

ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

THIRTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION

(First Part)

**Future of European security –
reply to the annual report of the Council**

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the General Affairs Committee
by Mr. van der Sanden, Rapporteur

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1. Adopted in committee by 13 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

2. . *Members of the committee:* Mr. Ahrens (Chairman); MM. Burger, Martino (Vice-Chairmen); MM. Aarts, Beix (Alternate: Bassinet), Caro (Alternate: Pontillon), Coleman, Collart, Sir Geoffrey Finsberg, MM. Forni, Foschi, Hill (Alternate: Speed), Hirschler (Alternate: Zywiets), Koehl, Lord Mackie of Benshie, MM. Mechttersheimer (Alternate: Soell), Müller, Natali, Pécriaux, Pieralli, Reddemann (Alternate: Kittelmann), Ruet, van der Sanden, Sarti (Alternate: Scovacricchi), Sir William Shelton, Mrs. Staels-Dompas, Mr. Stoffelen.

N.B. *The names of those taking part in the vote are printed in italics.*

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- II. Resolution on the security of Western Europe adopted by the European Parliament on 14th March 1989

Draft Recommendation
on the future of European security –
reply to the annual report of the Council

The Assembly,

- (i) Noting the motion for a resolution in Document 1168;
- (ii) Having taken cognisance of the second part of the thirty-fourth annual report of the Council;
- (iii) Noting that member governments decided on the occasion of the accession of Portugal and Spain to WEU to prepare a revision of the modified Brussels Treaty and noting the statement by the Chairman-in-Office of the Council on 16th March 1989 that “ the Assembly will be regularly consulted on this matter as the work progresses ”;
- (iv) Noting that the Council has said it is “ willing to meet those needs of the Assembly which are the direct result of enlargement ”;
- (v) Noting that the Council of Ministers has “ instructed the Permanent Council to review the question of an institute for strategic studies and the related question of the WEU agency ”;
- (vi) Recalling that the Presidential Committee expressed an opinion on these points in Recommendation 467, urging that the Council establish “ a European institute for advanced security studies... in order to promote a European spirit in matters of defence ” and “ that the mandate of the WEU security agencies be brought to an end ”;
- (vii) Considering that the colloquy on the future of European security held in Florence from 21st to 23rd March 1989 allowed a useful review to be made of the new facts of this question which will guide the work of WEU in the coming years,

I

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Give an organogram of the intergovernmental organs of WEU;
2. In its annual report, give the Assembly detailed information on every aspect of the application of the modified Brussels Treaty;
3. Continue to keep the Assembly regularly informed about all its activities, in particular through regular letters from the Secretary-General;
4. Ensure that it gives more detailed and quicker answers to Assembly recommendations;
5. Make available without delay the premises needed to accommodate the Portuguese and Spanish Delegations in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly;
6. To this end, take early action on Recommendation 467;
7. Promote a more active public information policy on the requirements of European security;
8. Define without delay a draft statute for a European institute for advanced security studies and submit it to the Assembly for a joint examination of the implications of its implementation;

II

ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Specify as soon as possible which provisions of the modified Brussels Treaty it intends to revise;
2. Adopt no provision which might weaken the impact of Article V;
3. Retain in full the preamble and Articles I, II and III of the treaty which make WEU an essential factor in the establishment of a European union;
4. Maintain the provision in Article IX for the Assembly to be composed of delegations from the national parliaments of member countries.

Explanatory Memorandum

(submitted by Mr. van der Sanden, Rapporteur)

PART ONE

I. Introduction

1. The present report has to take account of a large number of events that have occurred in WEU in recent months. After the signing of the act of accession of Portugal and Spain to the modified Brussels Treaty, including the decision to revise the treaty, applications from Turkey and then Greece to join WEU, the arrival at the Office of the Clerk of the second part of the thirty-fourth annual report of the Council, the adoption by the Presidential Committee of a recommendation on the restructuring of the WEU ministerial organs, the colloquy on the future of European security held in Florence from 21st to 23rd March and then the ministerial meeting in London on 3rd April 1989, followed by a joint meeting with two Assembly committees on 4th April, constitute new factors which compelled your Rapporteur to make major changes to the text he submitted on 23rd February for a first reading by the General Affairs Committee. He has also had to take account of remarks made by several committee members at that meeting.

