

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 292 on the role of the Atlantic Alliance in the world today (14 June 1977)

Caption: On 14 June 1977, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 292 on the role of the Atlantic Alliance in the world today. Despite the economic crisis affecting the Western world, the Council emphasises the vigilance that must be exercised in order to ensure balance and stability in Europe, noting the importance of the Helsinki Final Act and the vital role of effective joint defence in view of the growing threat of the Warsaw Pact. The Council particularly mentions the action taken by WEU Member States in the various international bodies (CSCE, NATO, etc.) on issues relating to disarmament, defence, the promotion of parliamentary democracy and respect for human rights.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Recommendation 292 on the role of the Atlantic Alliance in the world today. London: 14.06.1977. C (77) 84. 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: 1974, 01/07/1974-30/06/1977. File 202.413.72. Volume 1/1.

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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Recommendation 292
on the role of the Atlantic Alliance
in the world today
(C (76) 164)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 292.

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

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London, S.W.1.

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Reply to Recommendation 292
on the role of the Atlantic Alliance
in the world today

1. The Council are alive to the concern expressed by the Assembly in the preamble to Recommendation 292. This is in fact not unconnected with the action taken and the results obtained by the Allies in various fields as evidenced in particular by the Ottawa Declaration and the communiqués issued after ministerial sessions of the North Atlantic Council.

As regards disarmament and arms control, W.E.U. member countries represented in the competent international bodies have played and are continuing to play an active role, with a view to the adoption of multilateral measures subject to adequate control. This action has been combined, as and when required, with consultations, both as part of European political co-operation and in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance. Such contacts take place at frequent intervals.

2. The importance of defence and of the promotion of parliamentary democracy has frequently been reflected in the emphasis laid on these subjects during contacts between the representatives of the member countries and those of other members of the international community. In this context, the member countries of W.E.U. have been specially attentive to their relations with the new parliamentary democracies which have recently come into being in southern Europe. There is a growing likelihood that these democracies will take an increasing part in the process of European integration.

3. The terms of the preamble to the modified Brussels Treaty and, in particular, respect for fundamental human rights, for the dignity and worth of the human person and for the other ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations have been a constant inspiration and guide to member countries of W.E.U. since the Council was first formed. This was the spirit in which they made their contribution to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Member governments have stated repeatedly that they regard the Helsinki document as a major contribution to détente and mutual understanding in Europe and have stressed the importance of this text in the matter of respect for human rights.

/Thus, ...

Thus, they have kept in contact with each other over the period leading up to the forthcoming meeting in Belgrade, in order to determine how far the provisions of the Final Act have been implemented and, possibly, to seek improvements which may be both desirable and expedient.

4. The Council recognize the disturbing nature of the elements of instability and uncertainty hanging over Europe and détente as a result of the continuing growth in the strength of offensive capabilities of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact countries particularly in the area covered by the North Atlantic Treaty, including the Mediterranean.

The Council therefore consider that the greatest vigilance must be exercised in order to ensure stability in the area and that an effective common defence must be maintained as in the past in spite of the effects of the persistent economic crisis.