

Recommendation 297 of the WEU Assembly on a European armaments policy (Paris, 21 June 1977)

Caption: On 21 June 1977, the Assembly of Western European Union (WEU) adopts Recommendation 297 on a European armaments policy. It recommends that the Council urge the member governments, severally and jointly in all appropriate bodies, to pursue the objective of ensuring the maintenance of a viable defence production industry in Europe taking account of the needs of national defence plans and of the Atlantic Alliance. The document also calls for the institutional basis of joint production to be streamlined by concentrating on the independent European Programme Group and ensuring that military characteristics of equipment are determined within NATO.

Source: Assembly of Western European Union. 'Recommendation 297 on European armaments policy (Paris, second sitting, 21st June 1977)' in Proceedings: Twenty-third ordinary session: First Part, Vol. II, Minutes: Official Report of Debates. Paris: Assembly of WEU. June 1977, p. 22.

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http://www.cvce.eu/obj/recommendation_297_of_the_weu_assembly_on_a_european_armaments_policy_paris_21_june_1977-en-36d15ffb-a473-4771-9866-28e224276b22.html



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RECOMMENDATION 297
on a European armaments policy

The Assembly,

- (i) While wishing for a mutual and balanced reduction of armaments in Europe, believing that the increasing cost of future generations of weapons systems makes it urgent and imperative for the European countries of the Alliance to secure the economic and military advantages of standardisation through joint production ;
- (ii) Noting :
 - (a) that the proliferation of equipment types reduces the operational capacity and the cost effectiveness of the defence of Western Europe ;
 - (b) that the growing complexity of modern weapons systems causes a large increase in equipment costs ;
- (iii) Considering the inherent political dangers of any armaments industry which relies on exports to third world countries or areas of conflict ;
- (iv) Welcoming recent indications that the United States will increasingly seek standardisation of equipment in the Alliance ;
- (v) Stressing the need for satisfactory parliamentary control both at European as well as at a national level of the defence procurement process, and resolving itself to play a rôle until the European Parliament is invested by statute with defence functions,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

Urge member governments, severally and jointly in all appropriate bodies, to pursue the following objectives :

1. Ensure the maintenance of a viable defence production industry in Europe taking account of the needs of national defence plans and of the Alliance :
 - (a) by giving first priority to the joint production of standardised equipment in Europe while ensuring the interoperability of existing equipment throughout the Alliance ;
 - (b) by pursuing secondly further standardisation in the Alliance as a whole ;
2. Streamline the institutional basis of joint production :
 - (a) by concentrating on the independent European programme group ;
 - (b) by ensuring that military characteristics of equipment are determined within NATO ;
3. Inform the Assembly accurately and fully of the nature and extent of the terms of reference given to the Standing Armaments Committee on 26th April 1977.