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WEU's role in the organisation of European security
after the decisions taken by the European Union
in Amsterdam and by NATO in Madrid

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Mr Blaauw, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur

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Amsterdam and by NATO in Madrid*

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submitted by Mr Blaauw, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur

¹ Adopted unanimously by the Committee.

² *Members of the Committee: Mr Baumel (Chairman); MM Urbain, Blaauw (Vice-Chairmen); MM Antretter, (Alternate: Schloten), MM de Assis, Bianchi, Brancati (Alternate: Mrs Pozza Tasca), Mr Bühler, Sir Sydney Chapman (Alternate: Davis), MM Cusimano, Dias, Mrs Dumont, MM Ehrmann, Evangelisti, Eyskens, Mrs Fischer, Mr Forni, Lord Grenfell (Alternate: Mrs Fyfe), Mr Irmer, Lord Kirkhill (Alternate: O'Hera), MM Liapis, van der Linden, Van der Maelen, Marshall, Martinez, Martinez Casañ, Puche Rodriguez, Recoder (Alternate: López Henares), MM Rippinger, Roseta, Skoularikis, Vrettos, Woltjer (Alternate: Verbeek), Mr Wray (Alternate: McNamara), MM Yamgnane, Zierer, N... (Alternate: Mrs Squarcialupi).*

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

Draft Recommendation

on WEU's role in the organisation of European security after the decisions taken by the European Union in Amsterdam and by NATO in Madrid

The Assembly,

(i) Considering that the Treaty of Amsterdam has ruled out:

(a) the prospect of an immediate or early realisation of a common defence policy or a common defence within the European Union,

(b) plans for the immediate or early integration of WEU with the European Union,

but is in favour of closer cooperation between both organisations, in particular in cases when the European Union avails itself of WEU to elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the Union with defence implications;

(ii) Stressing that the incorporation of the Petersberg tasks into the Amsterdam Treaty and the fact of entrusting of WEU with additional tasks, such as providing the European Union with access to operational capability, supporting it in framing the defence aspects of its common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and providing WEU personnel for the European Union's policy planning and early warning unit make formal arrangements between both organisations a matter of urgency;

(iii) Noting that as yet there have only been occasional informal contacts between WEU and the relevant European Union bodies;

(iv) Fearing that the difficulties that the European Union has experienced so far in reaching common decisions and in reacting quickly to a particular security crisis (for example in the Balkans) will be aggravated by the extreme complexity of the draft procedure which has been framed for EU/WEU operations under Article J.7.3 of the Treaty of Amsterdam;

(v) Stressing, therefore, the need to simplify these procedures and for WEU to continue to make full use of its own powers of decision both under Article VIII.3 of the modified Brussels Treaty and in accordance with the Petersberg Declaration;

(vi) Concerned that the specific reference in the Amsterdam Treaty to the dominant role of NATO, which is where certain member states of the Union see a common defence being realised, should not be construed by the public at large as an indication that the common European defence project is being abandoned;

(vii) Welcoming the fact therefore that the Amsterdam Treaty reaffirms that its provisions shall not constitute an impediment to the development of closer cooperation between member states in the framework of WEU, on the basis of the modified Brussels Treaty, which is still the only basis in international law for the establishment of a common European defence;

(viii) Welcoming also the Declaration of the WEU Council of 22 July 1997 confirming its determination to retain the autonomous decision-making capability conferred on it by the

modified Brussels Treaty and to develop its role as the European military body for crisis management;

(ix) Noting that at their Madrid summit meeting held in July 1997 the heads of state and of government of the Atlantic Alliance member countries reiterated their resolve to build a European security and defence identity (ESDI) within NATO, but stressing that without WEU there will be no such identity;

(x) Considering that substantial impetus might be provided by increasing the number of options available to WEU, including the option approved by the Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers in Paris on 13 May 1997 (paragraph 22 of the Paris Declaration);

(xi) Recalling however that ESDI can only become a political and military reality if there is consensus that it is to be achieved by common European political will and expressed through WEU where all the European members of NATO and European Union member countries are represented;

