

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 363 on energy and security (London, 29 April 1981)

Caption: On 29 April 1981, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 363 on energy and security. The Council shares the views and concerns expressed by the Assembly. The member countries are fully aware of the constraints on the development of a common energy policy for all Western countries and have agreed on energy policy guidelines for the decade to 1990. They recognise the need to move towards energy self-sufficiency by reducing dependence on imported oil and developing other sources of energy.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General note. Assembly Recommendation 363 . London : 29.04.1981. C(81)70. 4 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: 1973, 01/11/1973-05/05/1981. File 202.424.40 vol 1/1.

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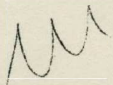
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 363

(C (80) 171)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 363.

This reply, approved by the Council at their meeting on 29th April, 1981, has been forwarded to the Assembly (CR (81) 6, IV, 1).


9, Grosvenor Place,
London, S.W.1.

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Reply to Recommendation 363
on energy and security

The Council share the views expressed and the concern shown by the Assembly in the preamble to Recommendation 363. The following observations can be made about the individual points in the Recommendation:

1. The member countries, fully aware of the practical constraints on the development of an energy policy common to all western countries, are making the maximum effort, both in the E.C. and together with other western countries including the United States, Canada and Japan, in the framework of the I.E.A. towards the adoption of convergent energy measures and a common economic strategy. In this connection, it is sufficient to quote, in addition to the summit meetings of the seven main industrialised countries, the measures agreed by the Energy Ministers of the European Community on 27th November, 1980, and those adopted by the International Energy Agency on 9th December, 1980.
2. The member States have acknowledged the need to move towards energy self-sufficiency by reducing dependence on imported oil, more rational and efficient use of energy, and where possible the development of alternative sources such as coal, nuclear energy or other sources of renewable energy. To this end, they have agreed energy policy guidelines for the decade to 1990 and they have agreed action on energy conservation. Member States are also pursuing research and development activity in the energy sector. The key role of economic energy pricing in achieving agreed objectives has been recognised. In addition to existing schemes for dealing with a situation of oil supply crisis, member States are currently considering the possibility of arrangements which will alleviate difficulties in the event of temporary or less serious oil supply shortfall.

/3. ...

3. The Energy Ministers of the member countries of the International Energy Agency (I.E.A.), as reported in the communiqué resulting from their meeting of 9th December, 1980, agreed with the main conclusions of the Coal Industry Advisory Board (C.I.A.B.) and undertook to examine closely the recommendations put forward and adopt, if appropriate, the required measures.

4. In line with the results of the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation (INFCE) study, which highlighted the need to apply techniques leading to the maximum economies in the use of uranium, most member countries agreed on the need for wider use of fast-breeder reactors and on making provision also for the possibility of thermal recycling of plutonium. The E.E.C. also demonstrated its sympathy with this orientation by approving the three-point nuclear plan.

5. In order to ensure the continuity of supply of energy and raw materials as much as possible, the Council consider diversification of sources of supply to be desirable. The question of imports of energy from eastern European countries is to be carefully examined.

6. The member countries, in the European Political Co-operation (E.P.C.) framework, and through the Declaration in New York by the Foreign Ministers of the Nine on 23rd September 1980, immediately after the worsening of the dispute between Iran and Iraq and its extension into a general conflict, stated the following:

- deep concern about a military confrontation in a region of vital importance to the whole international community;
- the need to ensure freedom of navigation in the Gulf;

/- their endorsement of...

- their endorsement of the appeal by the Secretary-General of the Islamic Conference and the action of the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to an immediate ceasefire and avoidance of any escalation of the conflict;
- the willingness of the Nine to support any international initiative that could lead to a settlement of the dispute and to assist in the search for a solution.

The action of the member countries, therefore, appears to have been based so far on two considerations: first, to achieve an early ceasefire that would spare the population both grief and suffering and facilitate a negotiated settlement of the conflict in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; secondly to safeguard the interests of the entire international community by ensuring freedom of navigation in the Gulf, which must not in any way be threatened or impeded.