

**INTRODUCTION TO EPC
[EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION]**

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I. Introduction to EPC

European Political Co-operation (EPC) among the twelve Member States of the European Community has become “a central instrument of the pursuit of both national interests and European integration” (Foreign Minister Genscher (113). It has created a unique system of mutual information, consultation, co-ordination and concerted diplomacy among sovereign countries. It is directed towards the goal of a common European foreign policy.

1. EPC dates back to 1969/70. At the summit conference in The Hague, the Heads of State or Government of the Member States of the European Community stated on 2 December 1969 that entry upon the final stage of the Common Market means “paving the way for a united Europe capable of assuming its responsibilities in the world of tomorrow and of making a contribution commensurate with its traditions and its mission” (1, para. 3). They instructed the foreign ministers to examine the question of how progress could be made in the field of political unification (1, para. 15).

Given this mandate, the foreign ministers of the then six Member States of the European Community, under the chairmanship of Foreign Minister Walter Scheel, drew up the Luxembourg Report of 27 October 1970 (2), in which the aims and methods of pragmatic co-operation in the sphere of foreign policy were laid down. Community co-operation in the sphere of foreign policy was to be achieved through continuous collaboration among the foreign ministers and the foreign services of the Member States, without any special bodies being set up. The report envisaged above all regular meetings of the foreign ministers and of the directors of political affairs (Political Committee) as well as the creation of working groups. Furthermore, each country was to designate an official from its foreign ministry to liaise with his counterparts in the other countries ('European Correspondent').

At the Paris summit conference on 21 October 1972 (3), the Heads of State or Government voiced the expectation that the policy of unification would enable Europe “to es-

