

MEETINGS OF THE HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT

**PARIS
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*Looking to the "Summit" of Ten
Preparations up to August 1972*

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II. LOOKING TO THE "SUMMIT" OF TEN

After the Summit Conference in The Hague on 1 and 2 December 1969, the Member States' Heads of State or Government had assigned the Foreign Ministers to "investigate the best way of making progress in unifying policies in view of the enlargement". The Report made after this decision and adopted in its final form by the Foreign Ministers of the Six on 27 October 1970 recommends that if the circumstances and matters to be dealt with justify it, the six-monthly meeting of Ministers could be replaced by a Conference of Heads of State or Government.

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The monetary events of May 1971 having compromised the realization of the Economic and Monetary Union decided only a few weeks earlier by the Council and Member State's Government representatives,¹ the European Parliament took the initiative in asking for a new Summit to be convened. During Parliament's debate on monetary problems in the May 1971 session, Mr Oele, Mr Broeksz, Mr Ramaekers, Mr Spénale and Mr Vredeling had submitted a Resolution proposal aimed at "organizing a Summit Conference of Heads of Government of the Six Member States which would help to overcome the current difficulties".

In the Resolution adopted during the following session in June 1971,² Parliament "invites the Council of Ministers to initiate talks between Member States' Governments and including the Commission and Parliament to set up, after careful preparation and with the enlargement in mind, a Conference of Heads of State or Government. The mission of the Conference is to define the objectives of a united Europe, settle the outstanding issues, especially those still blocking the Economic and Monetary Union and obstructing the goals of the Third Programme of Medium-Term Economic Policy, and thirdly to strike a more democratic institutional balance".

As Mr Scarascia Mugnozza pointed out, when he was Chairman of the European Parliament Political Committee, the Summit "must not prejudice the situation before the Community's enlargement. Its task will be to solve the problems of the Economic and Monetary Union, if they have not been cleared up already, to recommend objectives for Europe in view of the enlargement, and strike a more democratic balance between the institutions".

In August 1971 after the United States Government's decision to suspend gold convertibility, the French Government announced the intention of the President

¹ Resolution by the Council and Member States' Government representatives on the achievement by stages of the Economic and Monetary Union in the Community. EC Bulletin 4-1971, Part 1, Chap. I.

² OJ C 66 of 1 July 1971.

of the Republic to suggest "to the government leaders of the Community and the countries preparing to join, that advance discussions be organized pending a meeting at their level".¹

The day after this announcement, the President of the Commission, Mr Franco Maria Malfatti, made the following statement at the start of the Council session of 19 August 1971:

"The problems which the European Community must face in the near future in making a constructive contribution to improving, on a new basis, world economic relations, can certainly not be completely solved today, at that meeting. The task before us is not an appendix to today's limited debate. We have to overhaul the economic structure which has ruled for the past twenty-five years over the relationships of almost all the countries of the world. From this widespread transaction a new reality must emerge. Our contribution and the defence of our interests as Europeans will depend on the degree of solidarity and unity which we can prove.

The Commission therefore fully endorses Mr Pompidou's move when he proposed to call, after careful preparation, a new Summit Conference of government leaders of the expanding Community. Only top-level political decisions will enable us to tackle our task properly, considering the multiple complications in the new situation following the measures announced by President Nixon".

Afterwards, on 10 September 1971, President Malfatti, on behalf of the Commission, sent a letter to the Heads of State or Government, drawing their attention to the serious risks for the Community in the monetary crisis.

In the letter, the Commission "considers it its duty to attend to this situation which may have an unhappy outcome both for our Community's future and for preserving the Community's present assets. For the first time in Community history, we are facing not merely a halt in the march on our objectives but a likely reversal of the trend and the possible deterioration of our Community. Obviously then the answers which we can find to our present difficulties will affect our chances of protecting equitably and systematically our Community interests which can henceforth be identified as our national interests. They will affect our scope for helping effectively to mould a new and more finely balanced form for international relations and will colour our chances of ensuring the smooth functioning of all that we have constructed over the last years. It may take a long time to resolve this complicated crisis. Nevertheless

¹ Communiqué published on 18 August 1971.

