

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 358 on the future of European security (London, 8 May 1981)

Caption: On 8 May 1981, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the WEU Council's final reply to Assembly Recommendation 358 on the future of European security. The document incorporates most of the French proposals made in the draft reply (WPM(81)7). The Council emphasises that the coordination of WEU member countries' policies is one of the reasons for the Council's existence. Furthermore, it does not see the need for the systematic convening of meetings of the WEU Council before those of the North Atlantic Council. Finally, it rejects the Assembly's request to set up a working group to examine the measures to be taken to adapt WEU to the present requirements of European defence.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-general's note. Assembly Recommendation 358. London: 08.05.1981. C (81) 74. 3 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: 1980, 01/11/1980-30/06/1981. File 202.413.27. Volume 1/1.

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URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/reply_by_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_358_on_the_future_of_european_security_london_8_may_1981-en-9e6ac08a-e09f-478e-b724-ae32e93dcb5f.html



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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 358

(C (80) 171)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 358.

This reply, approved by all delegations, has been forwarded to the Assembly.

PA

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London, S.W.1.

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Reply to Recommendation 358
on the future of European security

The Council have noted with interest the report on the future of European security presented on behalf of the General Affairs Committee, and have examined very attentively the contents of the Assembly's recommendation.

Among the various suggestions put forward by the Assembly in its proposal to set up a working group, two are matters of constant concern to the Council:

- the coordination of member countries' policies in its areas of responsibility is one of the reasons for the Council's existence. Article VIII of the modified Brussels Treaty gives the Council adequate scope to discuss a wide variety of subjects. The Council continue to be flexible and have sufficiently wide powers to embrace any debate relevant to the application of the Treaty.

- the question of any follow-up to the study being conducted by the Standing Armaments Committee and which is to make a descriptive analysis of the armaments industry in member countries has yet to be considered by the Council. In any case, the Council are still willing to improve European consultation and cooperation in the sphere of armaments, "with a view to finding joint solutions which would assist Governments of member countries in meeting their equipment requirements" (Article 10 of the Decision of the Council of 7th May, 1955 setting up the Standing Armaments Committee).

The three other suggestions introduce new elements, which the Council analyse as follows:

- the participation of Ministers of Defence, or their representatives, in Council meetings would certainly not be without its value. This would be possible where matters which are the direct responsibility of Defence Ministers were to be discussed. Where this is not the case, their participation in essentially political discussions would not appear to be strictly necessary.

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- the systematic convening of Council meetings before those of the North Atlantic Council would scarcely appear to offer any new advantages over the current practice.

- the participation of other countries in the achievement of the aims of the Treaty is in the first place a matter for those countries themselves, since the Treaty sets out procedures for that purpose.

For all these reasons, the Council consider that the setting up of a working group as recommended by the Assembly is not a necessity in present circumstances.