2. Two mandates were also assigned to the General Affairs Committee. One was to deal with the problem of "the integration of Europe with a view to European union: WEU's rôle" – the question raised by Mr. Pannella and others in the motion for a resolution published as Document 1168 and referred to the General Affairs Committee by Presidential Committee decision of 19th January 1989. The other was to explain the Assembly's views on proposals to create a European institute for advanced security studies in accordance with the wish expressed by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chairman-in-Office of the Council, at the joint meeting on 4th April 1989. On this last point, your Rapporteur has to note that compliance with this request would have been easier if the texts of proposals made to the Council had been transmitted to the Assembly. He has to base his thinking on vague, indirect echoes about a question which the Permanent Council is required to study on the basis of written and probably detailed documents.

3. The colloquy on the future of European security organised by the General Affairs Committee allowed a wide-ranging discussion to be held on the basis of five topics, remarkably well introduced by five particularly competent rapporteurs. The synthesis was presented with talent and authority by Mr. Alfred Cahen, Secretary-General of WEU. Since the proceedings of

the colloquy are to be published separately, your Rapporteur has no need to present them. In the present report, he will merely draw certain conclusions more specifically related to the course that should now be set for WEU.

II. The problems

4. Since 1984, the question of reactivating WEU has been put openly but answered only in part, allowing various contradictory interpretations or even proposals, to the point that the reality of reactivation, proclaimed by official Council representatives, is being questioned with increasing frequency by the media and even by ministers of member countries and the President of the French Republic in an address to the Institut des hautes études de défense nationale in Paris in October 1988. The prospect of revising the texts resulting from the 1954 Paris Agreements makes it necessary to identify first the reasons calling for and still compelling reactivation and then the obstacles which have so far limited its impact before examining what it is now possible and desirable to achieve.

5. Some of the reasons why the governments wished to reactivate WEU are permanent, although they are not all accorded equal importance, others are more occasional. The following are worthy of note:

6. (i) The idea already put forward by Mr. Jobert, then Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, when addressing the Assembly in 1973, that the Western European countries need a forum in which to examine together their security problems. However, the development of European political consultations since then could, by and large, meet that requirement. Moreover, the NATO authorities, the United States Government and the governments of several European countries, whether members of WEU or not, have long expressed serious reservations about anything that might seem to indicate a division within NATO or cause such a division. At the same time, the fact that France's withdrawal from the integrated military structures brought about such a division gave WEU a special rôle as a link between France and NATO. It was thus in these various contexts that in 1984 the governments agreed to develop intergovernmental consultations in the framework of the modified Brussels Treaty.

7. The question is whether such consultations between the WEU member countries are still desirable. Can they be held in the framework

of the Community in spite of the fact that several of its members seem hardly prepared to share the views of the Nine on security matters? This view was strongly upheld by General Copel of France in his information letter *Défense active* of 15th January 1989, in which he wrote: "All WEU's responsibilities must be quite simply transferred to the European Communities", which he considers quite feasible "with a little determination and a lot of good will". This view also underlies the motion for a resolution in Document 1168 tabled in the Assembly on 5th December 1988, calling for a new plan for European union to be drawn up in 1989 by the European Parliament to be elected next June in accordance with the broad lines of the draft treaty already approved by the European Parliament on 14th February 1984. This motion:

"Wishes this new draft treaty, covering several areas of political integration, including security and defence, to be ratified by member states at an early date;

Affirms formally that the completion of this process, vital for a closer union of European nations, must mean the European union (United States of Europe) progressively assuming the prerogatives and duties now exercised by WEU."

However, the treaties establishing the European Community give it no responsibility for defence matters and there is every reason to think that some WEU member governments are not at all anxious to extend Community prerogatives in that direction. It is even more probable that those member countries of the Community that have not applied for membership of WEU, in particular Ireland, are not prepared to agree to the Community being extended to include defence. Austria's application for membership of the Community, which will probably be submitted in the next few months, will force it to make a choice with enduring consequences, since Austria's neutral status is guaranteed by an international treaty which forbids it to take part in a military alliance.