(xii) Emphasising the need to decide on the consequences for WEU of the different ways in which NATO and the European Union proceed with their enlargement policy;

(xiii) Convinced that the current situation created by the Amsterdam Treaty and NATO decisions in Brussels, Berlin and Madrid make examination of whether, and to what extent, revision of the modified Brussels Treaty is required a matter of urgency;

(xiv) Concerned that the legal basis for participation by the associate and observer countries in WEU's activities, and particularly in the area of armaments cooperation, needs clarification;

(xv) Concerned also that public opinion in Europe seems ever more confused about how security and defence responsibilities are apportioned and increasingly unaware of Europe's requirements in this area;

(xvi) Stressing the need to make substantially more financial resources available to WEU to enable it to cope with its new responsibilities;

(xvii) Stressing also the need to develop WEU's military structures and to define the remit and composition of the Military Committee in line with WEU's new responsibilities vis-à-vis the European Union and NATO;

(xviii) Recalling the need to develop a procedure for carrying out operations whereby WEU can take charge of the deployment of an armed force in which not all member countries take part;

(xix) Convinced that obtaining the public support necessary for the many decisions that face WEU demands the involvement at the highest level of political and government representatives of its member countries;

(xx) Recalling paragraph 13 of Assembly Recommendation 556 and the Council's reply to that Recommendation,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Establish WEU as the caucus in which the European common political will required to make ESDI a political and military reality is to be achieved and expressed, and take concrete steps to build up WEU in stages as the defence component of the European Union;
2. For its next ministerial meeting prepare:
 - (a) a draft agreement, to be ratified by the relevant authorities of the countries concerned, with a view to providing a sound legal basis for full participation in WEU's activities, under the terms of the Amsterdam Treaty and the new relationship between WEU and NATO, by those associate and observer countries which at the moment cannot or will not accede to the modified Brussels Treaty;
 - (b) an opinion on whether, and to what extent, certain provisions of the modified Brussels Treaty might need to be revised or adjusted in the light of WEU's new responsibilities vis-à-vis the European Union and NATO;
 - (c) a conceptual approach to WEU's enlargement policy, to replace WEU Declaration II of December 1991 appended to the Maastricht Treaty, which seeks to achieve maximum congruence within the "WEU family", particularly in regard to enhanced relations with the associate partner countries;
 - (d) a concerted policy on relations with Russia and Ukraine;
 - (e) a proposal on a substantial increase in the financial resources to be made available to WEU to enable it to cope with its new responsibilities;
3. Establish close consultations as a matter of urgency with the relevant institutions of the European Union to define the scope of future cooperation between both organisations;
4. Carry out its resolve, as stated in its Declaration of 22 July 1997, to avail itself fully of the autonomous decision-making capability conferred on it by all relevant provisions of the modified Brussels Treaty;
5. Give practical effect to the intention it has previously expressed of supporting the United Nations and OSCE in their crisis-management tasks;
6. Complete the development of the operational capabilities of WEU and of all its subsidiary bodies;
7. Convene a Council meeting at head of state and of government level on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Brussels Treaty, in order to ratify, among other things, the political decisions set out in this Recommendation.

Explanatory Memorandum

(submitted by Mr Blaauw, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur)

1. When Mr Hoyer, German Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Germany's negotiator at the intergovernmental conference, briefed the Presidential, Defence and Political Committees of the WEU Assembly on 19 June 1997 on the results of the Amsterdam summit meeting, he remarked among other things that the prospect of a common European defence remained open. However, he added that nothing further was envisaged for the present.

2. Mr de Puig, President of the Assembly, therefore reminded member governments in his declaration to the press on 27 June 1997 that there is still much to be done to show our peoples that our nations have not abandoned the European defence project and that they stand firm in their determination to develop the means by which that project can be achieved. This will be a difficult task bearing in mind that, as the result of the intergovernmental conference on the revision of the Maastricht Treaty showed, opinions remain divided on the nature, the configuration and the political and geographical range of the project. We know now that the Treaty of Amsterdam makes no concrete provision for a common defence policy, a common defence or WEU's integration in the European Union in the immediate future or in the relatively short term. It merely provides for enhanced cooperation between both organisations, the detailed arrangements of which still have to be worked out between them.

