

Declaration by the WEU Council of Ministers (Marseille, 13 November 2000)

Caption: Meeting in Marseille on 13 November 2000, the Council of Ministers of Western European Union (WEU) ratifies the conversion of WEU into a 'residual' organisation which is to cease its activities and transfer its operational structures to the European Union (EU).

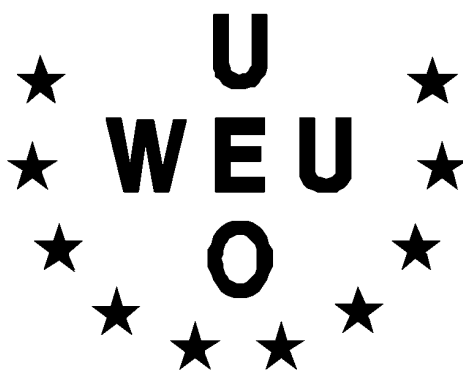
Source: WEU Council of Ministers, Marseille Declaration (Marseille, 13 November 2000). [ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: Western European Union, [22.09.2003]. Disponible sur <http://www.weu.int/documents/001113en.pdf>.

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Last updated: 22/06/2015

WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION



Marseille Declaration

WEU Council of Ministers

Marseille, 13 November 2000

Marseille Declaration

The WEU Council of Ministers met in Marseille on 13 November 2000. The WEU Council was preceded by a meeting of the Defence Ministers of WEAG at which Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Poland and Sweden became full members.

Ministers welcomed the crucial role played by WEU, particularly since its reactivation and installation in Brussels, and appreciated its important contribution to the development of European security and defence architecture.

Ministers welcomed the progress made by the EU in the field of European security and defence policy, and the Atlantic Alliance's support for this process. They recalled their attachment to this policy which will serve the interests of all WEU nations, through the development of satisfactory arrangements.

Following on from the Porto Ministerial Council, and with a view to the decisions that will be taken by the Nice European Council, Ministers agreed on a number of measures designed to address the consequences for WEU of the changes under way.

In this regard,

1. Ministers approved the WEU residual functions and structures which will be in place by 1 July 2001 at the latest and will enable the Member States to fulfil the commitments of the modified Brussels Treaty, particularly those arising from Articles V and IX, to which the Member States reaffirm their attachment. Ministers requested that the necessary administrative and accommodation measures now be taken, to ensure that the residual WEU structures are in place when the EU becomes operational.
2. Ministers again acknowledged the competence and dedication of the staff of the WEU Secretariat-General and their most valuable contribution to the work of the Organisation. They reiterated the commitment they made at Porto in this area. In this regard, they encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to find appropriate solutions which take into account the professional expertise and legitimate expectations of the WEU staff. They also endorsed the social plan which will benefit the WEU staff members concerned.
3. Ministers acknowledged the work of the WEU Military Staff and noted that it is preparing to cease its activities in accordance with the transition plan approved on 17 October by the Chiefs of Defence Staffs. Ministers also acknowledged that due consideration was being given in the EU to the question of appropriate contacts between military officers of the non-EU WEU nations and the new EU military structures.

4. Ministers acknowledged the importance of the dialogue and cooperation which WEU at 28 and 21 has developed with third countries over recent years. WEU will cease to carry out these responsibilities, which it is intended will be taken up within the existing framework of political dialogue between the EU and the countries concerned.

5. They also agreed to suspend application of the routine consultation mechanisms in force between WEU and the EU, without prejudice to the cooperation required within the framework of the transition process. Similarly, WEU/NATO routine consultation mechanisms will be suspended, except for those that still need to be applied during the transition period, in particular for exercise JES 2001.

6. Ministers noted with satisfaction the European Union's agreement in principle to the setting-up, in the form of agencies within the EU, of a Satellite Centre and an Institute for Security Studies which would incorporate the relevant features of the corresponding WEU subsidiary bodies. They tasked the Permanent Council to draw all the administrative and financial consequences of these decisions. Ministers also acknowledged that due consideration was being given in the EU to the question of the appropriate involvement of non-EU WEU nations in the activities of the Institute for Security Studies and the Satellite Centre.