8. A fact that must be noted is that, in security matters, there are very great differences of views both among governments and among the peoples of Western Europe, and institutional procedures would not suffice to overcome these differences. For instance, the Spanish people in no way share the views of representatives of French public opinion on the rôle of nuclear weapons in European security. Conversely, Spain and France hold similar views on the importance Europe should attach to the integrated military commands, whereas these views differ widely from those of most of their partners. The German people, for their part, divided between two states that would inevitably be in conflict in the event of world war, have

concepts of security and peace that are not exactly the same as those of peoples further away from a possible combat area. Finally, the Western European countries do not all have the same means of intervening outside the European continent. Some want to avoid intervention at all costs, while others consider they have vital interests to defend abroad. Thus, although five of them deployed naval forces in the Gulf in 1987 and 1988, this was merely on a basis of "co-ordination", very limited in the case of Italy and France. Integration of these armed forces would have made the operation subject to decision-taking procedures that would in any event have been too slow to allow them any chance of success and would very probably have made them ineffectual. There can be no joint defence outside Europe without a joint external policy and even the single European act lays no true foundation for such a policy.

9. The single act establishes a hierarchy of bodies designed for political co-operation: European Council, meetings of ministers for foreign affairs, Political Committee, European Correspondents' Group and groups of experts on each topic. Any decisions taken at meetings have to be taken unanimously: the governments have never agreed to majority voting procedures, thus firmly limiting Europe's decision-taking ability in this area.

10. The only innovation the single act introduced into political co-operation is the creation of a permanent secretariat to assist the presidency with the preparation and implementation of consultations, but it has no powers of initiation or implementation. It is the presidency that is entrusted with very limited powers of initiative and it represents the Twelve as a whole when a joint decision has to be implemented.

11. It should also be added at once that Article 30, paragraph 6, of the single act further reduces the scope of European political consultation where defence questions are concerned. The member states admittedly indicate in that paragraph that they "consider that closer co-operation on questions of European security would contribute in an essential way to the development of a European identity in external policy matters" but the paragraph specifies that "they are ready to co-ordinate their positions more closely on the political and economic aspects of security". The military aspects are therefore excluded, the single act not including them among the responsibilities, even potential, of the Twelve.

12. On 17th January, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain, Chairman-in-Office of the EEC, summed up the situation most realistically by saying that the time had come for the Twelve to consider going further than mere co-ordination in security matters. He said that the new impetus

being given to the dialogue with the Soviet Union and other member states of the Warsaw Pact meant that "we should be fully aware of the primordial importance of developing the security dimension in the context of the process of building a European union". When the time comes to consider the possibility of revising Title III of the single act, he added, it will be necessary to examine whether the limits imposed in Article 30 on the Twelve's co-ordination of security matters should be exceeded. "Spain's accession to WEU is the consequence of a separation whose existence is recognised in the single act and which my country wishes to be brought to an end. In the meantime, we are bound not to shirk an essential debate." The purpose of the present report is to introduce this essential debate.

13. (ii) The necessity for Europe, if it wishes to keep its armaments industries, to co-operate far more closely than in the past. In 1955, this necessity was plain to the seven WEU countries which set up the Standing Armaments Committee and it has since become more urgent. Conversely, although Article 223 of the Rome Treaty does not preclude all Community activity in security matters, in paragraph 1 it is provided that:

- "(a) no member state shall be obliged to supply information the disclosure of which it considers contrary to the essential interests of its security;
- (b) any member state may take such measures as it considers necessary for the protection of the essential interests of its security which are connected with the production of or trade in arms, munitions and war material; such measures shall not, however, adversely affect the conditions of competition in the common market regarding products which are not intended for specifically military purposes."

14. Furthermore, in Article 30, paragraph 6, of the single European act, the signatory states declare their determination "to maintain the technological and industrial conditions necessary for their security. They shall work to that end both at national level and, where appropriate, within the framework of the competent institutions and bodies", which is quite clearly non-committal. Moreover, the same paragraph ends with a remark that "nothing in this title shall impede closer co-operation in the field of security between certain of the high contracting parties within the framework of the Western European Union or the Atlantic Alliance".

15. Conversely, intergovernmental institutions other than WEU have tried to develop international co-operation in armaments matters, either in the framework of NATO or

among its European member countries. Furthermore, the creation of a single European market as from January 1993 will compel the Community to consider the problem of the armaments industries from a new angle as they become increasingly dovetailed in industrial activity with the use of a wide variety of technology in the production of armaments. The Commission of the Community is also considering introducing customs duties for imports of defence equipment by member countries, thus increasing Community resources. This is meeting with strong opposition from the United States, the main supplier of arms to member countries, as it would thus be excluded from these markets in favour of its European competitors. This is an area in which European and Atlantic interests diverge sharply.

