

Note to the Assembly on the division of work between the Standing Armaments Committee and the independent European Programme Group (London, 27 February 1978)

Caption: On 27 February 1978, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates to the Assembly an amended note on the division of work between the Standing Armaments Committee (SAC) and the independent European Programme Group (IEPG), together with a copy of a letter sent to the President of the Assembly on 23 February. The note gives details on how work is divided between the two organisations with regard to European cooperation in the armaments field. The main aim is to avoid any overlap between the work carried out by the SAC and that of the IEPG or other bodies. The Standing Armaments Committee will be kept informed of the progress of studies by the IEPG, and the Member States will ensure that there is no conflict between the work and results of all the various bodies on which they are represented.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General note. Note to the Assembly on the division of work between the Standing Armaments Committee and the Independent European Programme Group. London : 27.02.1978. C (78)35. 5 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: 1979, 01/10/1977- 31/07/1979. File 250.01. Volume 10/15.

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http://www.cvce.eu/obj/note_to_the_assembly_on_the_division_of_work_between_the_standing_armaments_committee_and_the_independent_european_programme_group_london_27_february_1978-en-a6b713f3-1ea4-46c5-93b3-2c6d1cd3d4dd.html



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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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C (78) 35

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27th February, 1978

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Note to the Assembly on the division of work between the Standing Armaments Committee and the independent European Programme Group

Following the discussions at the last meeting of the Council on 15th February, and the decision taken in the matter (CR (78) 1, III, 2), the Secretary-General circulates herewith the amended text of the Note in question, together with the copy of a letter he addressed on 23rd February to the President of the Assembly.

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Text of a letter dated 23rd February, 1978 from
the Secretary-General to the President of the Assembly

"The Council have instructed me to forward to you the attached note, prepared at their request by the Head of the International Secretariat of the Standing Armaments Committee, concerning the division of work between the S.A.C. and the independent European Programme Group.

As you will recall, the Chairman-in-Office of the Council agreed to have such a note prepared in response to a request made during the meeting with the General Affairs Committee in Bonn on 3rd November, 1977."

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Standing Armaments Committee and the independent
European Programme Group

In her address to the Assembly on 28th November, 1977, the Chairman in Office of the Council, referring to the joint meeting with the General Affairs Committee held in Bonn on 3rd November, stated that the Assembly would, as had been requested, be given details of the division of work between the S.A.C. and the I.E.P.G. for the studies of European co-operation in the armaments field.

The Council circulate herewith a note on this subject.

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By a decision taken by the W.E.U. Council of Ministers on 31st May, 1976, the Standing Armaments Committee was instructed to prepare a detailed outline programme for a study of the situation in the armaments sector of industry in the member countries, together with a description of a working method suitable for such a study.

In complying with this instruction, the S.A.C. took account of the fact that a body bringing together all the European members of the Atlantic Alliance had been set up in February 1976 for the purpose of harmonising their armaments programmes (the independent European Programme Group). Consequently, in its proposals, the S.A.C. pointed out that the I.E.P.G. intended to start work forthwith, by drafting a definition of the armaments sector of industry.

In the course of 1976, the I.E.P.G. set up a number of Panels, each dealing with a specific subject. Panel III, under the chairmanship of the Federal Republic of Germany, is responsible for studying economic questions and procedures, with a view to working out guidelines for European co-operation in the field of armaments. This Panel has five sub-groups; of these, No. 4, for which the pilot country is France, is

/to prepare a study ...

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to prepare a study on industrial co-operation and the rationalisation of the European defence industry, and will be able to use any available findings of studies now in progress in the S.A.C. on the subject; and Sub-Group 5, which is headed by Italy, is beginning by collecting details of legislation, regulations and agreements relating to the export of armaments.

On 20th April, 1977, after considering the detailed outline programme submitted by the S.A.C., the Council decided to authorise the Committee to proceed with the proposed study, with the reminder that governments were anxious to avoid any overlapping with the work of other bodies, particularly the I.E.P.G. The Council therefore requested that the S.A.C. should be kept sufficiently closely informed of progress of the work of the I.E.P.G. These decisions were confirmed by the W.E.U. Council of Ministers at their meeting in Strasbourg on 26th April.

In accordance with the principles so laid down for sharing the work between the two bodies, the S.A.C. adopted a flexible and pragmatic approach, taking particular care to co-ordinate with Sub-Group 4 of Panel III of the I.E.P.G. It was mainly this concern which led to modification of the programme and method originally worked out.

As a first stage, the S.A.C. received from the I.E.P.G. a draft definition of armaments and the industrial sector which produces them. In order to make the list of equipments annexed to the document easier to use, the S.A.C. made a few changes to the layout, which were incorporated in the final text by the I.E.P.G. Thus, the two bodies are now working on the basis of a common definition.

Noting subsequently that the I.E.P.G. had begun work on an economic survey of the armaments industries, the S.A.C. decided to study the legal status of firms and domestic legislation as the next step in implementing its mandate. This study does not figure in the I.E.P.G.'s plans, but could be of interest to it. This part of the final report is now being prepared.

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With regard to the compilation of economic data, the S.A.C. has decided to wait until the data produced by the questionnaire prepared by the I.E.P.G. for circulation to national industries are available, so that there will be no overlapping or omissions in current or planned activities. However, in order to minimise the delay resulting from this decision, the Committee is beginning at once to study this questionnaire in relation to its duties under its own mandate.

Thanks to information received from the Federal Republic of Germany and from France as pilot countries, the S.A.C. remains in contact with Panel III of the I.E.P.G. and in particular with its Sub-Group 4. Furthermore, the reports adopted by the Committee are sent to the Chairman of the I.E.P.G. for information. In this way, the method and programme of work of the S.A.C. ensure efficient liaison and work-sharing between the two bodies, which are kept regularly informed of the progress of each other's studies, on the understanding that the I.E.P.G. has priority in carrying out its own mandate.

Each of the governments of the member countries of W.E.U. is, moreover, in a position to ensure that the work and results of all bodies on which they are represented do not conflict with each other.

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