

Draft reply by the French delegation to Recommendation 368 on the European combat aircraft and other aeronautical developments (London, 29 October 1981)

Caption: On 29 October 1981, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the draft reply by the French delegation to the Council to Assembly Recommendation 368 on the European combat aircraft and other aeronautical developments. The text states that the development of cooperative armaments programmes is a complex process. It requires consensus at national level between industrial, economic, military and political interests. In connection with the project to build a specifically European aircraft, the countries concerned are using the existing machinery for concerted action in the sphere of armaments, mainly the independent European Programme Group (IEPG) and the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD). Intense discussions are being held between the French, German and United Kingdom Governments. Other European countries have shown interest, and a project group within the IEPG has been set up to provide a suitable forum for concerted action and exchanges of information. In addition to the future combat aircraft, joint talks have been launched in connection with helicopters and transport aircraft. An exploratory group is examining the long-term requirements of the various European countries in this area.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General note. Recommendation N°368 on the European combat aircraft and other aeronautical developments. London : 29.10.1981. WPM(81)30. 6 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, 01/07/1974-26/07/1982. File 202.411.18 vol 3/4.

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URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft_reply_by_the_french_delegation_to_recommendation_368_on_the_european_combat_aircraft_and_other_aeronautical_developments_london_29_october_1981-en-76aa61e2-9cbf-4fbf-b60f-7761a29674be.html



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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Recommendation 368
on the European combat aircraft and
other aeronautical developments
(C (81) 96)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith a draft reply, prepared by the French delegation, to Recommendation 368 on the European combat aircraft and other aeronautical developments.

This draft will be considered by the working group at a forthcoming meeting.

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Draft reply to Recommendation 368
prepared by the French delegation

The Council welcome the interest which the Assembly, as the only Assembly competent in defence matters, shows in projects arising from European co-operation in the field of aeronautics, notably the combat aircraft.

1. The Council are fully aware of the need to design a technologically advanced multi-purpose aircraft able to meet the various forms of threat to which European countries may be subjected.

2. The development of co-operative armaments programmes is a long and arduous task calling for consensus at national level between industrial, economic, military and political interests. The countries concerned with the combat aircraft are striving to make the organisation of this project as flexible and as efficient as possible, taking into account its requirements. Co-operation in the matter of armaments, which is the fruit of pragmatic and patient efforts, naturally draws upon the lessons of the past, even if the programmes present themselves under the same configuration.

/3. As the spirit ...

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3. As the spirit of its recommendation shows, the Assembly is aware that the desire of the countries concerned is to construct a specifically European aircraft. At the preliminary design stage, the governments are anxious to carry out the definition of the characteristics and harmonisation procedures by using with maximum efficiency the already existing machinery for concerted action in the sphere of armaments and chiefly the I.E.P.G. and Conference of National Armaments Directors.

4. The future combat aircraft is notably the subject of intense tripartite discussions between the French, German and United Kingdom Governments. In addition, because of the interest shown by various European Governments, it has been decided within the Independent European Programme Group to set up a project group for this aircraft, thus providing an adequate vehicle for concerted action and exchanges of information. Although the interest of the various countries within the I.E.P.G. has been stressed and regularly reaffirmed, the fact remains that the working of this project group is dependent on harmonisation of characteristics, a matter currently being discussed in detail between the military authorities and the staff of the armaments directors of the various countries.

/5. The efforts ...

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5. The efforts pursued within the framework of the I.E.P.G. are aimed at the maximum harmonisation of renewal plans and military requirements; thus it examines on an annual basis the evolution of the schedules of each of the member countries and endeavours to promote machinery for co-operation whenever this is possible. With regard to aeronautics, in addition to the future combat aircraft, joint talks have started, particularly in connection with helicopters and transport aircraft. Regarding the latter, initial studies have proved to be fruitful and it has been decided to set up within the I.E.P.G. an exploratory group whose terms of reference are to determine the long-term requirements of the various European countries in the matter of transport aircraft.

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RECOMMENDATION 368

on the European combat aircraft and other aeronautical
developments

The Assembly,

Considering that several European countries will need to procure a new combat aircraft in the early nineties to replace, inter alia, fighter aircraft which will then be obsolete;

Considering that this aircraft must be designed in the light of the then prevailing threat to European States;

Considering therefore that this aircraft will involve the use of very advanced technology and will have to meet a wide range of requirements (air-to-air, air-to-surface, ease of handling, short take-off, etc.);

Considering further that the time available for the study and design of this aircraft will thus allow detailed technical studies to be made (new designs) and the necessary financial means to be provided;

Considering that the standard of industrial activity, employment and technological know-how in the European States is directly linked with the future of the civil and military aeronautical sector and hence to the maintenance of its order books,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Recall the need to design a multi-purpose aircraft adaptable to the specific requirements of the various W.E.U. member countries;
2. Insist on such co-operation being organised flexibly and efficiently, drawing on the lessons of twenty years of European experience of co-operation;

/3. ...

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3. Ask the interested governments to tackle their present study in greater detail and harmonise the specifications required by the staffs of the air forces so that the developments of a European combat aircraft may be undertaken;
4. Ask the governments of the W.E.U. member States, in the framework of the Standing Armaments Committee and of the Independent European Programme Group, to show their interest in the development of this aircraft which should be available for procurement in about fifteen years' time;
5. Consider extending European co-operation to other types of aircraft (helicopters, transport aircraft, etc.).

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