

Recommendation 359 of the WEU Assembly on the state of European security (Paris, 2 December 1980)

Caption: On 2 December 1980, the Assembly of Western European Union (WEU) adopts Recommendation 359 on the state of European security. The Assembly observes that the nature of the Soviet challenge is no longer exclusively a military threat to Europe but has become a worldwide search for influence, backed by the use of military force, either directly or by proxy. Soviet superiority in tanks and divisions on the central front in Europe is also a cause for concern. The document recommends that the WEU Council urge the member governments to impress on the United States, at the highest level, the need for continuous awareness of the allied dimension of all security issues. It is vital to carry out prior consultation in the North Atlantic Council. The member governments should also maintain and improve their contribution to allied defence by taking particular provisions to enable certain US resources to be devoted to defensive operations outside the NATO area.

Source: Assembly of Western European Union. 'Recommendation 359 on the state of European security (Paris, eleventh sitting, 2nd December 1980)' in Proceedings: Twenty-sixth ordinary session: Second Part, Vol. IV, Minutes: Official Report of Debates. Paris: Assembly of WEU. December 1980, p. 38.

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RECOMMENDATION 359
on the state of European security

The Assembly,

- (i) Observing that the trend of the East-West military balance over the last two decades has been towards rough equivalence in many sectors following the disproportionately large Soviet allocation of technological resources to defence, but that the disturbing superior Soviet concentration of tanks and divisions on the central front still exists ;
- (ii) Noting that the nature of the Soviet challenge is no longer exclusively a military threat to Europe, but has become a world-wide search for influence, backed by the use of military force, either directly or by proxy ;
- (iii) Deploing the outbreak of hostilities between Iraq and Iran, but noting with satisfaction that external powers have refrained from intervening ;
- (iv) Believing that independently of the withdrawal of France from the integrated military structure the cohesion of the Alliance has improved over the last two decades with more joint planning and better provision for consultation and collective decision-making, but regretting the weakness of allied consultation in particular cases ;
- (v) Noting that so far arms control agreements and current negotiations have not reduced levels of forces and armaments, but have contributed to better understanding of the military balance in certain areas ;
- (vi) Believing that European security can be ensured only in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance ; and that to maintain it continued and equal emphasis must be placed on allocating adequate resources to defence, on the one hand, and on pursuing negotiations on arms control and disarmament on the other,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Urge member governments to impress on the United States, at the highest level, the need for continuous awareness of the allied dimension of all security issues and the overriding need for prior consultation in the North Atlantic Council ;
2. Urge member governments to maintain and improve their contribution to allied defence, with particular provisions to enable certain United States resources to be devoted to defensive operations outside the Atlantic area from time to time ;
3. Urge member governments to call in the North Atlantic Council for no less emphasis to be placed on arms control and disarmament negotiations with a view to improving security and reducing forces and armaments ;
4. Urge member governments at the Madrid meeting to seek to negotiate the mandate of a conference on disarmament in Europe in the framework of the CSCE.