3. At their Madrid summit meeting on 8 July 1997 however, NATO member countries reaffirmed their determination, first expressed in January 1994 in Brussels and again in the Berlin Declaration of 3 June 1996, to build and support a European security and defence identity (ESDI) within NATO. Furthermore, they recognised once again that WEU constitutes an essential element of the development of this identity. However, none of the three aforementioned texts defines what exactly is meant by the ESDI. Does it mean the same as "common defence", "common defence policy" or the "CFSP" – terms used in the Treaty of Amsterdam? Who is or represents the ESDI and who takes the necessary decisions on its behalf? Who belongs to the ESDI and who has a voice in it?

4. Does the ESDI mean NATO itself or its 14 European member countries? Is it WEU in its configuration of 10, 13, 18 or 28? Or is it the European Council of the European Union which, according to the new Article J.7 of the Amsterdam Treaty, has competence to establish general guidelines in respect of WEU for those matters regarding which the Union avails itself of WEU, and takes the final decision on whether and when the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) is to lead to a common defence? For the Atlantic Alliance, the problem mainly seems to be one of its internal structural adaptation process.

5. However, ensuring that the ESDI becomes a political reality as soon as possible is first and foremost a challenge for WEU, which is recognised as being one of its essential elements. Furthermore, the Treaty of Amsterdam has confirmed WEU's role as an integral part of the development of the European Union and has conferred upon it responsibility for providing the Union with access to an operational capability. WEU is to support the European Union in framing the defence aspects of the common foreign and security policy.

6. In its Declaration of 22 July 1997, which is to be appended to the Amsterdam Treaty, the WEU Council confirms that WEU will continue to have as its basis the modified Brussels Treaty, which implies that the WEU Council will retain its independent decision-making powers for the purpose of implementing that Treaty. At the same time, the Council reaffirmed the aim "to build up WEU as the defence component of the European Union" and to act as an essential element of the development of the ESDI within the Atlantic Alliance.

7. In addition, WEU declared its willingness to act in accordance with the guidelines set by the European Council in all cases where the European Union avails itself of WEU to elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the European Union which have defence implications, in particular in the area of "Petersberg" missions, upon which the European Union can now also decide.

8. The WEU Declaration mentions a number of decisions to be taken in order to comply with the relevant Amsterdam Treaty provisions: the Organisation must develop the role of the observer countries within it and adopt the necessary arrangements so that all European Union member states contributing to tasks undertaken by WEU at the request of the European Union can participate fully and on an equal footing in the planning and decision-making process in WEU. WEU has to draw up, together with the European Union, arrangements for enhanced cooperation between both organisations, within a year from the entry into force of the Amsterdam provisions. It is of special importance in this context to make sure that WEU personnel participate fully in the new policy planning and early warning unit to be set up by the European Union and that WEU can make suggestions to that unit for work to be undertaken.

9. New arrangements for the development of WEU's Planning Cell, Situation Centre and Satellite Centre, as well as of WEAG in view of the establishment of a European armaments agency, have to be drawn up and implemented.

10. As an essential element of the development of the European security and defence identity (ESDI) within the Atlantic Alliance, WEU is to continue to strengthen institutional and practical cooperation with NATO, particularly in the context of crisis management. In the same context it will develop its own operational role and in particular define the role and composition of the newly created Military Committee. It will draw up the necessary arrangements with the United Nations and the OSCE in order to support them in their crisis-management tasks. In so doing, WEU will have to come to an arrangement with its associate member, observer and associate partner countries as to how their participation in WEU's activities can be further enhanced.

11. However, the most important challenges with which WEU is now confronted are not addressed in the WEU Declaration of 22 July 1997. One of them is the problem of how to achieve an ESDI with a true political content based on a firm legal foundation.

