

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 254 on security and the Mediterranean (London, 27 November 1974)

Caption: On 27 November 1974, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 254 on security and the Mediterranean, which incorporates several British proposals from documents WPM (74) 28 and WPM (74) 28/1. The text emphasises that these two subjects have been considered and studied by all the member countries of WEU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). But given the changing political and military situations in the region, the Council notes that the existing studies and analyses will have to be brought up to date and developed, particularly in the areas of anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles and observation satellites. Regarding the suggestion that France should resume its former command responsibility in the western Mediterranean, the Council points out that it is not in a position to express an opinion since this matter concerns France's relations with the Atlantic Alliance.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 254. London: 27.11.1974. C (74) 196. 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: 1962, 01/04/1962-18/05/1976. File 202.413.6. Volume 1/1.

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http://www.cvce.eu/obj/reply_by_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_254_on_security_and_the_mediterranean_london_27_november_1974-en-f80720ad-4325-4483-b5da-18eea0881471.html



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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

C (74) 196

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27th November, 1974

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 254

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 254.

The reply, adopted by the Council at their meeting on 27th November, 1974, has been forwarded to the Assembly (CR (74) 17, III, 1).

[see 6th para]

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Reply to Recommendation 254
on security and the Mediterranean

The problems raised by Recommendation 254 on security and the Mediterranean have been considered and studied by all the member countries of W.E.U. and the Atlantic Alliance.

However, changes in some aspects of the political and military situations in the Mediterranean area would suggest that studies already completed will have to be brought up to date and that, in some cases, new criteria will have to be adopted for assessing and evaluating facts and data previously accepted as definite.

Nevertheless, the basic reasons which lead the member governments to watch over any developments in the security situation remain valid.

The Council therefore accept the soundness of the point made in the Recommendation, that full use should be made of the lessons learned from the latest conflict in the Middle East to complement the study, referred to in the Recommendation, of anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles and observation satellites.

In this context, however, the Council are convinced that the use of missiles has not basically affected the value of the tank and the fighter bomber, particularly in view of Europe's special geographical configuration. While agreeing that the problem of the use of observation satellites is worthy of detailed study, the Council doubt whether it would be appropriate for them to call for the establishment of a United Nations observation satellite capability.

As the Indian Ocean is outside the area both of Western European Union and of the Atlantic Alliance, the Council, while taking note of the Assembly's views, do not feel able to comment on the strength or disposition of naval forces maintained there by certain member countries of the Alliance.

/The recommendation ...

The recommendation that the present on-call force in the Mediterranean (NAVOCFORMED) should be transformed into a standing force has already been under consideration by the competent military authorities for some time; there are difficulties arising from the limitation of the defence budgets of some of the countries concerned but there is hope of an early solution.

More generally, the Council wish to recall that a draft Declaration on the Mediterranean, prepared jointly by the nine member countries of the E.E.C. and approved by all the member countries of the Atlantic Alliance has been submitted to the C.S.C.E., in the context of the close links which exist between security on the mainland of Europe and in the Mediterranean area. This draft is intended to provide an opportunity to the conference, 35 states meeting for the first time to discuss problems of security and co-operation in Europe, to indicate to the non-participating Mediterranean states that the implications for security in the Mediterranean have not been ignored.

The proposal that the passage of aircraft carriers from Black Sea states through the Turkish Straits should be prevented necessitates a close examination of complicated legal issues relating to the interpretation of the Montreux Convention to which nine States in all are party. The Council have been assured by the two W.E.U. member governments concerned that this matter will be given careful consideration.

Finally, as regards the suggestion that France should resume its former command responsibility in the western Mediterranean, the Council are not in a position to express an opinion on a point concerning France's relations with the military command structure of the Atlantic Alliance.