7. Ministers expressed their resolve to bring the Transatlantic Forum to an end. They welcomed the European Union's intention to enrich the transatlantic dialogue, by entrusting the ISS with undertaking activities similar to those being currently conducted within the Transatlantic Forum, in accordance with modalities to be agreed, enabling all the nations concerned to participate in these activities.

8. Ministers noted the European Union's agreement in principle to take over in due course the direct management of the MAPE mission on police cooperation with Albania. WEU is ready to extend the mission under its present terms for an interim period beyond the end of the current mandate on 31 December 2000.

9. The Demining Assistance Mission to the Republic of Croatia will be continued under the responsibility of Sweden in the WEU framework until 9 May 2001 when its present mandate expires.

10. Ministers noted the importance of continuing cooperation between the members of the WEU Group of States parties to the Open Skies Treaty, that for the foreseeable future would be coordinated directly between its members, as appropriate, from capitals and from their missions in Vienna.

11. Recalling the relevant provisions of the modified Brussels Treaty, Ministers noted with interest the WEU Parliamentary Assembly's work of strategic reflection on European security and defence.

12. Ministers noted that WEAG will continue to carry out its function of reflection and cooperation in the armaments field.

13. Ministers welcomed the presentation by the Netherlands with regard to its incoming Presidency.

ARMAMENTS COOPERATION

1. The Defence Ministers of the thirteen member nations of the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), the European forum for armaments cooperation, met together with their colleagues from Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Poland and Sweden in Marseille on 13 November 2000.
2. They reviewed the evolving situation in the field of armaments and the specific armaments cooperation activities carried out under WEAG. Their discussion focused in particular on the European Armaments Partnership issue, the participation of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in WEAG Research and Technology cooperation, and the future of WEAG and WEAO.
3. Concerning the European Armaments Partnership issue, Defence Ministers had agreed at their meeting in Luxembourg in November 1999 on a procedure, so as to allow the possibility to Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Poland and Sweden to become full members of WEAG. Since then, those nations have formally applied for full membership and, based on the recommendation of National Armaments Directors (NADs), Defence Ministers agreed to their accession to WEAG full membership. From now on, WEAG numbers 19 full members, each enjoying equal rights and responsibilities.
4. Defence Ministers also noted the wish expressed by Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to participate in WEAG R&T cooperation through the SOCRATE MOU. To this end, Defence Ministers mandated their Chairman-in-Office to request the WEU Council to authorise the extension of the central contracting by the WEAO Executive Body under SOCRATE to the benefit of those four nations, and on this basis agreed to sign the necessary Amendments to the SOCRATE MOU.
5. Concerning the future of WEAG and WEAO, Defence Ministers had tasked NADs, at their special meeting in Porto, to commence work on examining the practical issues necessary to assure the immediate future of WEAG and WEAO and to establish a phased work plan for further in-depth studies on the long-term future. Defence Ministers noted with satisfaction that NADs have agreed on the way forward on the immediate future of WEAG and WEAO and that work has commenced based on the agreed phased work plan. Defence Ministers had a fruitful exchange of views on the initial report presented by NADs and provided guidance for the continuation of work towards a final report to be presented at their Autumn 2001 meeting.

6. Defence Ministers further took note of the work accomplished by the WEAG Panels and Groups. They expressed, in particular, their satisfaction with the finalisation and recent endorsement by NADs of a Manual on 'Principles, Procedures and Methods for the Harmonisation of Military Requirements and the Facilitation of Armaments Cooperation in Europe', and on the way forward agreed by NADs on the Masterplan for a European Armaments Agency.
7. Finally, Defence Ministers expressed their satisfaction to the Western European Armaments Organisation (WEAO) which has achieved its targets for launching EUCLID and THALES Research and Technology projects, including notifying research and technology contracts to European industry under the EUCLID programme. A 10% higher target has been set for launching new projects in the forthcoming period, with at least seventeen EUCLID contracts, amounting to a total value of 119 million euros, including 34 million from industrial self-investment.
8. The Chairmanship of WEAG, which rotates among its members, will be handed over from Greece to Italy for the years 2001 and 2002, while the WEAO Board of Directors will be chaired by Italy for one year starting from 1 January 2001.
9. The WEU Council (members of WEAG) adopted the conclusions of the WEAG Defence Ministers.