12. The ESDI can only become a reality if there is European consensus and coherence in security and defence issues. Amsterdam has shown that such a consensus will not be reached in the European Union in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, even if there is a consensus in NATO to build the ESDI within the Atlantic Alliance, NATO can only help by providing the necessary structures. The political expression of the ESDI however has to be developed in and around WEU as its recognised essential component. Why WEU?

13. The Council provides the answer in its aforementioned Declaration when it observes that the WEU Council:

“today ... brings together all the Member States of the European Union and all the European Members of the Atlantic Alliance in accordance with their respective statuses. The Council also brings together those States with the Central and Eastern European States linked to the European Union by an Association Agreement and that are applicants for accession to both the European Union and the Atlantic Alliance. WEU is thus establishing itself as a genuine framework for dialogue and cooperation among Europeans on wider European security and defence issues.”

However, dialogue and cooperation alone will not be sufficient. The time has come to take decisions.

14. WEU can fulfil this fundamental task only if it strengthens its internal coherence and founds its relationship with the various categories of associate countries, which have not signed the modified Brussels Treaty, on more solid political and legal grounds. In order to strengthen this coherence, WEU should first examine whether there is now a case in the new situation for increasing the number of countries belonging to the “WEU family” that could be invited to accede to the modified Brussels Treaty in accordance with Article XI. As long as the conditions for full membership of Western European Union are not met by all the European countries participating in WEU’s activities with varying statuses, it will not be possible for them to participate fully and on an equal footing in the planning and decision-making process in WEU, unless that process is based on formal international agreements duly ratified by the competent parliamentary institutions of member countries. The “practical arrangements” referred to in the WEU Declaration of 22 July 1997 are insufficient.

15. As things stand, the legal foundation for participation by the associate and observer countries in WEU’s activities is so weak that its legitimacy can easily be contested. This situation could affect the activities of the Council, its subsidiary bodies and the Assembly. A concrete example of such legal deficiency is granting the newly created Western European Armaments Organisation (WEAO) the status of a subsidiary body of WEU on the basis of Article VIII.2 of the modified Brussels Treaty, despite the fact that three WEAO members have not signed the Treaty, nor the Agreement on the Status of Western European Union, National Representatives and International Staff signed in Paris on 11 May 1955. The replies given by the Council to Written Questions 344 and 345¹ put by Mr De Decker in this connection serve to confirm these legal inadequacies.

16. A possible solution to such problems might lie in the adaptation of the modified Brussels Treaty to the new situation. The July 1997 Declaration confirms WEU’s determination to develop its own role as the European politico-military body for crisis management and states that the Organisation will also support the United Nations and the OSCE in their crisis-management talks.

17. The Declaration affirms that in addition to its support for the common defence enshrined in Article V of the modified Brussels Treaty, “WEU takes an active role in conflict prevention and crisis management as provided for in the Petersberg Declaration”. This political determination implies that the WEU Council must retain its independent decision-making

¹ See Document A/WEU/DG [97] 20, 4 September 1997.

powers for the purpose of implementing the modified Brussels Treaty. In order to decide whether it needs to act in the area of crisis management, WEU cannot rely exclusively on a political request from the European Union. It will therefore be necessary to make full use of Article VIII.3 of the modified Brussels Treaty.

18. The wording of this article might be tightened to include the essential elements of the Petersberg Declaration and make explicit reference to the possibility of WEU's agreed determination to support the United Nations and the OSCE in crisis management becoming a formal treaty obligation. Furthermore, in view of the change in the nature of WEU's cooperation with NATO, the wording of Article IV of the modified Brussels Treaty might also be reexamined.

19. The Assembly had already previously envisaged the need for the modified Brussels Treaty to be revised and had submitted recommendations to this effect in 1990 (Recommendations 490 and 491) and 1991 (Recommendation 504). The Council felt at that juncture that the time was not ripe for any such revision. Since then several countries have taken the view that WEU's possible merger with the European Union would in itself lead to a review of the Treaty and that this should not be undertaken within WEU's existing framework.

