

## II. SECOND FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ON POLITICAL COOPERATION

1. A further Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the EEC countries was held on 13 and 14 May 1971 in Paris, with Mr Maurice Schumann, the French Foreign Minister, in the chair. Mr Franco Maria Malfatti, the President of the Commission, took part in the work on 14 May.

This meeting, which was held for the purposes of consultation on various problems of common interest, was the second organized since the six Governments adopted the "Report by the Foreign Ministers of the Member States on problems of political unification",<sup>1</sup> drawn up in pursuance of paragraph 15 of the final communiqué of the Hague Conference.<sup>2</sup> Like the previous meeting, on 19 November 1970 in Munich,<sup>3</sup> this Conference of the Ministers of the Six was followed a few days later, on 18 May in Paris, by a meeting to "inform" the Foreign Ministers of the applicant countries—the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark and Norway—of developments.

2. At the session on 13 May, the discussion centred on the situation in the Middle East. The following communiqué was issued at the end of this meeting:

"After signifying their agreement with the first report submitted by the Political Committee, the Foreign Ministers, at their meeting on 13 May, once again discussed the problem of the Middle East, bearing in mind long-established and close links between Europe and the countries in this area and the interests they have in common.

"They consider that it is of great importance to Europe that a just peace should be established in the Middle East, and they are therefore in favour of any efforts which may be made to bring about a peaceful solution of the conflict, and particularly of the negotiations in which Mr Jarring is involved. They urge all those concerned to ensure that this mission proves successful.

"They confirm their approval of Resolution No. 242 of the Security Council dated 22 November 1967, which constitutes the basis of a settlement, and they stress the need to put it into effect in all its parts.

"The six Governments declare their willingness, as far as lies in their power, to contribute, at the appropriate time, to the social and economic stabilization of the Middle East.

<sup>1</sup> See Bulletin 11-1970, Ch. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1-1970, Ch. I.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 1-1971, Ch. I.

“They recall their decision to exchange views on 18 May on this subject with the four countries applying for membership of the European Economic Community.

“They have instructed the Political Committee<sup>1</sup> to supplement and continue its work in the light of the constantly changing situation in the Middle East.”

3. The meeting on 14 May was mainly devoted to matters connected with the possible holding of a conference on European security. Mr Malfatti, President of the Commission, presented a memorandum on the economic significance a conference of this type might have, and on the role and responsibilities which the Community, as such, would have to assume in this connection.

4. Following the session on 14 May, and at the end of the Conference, Mr Maurice Schumann made the following statement: “Political cooperation has made a good start. Far from splitting, we have, on the contrary, considerably narrowed the gap between our points of view.” The French Foreign Minister pointed out that an exchange of views had been held on the basis of a report drawn up by the Political Committee on questions connected with the conference on European security and cooperation. “On this occasion”, he added, “we discussed the various aspects of all the problems of special interest to the Community countries as such. The President of the Commission, Mr Malfatti, gave the Commission’s views on matters within its province.”

Mr Schumann stated that the Ministers had mainly discussed such questions as the preparation of the conference, the form it might take, and the questions it might seem desirable to raise. “On all these matters, the Ministers noted that they were in agreement on the main issues. They also had the opportunity to state how much importance they attached to a conference of this type being carefully prepared. Not only must procedural arrangements be made and a formal agenda be drawn up, but the scope of these various subjects must be defined so as to ensure that the conference had the best possible chance of achieving practical results.” Mr Schumann further stated that the Ministers had also stressed how much importance they attached, in view of the problems facing the Community countries, to discussing at such a conference concrete problems connected with cooperation in economic, cultural, scientific, and technical matters between all the countries represented.

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<sup>1</sup> As laid down in the Foreign Ministers’ report drawn up in pursuance of the Communiqué issued at the Hague Summit, the “Political Committee” is, of course, composed of the heads of political affairs departments in the Foreign Ministries of the six Member States. It meets at least four times a year to prepare for ministerial meetings and to carry out tasks assigned to it by the Ministers.

It was decided to keep questions arising from the conference on European security and cooperation on the political cooperation agenda. The Political Committee was instructed to continue its work on this subject in preparation for the forthcoming ministerial meeting.

5. This political consultation among the Six was followed, on 18 May, by a conference of ten—with Mr Maurice Schumann once again in the chair—attended by the Foreign Ministers of the Community countries plus those of the four applicant countries. The French Foreign Minister pointed out that this session was held merely to “exchange views”, since the meetings with the applicant countries—unlike the conferences on political cooperation held between the Six—were only for information purposes, without any decisions, as such, being taken.

No communiqué was issued after this meeting, but according to information supplied by those present the representatives of the Community countries are said to have informed their four colleagues of the results achieved at their own meetings on 13 and 14 May. It would appear that fairly wide agreement was reached on such questions as the Middle East situation, the preparation of a conference on European security, and Mediterranean problems, which led Mr Mario Pedini, State Under-Secretary at the Italian Foreign Office, to remark that “the political consensus among the Ten was remarkable”.

6. The next conference on political cooperation between the Six will be held at mid-October, probably in Rome, since Italy is due to take the chair in the Council at that time. This consultation meeting will be followed, in accordance with the practice now usual, by an exchange of views with the Foreign Ministers of the four applicant countries.