16. At the time of the Rome declaration, the WEU member countries gave priority to the choice of the IEPG for organising European co-operation in this area, reserving for WEU a rôle of "political impetus" which the WEU Council has never explained. The Standing Armaments Committee no longer meets, except at the level of a few sub-groups, while the IEPG decided at its meeting in Seville in 1988 to set up certain structures.

17. In order to see more clearly in this area, several levels have to be circumscribed:

- (a) from an industrial standpoint, consideration should be given to the restructuring which might be carried out in the framework of the Community on the one hand and the way technological arms development programmes are accepted on the other in order to see what the next step should be. Nothing seems possible before 1992;
- (b) for military orders, there is every interest in holding exchanges of views in the widest, most flexible framework possible, and the IEPG is probably the best one;
- (c) finally, faced with a still very vague future, the WEU Council should not give up its right of initiative in fostering, encouraging and facilitating co-operation, even if it is to be developed in other forums, just as the Assembly must not, in such matters, give up hope of finding a competent partner in the Council. It has always wished the latter to report to it on the work of the IEPG in one way or another. In this connection, at the joint meeting on 4th April 1989 it received, if not an official answer, at least words of encouragement from the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Council.

18. (iii) The proposals that led directly to the reactivation of WEU date back to the time when, following NATO's twofold decision in 1979, the West, noting that the Soviet Union was continuing to deploy medium-range SS-20 missiles, decided in turn to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles on the territory of several NATO and WEU member countries. In 1983 in particular, with the encouragement of the Soviet Union, this deployment aroused a strong anti-nuclear movement in many western countries and one might have wondered whether western cohesion would survive the crisis.

19. This prompted the governments to consider whether it would be possible to pursue a coherent security policy if they could not manage to convince public opinion of the need for it. The reactivation of WEU, as envisaged in 1984, concerned the Assembly first and foremost, as it is considered to be the ideal instrument for action to promote joint defence among a public which did not seem to be very convinced. The Assembly, for its part, recalled that as a parliamentary body it would not just echo the views of the governments, but being in touch with public opinion it could make the public grasp the true dimensions of the problem through encounters with the Council, debates and dialogue, not by mere public relations methods. As your Rapporteur has already said several times, in the end it was the failure of European political consultations on security matters that gave decisive impetus to the reactivation of WEU.

20. Furthermore, WEU parliamentarians can play such a rôle because the Assembly is composed of members of national parliaments, capable of acting in their own countries to bring out the European dimension of security matters, in particular when they take part in debates and votes on defence budgets. This consideration is the basis for the Assembly's constant call for an improvement in the dialogue with the Council, a European dialogue designed to promote a European view of security problems in national parliaments.

21. (iv) There is no doubt that certain aspects of United States security policy made many Europeans want more exchanges of views on the questions thus raised.

(a) President Reagan's March 1983 announcement of his strategic defence initiative, designed to protect American territory against Soviet missiles through mastery of space, led Europeans to consult each other in WEU, on the one hand on their possible participation in the project and on the other on its probable consequences for Europe's security.

(b) The fact that the Reykjavik summit meeting in October 1986 almost led to a nuclear disarmament agreement, about which the United

States' allies had not been consulted, led the latter to try to organise themselves to give greater weight to opinions on which they could agree.

(c) The discussion that has been under way in the United States for several years about a reorientation of the country's defence policy towards Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific at the expense of the continuing presence of the American forces now in Europe has encouraged Europeans to make an effort to co-ordinate so as to compensate, as far as possible, for the weakening of the alliance if American forces were to be redeployed outside Europe.

(d) Long reluctant about the public expression of European views on security matters, the United States authorities changed their point of view sharply in 1987-88:

(i) because they saw that WEU, far from being an obstacle to their policy, could on the contrary support them, as in December 1987 when the WEU Assembly, by unanimously approving the INF agreement, helped the United States Government to convince Congress that the agreement would not estrange Europe from the United States. Similarly, WEU's action in the Gulf helped the United States administration to show that America had not taken isolated action in that region;

(ii) because they hoped WEU would be a useful partner in promoting their views, particularly on improved burden-sharing in the alliance in return for more responsibility-sharing.