20. It became clear from the Amsterdam summit that the projected merger would not take place within the next few years. However the machinery set up by the modified Brussels Treaty and its associated agreements is hardly in tune with the reality of present-day Europe. The fact that only 10 of WEU's 28 participant nations have signed the Treaty is ample proof of this.

21. The argument that any challenge to the Treaty and Article V thereof would be dangerous to Europe's security certainly deserves ample consideration. But the involvement in WEU's activities of countries not party to the Treaty has opened up a gap between the law and reality that continues to widen. In order to bridge that gap, it is possible to contemplate concluding an agreement that would place a real commitment on countries involved in WEU's activities to move towards a common security policy without their necessarily having to accede to the modified Brussels Treaty. Such an agreement would need to be ratified by the relevant authorities in the countries concerned.

22. Any such agreement should cover the following:

- establishment of a European security policy in conjunction with the European Union. In this respect it is of particular importance to give all WEU associate countries which are applicants for membership to the European Union but which do not yet fulfil all the necessary criteria laid down by it for joining the first pillar, the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in the framework of the *second pillar*, particularly in the European Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the relevant structures and institutions. Such a procedure could considerably enhance cooperation between WEU and the European Union in establishing a joint policy without waiting until the complex enlargement process of the European Union has run its course;
- clarification of the rights and prerogatives of associate members, observers, associate partners and WEAO members in each WEU structure so as to ensure that

in the areas of their involvement in WEU's activities they are, to all intents and purposes, on an equal footing with member countries;

- total or partial extension of the 11 May 1955 Agreement to those countries;
- obligations of WEU participating countries as regards the military measures some of them may take in the framework of the Petersberg tasks;
- obligations towards NATO of countries participating in WEU activities.

23. A procedure needs to be developed for carrying out operations whereby WEU bodies can take charge of deployment of an armed force in which not all member countries take part or where non-member countries may be involved. It should be recalled that any operation according to this model is covered fully by Article VIII.3 of the modified Brussels Treaty.

24. Resources, in particular financial resources, made available to WEU by the member, associate member, observer and associate partner countries should be substantially increased to enable the Organisation to cope with its new responsibilities, and costs shared proportionately to the use made of each WEU body by the countries concerned.

25. The general public in Europe appears to be increasingly unaware of Europe's security and defence requirements and this has led to a substantial fall in defence spending in practically all European countries in recent years. This development is beginning to take its toll on their armed forces capability which looks set to decline further over the next few years.

26. Cutbacks of this kind threaten to force Europe irretrievably into dependency on external powers that have had the foresight to build up their defence resources to levels that are essential in view of developments in modern technology.

27. Last but not least, the problem of WEU's enlargement has to be examined in a new light. In Madrid, NATO invited Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, all three being WEU associate partner countries, to become full members of the Alliance. At the same time, it reaffirmed that NATO remains open to new members and that no European democratic country, regardless of its geographic location, that expressed an interest in becoming a NATO member would be excluded from consideration. NATO's enlargement process is to be reviewed in 1999 with particular regard to Romania and Slovenia.

28. In another context, on 15 July 1997 the European Commission proposed to the European Union that it start negotiations for the admission of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia to the European Union. A decision on this proposal is to be taken at the next EU summit meeting, which is to be held in Luxembourg in November. This decision will however be complicated by several new developments: first, a group of three countries – Belgium, France and Italy – has taken an initiative with a view to completing the internal institutional reform of the European Union before beginning the enlargement process. This idea has been rejected in particular by the German Government. On the other hand, Germany and the Netherlands, as firm supporters of the European Union opening up to central European countries, strongly advocate a revision of the financial rules of the Union and have both indicated that they wish to reduce considerably the amount of their financial contributions to the EU's budget. This new attitude may have consequences for the position to be adopted

by those member countries which benefit most from the European Union budget, as regards the Union's enlargement towards central and eastern Europe.

29. In any case, WEU's enlargement policy is bound to be affected by the processes of enlargement in NATO and the European Union between which there is no real parallelism at the moment. The programme of the German WEU Presidency envisages a further deepening of the involvement of the associate partner countries, particularly in WEU's military cooperation activities. According to the WEU Declaration of 22 July 1997, WEU will examine how to strengthen the associate partners' participation in an increasing number of activities.

