 5th sitting) in Proceedings, 20th ordinary session, first part, Vol. II, minutes, official reports of debates. WEU Assembly, Paris, June 1974, p. 46.

[14] For example: Reply of WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 241 on oil and energy problems (25 April 1974), Council of the Western European Union, Secretary-General's note, Assembly Recommendation 241, London: 25.04.1974.

[15] <http://www.nato.int/archives/1st5years/chapters/7.htm>, retrieved 31 July, 2014

[16] McCormick, Gordon H, "The Soviet Presence in the Mediterranean," (The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, October 1987) p. 1. See also: 'Soviet Oceans Development', prepared at the request of Warren G. Magnuson, chairman, Committee on Commerce, and Ernest F. Hollings, chairman, National Ocean Policy Study for the use of the Committee on Commerce and National Ocean Policy Study, pursuant to S. Res. 222 (1976), pp. 69-90, <https://archive.org/details/sovietoceansdeve00unit>, Retrieved, 31 July 2014. The paper discusses the evolution of Soviet naval policy from 1950 to 1975, and how the Soviet government insisted on designing a policy that integrated the 'military, fishing, commercial and scientific' functions of its fleet. pp. 2-3.

[17] For an example of WEU proceedings relating to the crisis, see: Findings of the WEU Council relating to the Israeli invasion of Egypt, 31 October 1956.

[18] Draft reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 185 on the political implications of the Soviet intervention in the Mediterranean (London, 22 September 1969), WEU Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987. Organs of the Western European Union, Year 1969, 01/01/1969-30/12/1974. File 202.413.999.01 Volume 1/1.

[19] Recommendation 185 of the WEU Assembly on the political consequences on Soviet intervention in the Mediterranean (18 June 1969), WEU Archives, Official Acts, 15th session, 1st part, Vol. II, records of the debates, Paris, WEU Assembly, June 1969, p. 39.

[20] Draft recommendation adopted as a matter of urgency by the Presidential Committee of the WEU Assembly on the resumption of hostilities in the Near East (Paris, 18 October 1973), Council of the WEU, WEU Archives, Secretary-General/Council 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. The price of oil increased 400 % between June 1973 and January 1974. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/oil-embargo>, retrieved 31 July 2014

[21] Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 313 on security in the Mediterranean (London, 13

October 1978), WEU Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987. Organs of the Western European Union, Year 1977, 01/01/1977-30/10/1978. File 202.413.999.04, Volume 1/1.

[22] Recommendation 341 of the WEU Assembly on the impact of the evolving situation in the Near and Middle East on Western European security (4 December 1979, Paris, 11th sitting) in Proceedings, 25th ordinary session, second part, Vol. IV, minutes, official reports of debates. WEU Assembly, Paris December 1979, pp. 34-35. The Iran-Iraq War began in 1980 and continued until 1988.

[23] Documents on British Policy Overseas (DBPO), Series II, Vol. III, the invasion of Afghanistan and UK-Soviet Relations, 1979-1982. For WEU, see Recommendation 341 of the WEU Assembly on the impact of the evolving situation in the Near and Middle East on Western European security (4 December 1979, Paris, 11th sitting), in Proceedings, 25th ordinary session, second part, Vol. IV, minutes, official reports of debates. WEU Assembly, Paris, December 1979, pp. 34-35. Also, see section 2, The Nuclear Question, and sub-section 3, The Euromissile Crisis, for a description of the crisis.

[24] Draft reply by the British delegation to the WEU Council to written question 225 from Sir Frederic Bennett on the measures that WEU is contemplating taking to assist the Afghan resistance movements (London, 1 April 1981), WPM (81) 20. 2p., and Draft reply by the WEU Council to written question 225 from Sir Frederic Bennett on the measures that WEU is contemplating taking to assist the Afghan resistance movements (London, 29 April 1981), C (81) 68. 2 p. In Western European Union Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987. Organs of the WEU, Year 1980, 01/01/1980 – 05/05/1981. File 202.413.999.12, Volume 1/1.

[25] Recommendation 371 of the WEU Assembly on European Security and events in the Gulf Area (18 June 1981) in Proceedings: twenty-Seventh ordinary session: First Part, Vol. II, minutes; Official Report of Debates. Paris: Assembly of WEU. June 1981, p. 47.

[26] Draft reply by the British Delegation to the WEU Council to Written Question 225 from Sir Frederic Bennett on the Measures the WEU is contemplating taking to assist the Afghan resistance movements (London: 1 April 1981) Western European Union Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987. Organs of the WEU, Year 1980, 01/11/1980 – 05/05/1981. File 202.413.999.1240 Volume 1/1.

[27] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8215187/National-Archives-Britain-agreed-secret-deal-to-back-Mujahideen.html> – retrieved October 1st 2014.

[28] Most of the West's uranium came from South Africa until the 1950s, when Canada and the US were able to increase production domestically, which, combined with increased Soviet uranium production from mines in East Germany, reduced the strategic competition between the superpowers for fissionable material.

[29] For an example of WEU proceedings relating to the crisis, see: Findings of the WEU Council relating to the Israeli invasion of Egypt, 31 October 1956.

[30] For example, see: Draft reply by the French delegation to Assembly Recommendation 241 on oil and energy problems (London, 19 February 1974), WPM (74) 8. 2 p. In: Western European Union Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987. Organs of the WEU, Year 1973, 01/11/1973 – 05/05/1981. File 202.424.40 Volume 1/1.

[31] Ibidem.

[32] Draft reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 371 on European security and events in the Gulf area, (London, 22 September 1981), WPM (81) 23/1. 7 p. In Western European Union Archives, Secretary-General/Council Archives, 1954-1987. Organs of the WEU, Year 1981, 01/06/1981 – 29/04/1983. File 202.413.999.13, Volume 1/1.