22. (v) Certain threats to international peace in areas not covered by the North Atlantic Treaty led the WEU member countries to develop their consultations. These went as far as a co-ordinated mine-sweeping operation in the Gulf as from July 1988. What the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Council said on 4th April 1989 gives the impression that the Council is seriously considering giving these consultations the permanent nature they always lacked.

23. (vi) The development of détente and the extension of negotiations on conventional, nuclear and chemical disarmament are forcing Europeans to view their security from a new standpoint. As long as there is a major threat to Europe, and in particular its centre, the Atlantic Alliance, designed to meet this threat, will remain the keystone of European security.

24. If these really are the reasons that led to the reactivation of WEU, it is possible to draw a few conclusions on how a forthcoming revision of the modified Brussels Treaty should be envisaged.

(a) A revision must in no event call in question the system of security and deterrence offered by the Atlantic Alliance: the platform adopted in The Hague showed that the seven governments – or even nine, since Portugal and Spain have subscribed to that document – were convinced of this necessity.

(b) It must maintain or even develop a close association between WEU and the European Community, bearing in mind the possibility of a merger of the European organisations.

(c) It must allow détente to be continued and generalised, ensuring that twelve-power Europe does not stand in the way of the development of relations of all kinds between the two halves of Europe. In this connection, a merger of the two institutions would probably make the Soviet Union exert very strong pressure against any enlargement of the Community and slow the growth of trade between the Eastern European and Community countries.

25. The revision of the treaty should be examined in the light of these requirements.

III. The enlargement of WEU

26. Following the accession of Portugal and Spain, the question of the further enlargement of WEU has again arisen officially with the candidatures of Greece and Turkey. It may also arise in regard to Denmark and Norway, which have not applied for membership but which might possibly be invited in accordance with Article XI. Your Rapporteur has no intention of assessing the respective merits of each of these countries from the point of view of its accession to WEU but wishes to recall the fundamental questions thus raised which are not settled by the treaty.

27. Depending on whether one opts for the "European" or the "Atlantic" concept of WEU, very different conclusions may be reached on how enlargement should be envisaged. While the accession of Portugal and Spain, members of both the Community and the Atlantic Alliance, raised no questions of principle, this is not so in the other cases. Of the Community countries, three do not belong to WEU: Ireland, Denmark and Greece. Ireland does not belong to the Atlantic Alliance and is showing no intention of joining it any more than WEU. There is obviously no question of inviting it to do so and any steps by WEU to encourage its candidature could only be interpreted as an attempt to draw WEU away from the alliance. Ireland's special position is one reason why it is difficult to integrate defence questions into the European Community. But it is a fact which has to be taken into account. Denmark, for its part, while a member

of the alliance, shows no intention of developing military co-operation with members of the alliance and, as long as it has not notified its wish to do so, any approach to it would seem premature.

28. The case of Greece is obviously different since it has applied to join WEU. It should be noted, however, that its candidature raises difficulties:

(a) relations between Greece and its partners in the Atlantic Alliance have in recent years run into obstacles because Greece does not seem to be giving priority to the goals of the alliance in its force deployments, its relations with its allies, in particular the United States, or the conduct of its diplomacy;

(b) continued tension between Greece and Turkey, members of the alliance, suggests that, if one of these countries has subscribed to Article V of the modified Brussels Treaty, it might call on its WEU partners to attain aims not shared by the other members of the organisation or, in any event, its national ambitions might thereby be enhanced;

(c) the relations which Greece seems to wish to maintain with certain countries of the Middle East, including some which, in recent years, have obviously been weak in regard to terrorism, already have a paralysing effect on European political consultations. It does not seem desirable to introduce this factor of impotence into WEU;

(d) in any event, the means available to WEU members for possible action in the Eastern Mediterranean are not sufficient for them to be able to subscribe to Article V for the benefit of countries in that region.

29. An "Atlantic" concept, moreover, means examining, apart from the cases of Denmark and Greece, those of Norway, Turkey and, possibly, Iceland. So far, the latter has shown little interest in WEU which, for its part, does not have the wherewithal to make a significant contribution to its security.

30. The case of Turkey, which has applied for membership of WEU, is in a way similar to that of Greece, with the sole difference that Turkey is not a member of the European Community but provides NATO with the largest army and makes an essential contribution to western security. Conversely, the Turkish Government has sometimes reacted to threats to its security by means