30. However, it would appear to be essential for WEU to review its enlargement policy as a whole, as the Assembly has already proposed in a number of its recommendations. At the moment, the three central European countries invited to become members of both NATO and the European Union have good prospects of becoming full members of WEU as well.

31. To the extent that WEU is to be considered as an essential component of the European security and defence identity (ESDI) within NATO, it will have to take a political decision on which countries are to be fully part of that identity on an equal footing. The new article J.7 of the Amsterdam Treaty stipulates that the policy of the European Union "shall respect the obligations of certain member states, which see their common defence realised in NATO, under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework".

32. The new situation requires, in particular, a review of the role of the associate member countries and of the observer countries. As member countries of NATO, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Turkey played a part in the Alliance's decision to create the CJTF process and to invite Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic to join NATO. They thus paved the way for these central European countries to become full members of WEU, once members of the European Union.

33. In this connection, it is useful to recall the text of Declaration II (December 1991) by the WEU member countries, which is appended to the Maastricht Treaty and states:

"The member states of WEU welcome the development of the European security and defence identity. They are determined, taking into account the role of WEU as the defence component of the European Union and as the means to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance, to put the relationship between WEU and the other European states on a new basis for the sake of stability and security in Europe. In this spirit, they propose the following:

'States which are members of the European Union are invited to accede to WEU on conditions to be agreed in accordance with Article XI of the modified Brussels Treaty, or to become observers if they so wish. Simultaneously, other European member states of NATO are invited to become associate members of WEU in a way which will give them the possibility of participating fully in the activities of WEU.' ..."

34. But the question is whether the 1991 WEU Declaration has now been overtaken by the Treaty of Amsterdam and whether the WEU Declaration of 22 July 1997 is intended to replace it entirely. If this is so, it has to be noted that the latter says nothing about the criteria for WEU enlargement in the light of the new situation.

35. Is it necessary to define new criteria? The problem is strongly linked with the question of what the creation of a European security and defence identity (ESDI) means. Although no official definition exists, Anthony Cragg, NATO's Assistant Secretary-General for defence planning and operations recently described it as follows in an article in the *NATO Review*²:

“A major element of the transformation of the Alliance has been the steady strengthening of its links with WEU and the search for practical means to enable NATO to support WEU-led operations in the fields defined in the WEU's June 1992 Petersberg Declaration, such as conflict prevention, crisis-management and humanitarian operations. At the same time, the European allies have underlined their commitment to strengthening the effectiveness of the contribution which they bring to the Alliance as an expression of shared responsibilities and in order to strengthen the transatlantic link. ESDI is, therefore, being developed within NATO to enable the European allies to support a WEU-led operation by drawing, with the agreement of the North Atlantic Council, on NATO's command structures, planning capability and military assets...”

36. If ESDI is to be understood in this limited sense, the WEU Council seems to have already taken the necessary steps in order to implement the ESDI project as a part of NATO's internal adaptation: WEU agreed in April 1997 that all European NATO members which have not signed the modified Brussels Treaty (Norway, Iceland and Turkey as WEU associate member countries and Denmark as a WEU observer country) can participate fully in WEU's decision-making process where WEU mounts an operation using NATO's operational assets to which the aforementioned countries will be contributing.

37. But how will they take part in missions carried out by WEU if WEU decides not to use NATO's operational assets but only those assets made available to it by WEU countries? Two scenarios are possible in this context: either WEU acts at the request of the European Union in which the associate member countries have no voice, or WEU decides to act on its own behalf. In both cases the associate member countries have only a limited voice in the decision-making process in WEU even if they wish to participate in the operation.

38. With regard to the future role of European Union member states which have chosen observer status in WEU and do not belong to NATO, the situation is quite different. According to Article J.7 of the Amsterdam Treaty and the WEU Declaration of 22 July 1997, they will be able to participate fully in Petersberg missions organised by WEU at the request of the European Union and, if they contribute to the relevant missions, they can also participate fully and on an equal footing in the planning and decision-making process within WEU. If the mission is to be carried out without using NATO assets, the observer countries consequently have a better position in WEU than the associate member countries.

