

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 235 on nuclear policies in Europe (London, 16 November 1973)

Caption: On 16 November 1973, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the final reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 235 on nuclear policies in Europe. The Council emphasises the various programmes that have already been set up within the nine-member European Communities and also in a wider framework, particularly in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), to promote a policy for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It also welcomes the progress made in coordinating uranium enrichment and the extension of this cooperation to other Western European countries. With regard to the adoption of joint Atlantic nuclear policies, the Council believes it is too early to predict the lines along which cooperation with the United States will proceed.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 235. London: 16.11.1973. C (73) 157. 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: 1973, 01/05/1973-30/12/1974. File 202.415.30. Volume 1/1.

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

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/reply_by_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_235_on_nuclear_policies_in_europe_london_16_november_1973-en-ffe1e536-1798-4362-ac58-bb06f10eoc60.html



Last updated: 13/10/2016

WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

C (73) 157

Original: English/French


16th November, 1973

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 235

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the text of the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 235.

This reply, which has been approved by all delegations, has been communicated to the Assembly.


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

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

C (73) 157

Reply to Recommendation 235
on nuclear policies in Europe

1. In the framework of the enlarged Communities important measures have been undertaken, directly associated with EURATOM, in whose work Britain, Ireland and Denmark now take part, to promote co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

a) Valuable work has been undertaken in the field of nuclear reactors with a view to implementing the EURATOM Treaty and a special working group has been set up by the Commission of the European Communities on the development of "fast breeder reactors". In addition, the Council of the European Communities has set up a co-ordinating committee for "fast breeder reactors", which has been entrusted with the task of studying and carrying out the broadest possible co-ordination and co-operation between the various programmes of the member states, in particular those of Germany, France and Great Britain.

b) At the same time, also in the framework of the enlarged Communities, valuable progress is being achieved in the consideration of a European capacity for the production of enriched uranium which will constitute the principal fuel of the more advanced reactors. Recently, in order to improve co-ordination among their members, the Communities have created a Permanent Committee. Its task will be to compare and assess the prospective demand for nuclear energy in European countries and to proceed on the basis of that assessment to a comparison of the various systems suggested by the different countries to meet that demand, having special regard to efficiency and cost, to examine ways of promoting the development of the necessary industrial capacities of the Communities and to facilitate co-ordination of any measures initiated by the partners concerned.

The Committee includes in particular the representatives of the two study associations which have been set up to examine problems in the field of the gaseous diffusion (Eurodif) and the gas centrifuge (ACE) technologies in which the principal European nuclear industries participate.

The Permanent Committee will submit a report to the Commission of the Communities setting out governments' forecasts of their prospective demand for enriched uranium in the 1980's based largely on national programmes for the development and entry into the service of nuclear reactors. The report will also enumerate the basic technical and economic characteristics of the different technologies (diffusion and centrifuge processes).

/c) Another ...

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

c) Another important project initiated by the founder members of the Communities, in which the three new member countries take part, is the "Joint Research Centre" (JRC). Among the contributions which the JRC's four establishments make to nuclear research, the reactor safety programme is of particular interest to all European countries.

d) A particularly useful development is the programme on fusion, which through the association of national institutes and laboratories, has led to an interesting formula for co-operation; this has made it possible to exchange and compare the results of research into the long-term prospects for nuclear fusion in the light of foreseeable technological developments.

2. In a wider European framework and particularly in co-operation with the countries of the O.E.C.D., the nine members of the Communities are engaged in an interesting programme of research in the field of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Its main achievements are the development of the high-temperature reactor "Dragon" and the regular exchange of data between the different countries on experiments and research, channelled through the Nuclear Energy Agency of O.E.C.D.

3. The member countries of the Communities have always attached the greatest importance to the possibility of associating all the countries of western Europe with the work of the Permanent Committee for the co-ordination of uranium enrichment and when the Committee was formed the countries who were not members of the Communities were formally invited to participate. Sweden, Switzerland and Spain have responded favourably and their industries now take part in the Committee's work. As progress on this project is achieved, it is likely that an increasing number of western European countries will wish to participate.

4. While they recognise that absolute priority must be given to the development of European policy in this field, the Council are convinced of the advantages to be gained through appropriate co-operation with the United States. Among the arguments in favour of widening the scope of the dialogue with the United States Government are:

- the need to prepare for increasingly limited supplies of oil and other sources of energy;

/- the obvious ...

- the obvious advantages of a reciprocal exchange of data and information on current research programmes on both sides of the Atlantic in the field of nuclear reactors;

- the desirability of close co-operation in an examination of the problems of reactor safety, especially of light-water reactors;

- finally, the desirability of reaching agreement on common problems, such as the disposal of radio-active waste.

There has already been co-operation on these matters, mainly on a bilateral basis, with the United States Government. Some American industries have shown interest in the study associations. It is too early to predict the lines along which co-operation with the United States will proceed, as overall European policy on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy develops.