

Recommendation 241 of the WEU Assembly on oil and energy problems (Paris, 20 November 1973)

Caption: As the oil shock unfolds, the Assembly of Western European Union (WEU) adopts a recommendation on oil and energy problems. Western Europe, which does not have the energy resources that are essential for its economy and security, depends for its oil supplies on large-scale imports, most of which come from the Near and Middle East countries. The text recommends that the WEU Council should study means of meeting any restrictions on oil supplies and promote a joint energy policy in Europe based on security requirements.

Source: Assembly of Western European Union. 'Recommendation 241 on oil and energy problems (Paris, ninth sitting, 20th November 1973)' in Proceedings: Nineteenth ordinary session, Second Part, Vol. IV, Minutes: Official Report of Debates. Paris: Assembly of WEU. November 1973, pp. 21-22.

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RECOMMENDATION 241
on oil and energy problems

The Assembly,

Considering that Western Europe does not have the energy resources which are essential for its economy and security ;

Considering in particular that it depends for its oil supplies on large-scale imports, most of which necessarily come from the Near and Middle East countries ;

Considering that supplies would be favoured by the establishment of a relatively balanced flow of industrial and commercial exchanges between Europe and the abovementioned countries ;

Considering that such a development will meet with the desired success only if all the producer countries are guided in their decisions on oil production and oil exports by economic considerations following the principles of free world trade ;

Considering that the maintenance of peace in that area is of vital importance for Europe ;

Deploing the fact that Europe was unable to voice its views during the October 1973 hostilities ;

Considering that in all events WEU is still the only truly European organisation with responsibilities in security and defence policy matters,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Consider regularly the situation in the Near and Middle East with a view to uniting the efforts of its members to ensure peace in that area ;
2. Work out means of applying a joint embargo by member countries on arms supplies to the belligerents and act in concert with the Soviet Union and the United States for them to be jointly associated with this embargo ;
3. With a view to ensuring Europe's security, study means of meeting any restrictions on oil supplies from this area ;
4. Promote a joint energy policy based on security requirements, including :

A. *For oil*

- (a) The constitution of large strategic reserves by each member country at a level to be defined by the Council ;
- (b) A policy of assistance to member countries experiencing temporary difficulties in respect of their oil supplies ;
- (c) The establishment of an inventory of world — and particularly Middle Eastern — reserves in the fullest possible detail ;
- (d) The diversification of sources of oil supply including a higher priority for prospecting and drilling in Western Europe and the North Sea ;
- (e) The development of consultations between consumer countries with a view to avoiding disastrous competition between each other in the event of shortages ;

B. *For other sources of energy*

- (a) The preservation of the possibility of reverting to other sources of energy not now in operation ;
 - (b) The development of the production of nuclear energy, *inter alia* by building a European isotope separation plant without delay, and its adaptation to the requirements of the European economy ;
5. Organise consultations with interested European countries with a view to promoting policies for :
- (a) Increasing trade of all kinds with the producer countries so as to allow them to diversify their activities ;
 - (b) Assisting these countries so that their oil output may be operated and marketed rationally ;
6. Initiate talks between interested Western European countries and the OPEC countries with a view to finding a lasting and mutually-profitable solution to the oil problem.