39. If the operation is to be carried out with the support of NATO's operational assets, the observer countries in WEU have the same rights of participation in the WEU decision-making process as the associate member countries. In such cases however, NATO has to make specific arrangements with the relevant observer countries. Recourse to WEU by the European Union may still give rise to reservations within NATO, in particular on the part of the United States

² *NATO Review* No. 4, July-August 1997, page 34.

which might feel uncomfortable about WEU being given instructions by a European Council including countries that are not in NATO and are neutral³.

40. Regarding the future role of the central European countries that are WEU associate partners, WEU is again faced with the challenge of taking a decision on the consequences for its own enlargement policy of the incoherence between NATO and European Union enlargement. In this context WEU has to consider many new elements:

- the number of candidates for membership of NATO and European Union is not congruent with those countries which have a status of associate partnership in WEU⁴;
- NATO has decided to proceed with enlargement in waves although it underlines that every candidate is examined on its own merits;
- the European Union will decide in November on the first wave of its enlargement process;
- the criteria for NATO and European Union enlargement are different;
- NATO has created a new Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) which is to replace the former North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). It is composed of 44 countries, including 16 NATO member countries, 10 WEU associate partner countries, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 4 neutral countries – Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland (which had only observer status in the former NACC) – and 12 member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS);
- NATO has also created an enhanced Partnership for Peace programme with the same membership as the EAPC;
- on 27 May 1997, a Founding Act on mutual relations, cooperation and security between NATO and Russia was signed. However, the nature of the future relationship between NATO and Russia is far from clear. Even though Russia itself has not yet established its definitive approach, it is interesting to note that from the outset even Russian membership of NATO has never been excluded by the Alliance;
- on 9 July 1997, a Charter of distinctive partnership between NATO and Ukraine was signed at the Alliance's Madrid summit meeting;
- both NATO and the European Union have initiated a Mediterranean dialogue based on different and non-harmonised criteria. The role of WEU in this context remains marginal.

³ See the discussion at the Seminar organised by the WEU Institute for Security Studies on 21-22 April 1997 on "CJTFs" – a lifeline for a European defence policy?"

⁴ There are 12 candidates for NATO membership: the 10 WEU associate partner countries plus Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Applicants for European Union membership are the 10 WEU associate partner countries plus Turkey and Cyprus.

41. Will it now be necessary for WEU to divide the 10 associate partner countries into different groups and categories? What are WEU's criteria for its enlargement to central Europe? They cannot simply be those of NATO or those applied by the European Union. WEU provides the link between NATO and the European Union and should adopt a policy which ensures maximum coherence within the "WEU family", in particular regarding its future relations with the central European countries. This requires important and difficult political decisions. Furthermore, WEU has to take a political decision on how and on what basis it will establish its future relations with Russia, Ukraine and other member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

42. All these new developments demonstrate that WEU has to take decisions on new criteria for its enlargement policy. This question cannot be reduced to purely technical and structural adaptation measures as the WEU Council and its member governments seem to have envisaged so far. It is a highly political problem which must be settled at the highest political level.

43. The number of important issues involved in developing a European security system, combined with the need for wide public support, require our political leaders to take the appropriate action. A Council meeting at head of state and of government level would provide a spectacular demonstration of the determination to achieve it, and the fiftieth anniversary of the modified Brussels Treaty on 17 March 1998, which the Council itself has earmarked for WEU's take-off, could provide the occasion.

44. This is an ambitious enough programme and one whose preparation is sufficiently advanced for its solemn adoption by WEU member states. Such an event would provide an opportunity to inform the wider public about the implications of a security and defence policy for Europe in the scenario that has emerged as a result of the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact. The solemnity which marks a meeting of heads of state and of government would be the most appropriate way of attracting media attention and nations' interest in this endeavour for which there has to be widespread support if it is to succeed in a Europe where the cement that binds the continent as a whole is essentially the practice of democracy.