



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT



PRESS RELEASE

10091/92 (Presse 219)

1623rd Council meeting

- INDUSTRY -

Brussels, 24 November 1992

President : Mr Michael HESELTINE,

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry  
of the United Kingdom

10091/92 (Presse 219 - G)

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The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Melchior WATHELET

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Economic affairs

Denmark:

Mrs Anne-Birgitte LUNDHOLT

Minister for Industry

Germany:

Mr Johann EEKHOFF

State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs

Greece:

Mr Ioannis PALAIOKRASSAS

Minister for Finance

Spain:

Mr Claudio ARANZADI

Mr Alvaro ESPINA

Minister for Industry and Energy

State Secretary for Industry

France:

Mr Dominique STRAUSS-KAHN

Minister with responsibility for Industry and Foreign Trade

Ireland:

Mr Eamonn RYAN

Deputy Permanent Representative

Italy:

Mr Giuseppe GUARINO

Minister for Industry

Luxembourg:

Mr Robert GOEBBELS

Minister for Economic Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr J.E. ANDRIESSEN

Minister for Economic Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Luis MIRA AMARAL

Minister for Industry and Energy

United Kingdom:

Mr Michael HESELTINE

Mr Timothy SAINSBURY

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

Minister of State for Trade and Industry

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Commission:

Mr Martin BANGEMANN

Vice-President

Sir Leon BRITTAN

Vice-President

Mr Filippo Maria PANDOLFI

Vice-President

Mr Antonio CARDOSO E CUNHA

Member

Mr Peter SCHMIDHUBER

Member

**ADMINISTRATIVE SIMPLIFICATION FOR ENTERPRISES, ESPECIALLY SMEs**

The Council, after having taken note of a report by the Commission on administrative simplification and the need to minimise burdens on enterprises, especially SMEs, arising from Community legislation, adopted the following Resolution:

**"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

1. Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,
2. Having regard to the Council Resolution of 30 June 1988 on the improvement of the business environment,
3. Having regard to the Council Decision of 28 July 1989 on the improvement of the business environment and the promotion of the development of enterprises, and in particular small and medium sized enterprises, in the Community,
4. Having regard to the Council Recommendation of 28 May 1990 relating to the implementation of policy of administrative simplification in favour of small and medium sized enterprises in the Member States,
5. Having regard to the Commission Communication entitled "Industrial Policy in an open and competitive environment" (10200/90) the conclusions of which were approved by the Council on 26 November 1990, and particularly the principle that Community industrial policy be implemented through the creation of a favourable environment for firms' initiatives,
6. Having regard to the undertaking of the Commission at the European Council on 10 December 1991 to take account in legislative proposals of the costs and benefits of Community legislation through any consultations it considers necessary and by strengthening its existing system of impact assessments,
7. Having regard to the Council Resolution of 17 June 1992 on Community action to support enterprises in particular small and medium-sized enterprises including craft industry enterprises,
8. Having regard to the declaration at the European Council on 16 October 1992 "welcoming the Commission's offer to consult more widely before proposing legislation, which could include consultation with all the Member States and a more systematic use of consultation documents (Green Papers)",
9. Acknowledging that the development of small and medium sized enterprises is of great importance in increasing the competitiveness of the European economy and the economic cohesion of the Community,
10. Acknowledging that legislation can cause burdens for all enterprises and that the consequent costs for small and medium sized enterprises may sometimes be disproportionately high,
11. Acknowledging the benefit for enterprises of a framework of legislation which is simple, consistent and coherent,
12. Acknowledging that legislation adopted should be only that which is necessary, and should be a proportionate response to the need or opportunity addressed,

13. **Recognising that unjustified burdens on administrations as well as on enterprises should be avoided,**
14. **RECOGNISES that effective consultation with parties concerned on new legislation is an integral part of ensuring that legislation does not burden business unnecessarily and that consultative documents produced at an early stage in the consideration of legislation can serve as an effective means of consultation;**
15. **EMPHASISES the importance of the Commission's impact assessment system for ensuring proper consideration of legislative proposals and the need for assessments to be properly drawn up on the basis of full consultation with appropriate business organisations (including those representing small and medium sized enterprises) and other interested parties;**
16. **WELCOMES the Commission's report on Administrative Simplification in the Community, including the Guidelines for Future Action and, in particular, the Commission's intentions:**
  - a) **to consult thoroughly with interested parties, and especially with small and medium sized enterprise representatives, from the beginning of the consideration of new proposals for, and changes to, Community legislation;**
  - b) **to ensure that impact assessments are revised when substantial amendments to proposals are accepted by the Commission, in the context of the inter-institutional legislative process;**
  - c) **to make known in the publication of the annual legislative programme of the Community the proposals on which it has been agreed that an impact assessment should be completed ;**
  - d) **to encourage the exchange of ideas between Member States, including convening meetings between Member States and the Commission; and, in addition;**
17. **INVITES THE COMMISSION**
  - a) **to ensure that full account is taken of the costs and benefits to enterprises by preparing an impact assessment on all Commission proposals which may give rise to a substantial burden for enterprises;**
  - b) **to ensure the appropriate publication in the Official Journal of a list of those proposals on which an impact assessment is to be completed and for a reference to be made to the assessment when the proposal is published in the Official Journal; that the impact assessments will be made available to interested parties upon request; and that impact assessments are 'revised when substantial amendments to proposals are accepted by the Commission, in the context of the inter-institutional legislative process;**
  - c) **to indicate at the earliest possible time, before any measure which was not included in the Commission's Work Programme is proposed, whether that proposal will be the subject of an impact assessment;**
  - d) **to collect information on the impact on enterprises of existing Community legislation in the light of experience gained from implementation, and to formulate proposals to reduce the burden to a minimum consistent with achieving the legislative objectives;**
  - e) **to produce a report every three years on administrative simplification in the Commission and in Member States;**

- f) to ensure that an impact assessment is available whenever the Council acts on Commission proposals which may give rise to a substantial burden for enterprises;

**18. UNDERTAKES**

- a) to continue to take full account of the Commission's impact assessments in discussions of legislative proposals in the Council;
- b) to indicate to the Commission any other legislative proposals on which it thinks there should be an impact assessment, as soon as possible after the publication of the information outlined in 16 (c);
- c) to discuss the effectiveness of the impact assessment system regularly ;
- d) to avoid all unjustified burden on enterprises in its decisions on the Commission's proposals; and, in addition;

**19. INVITES THE MEMBER STATES**

- a) to continue to work in co-operation with the Commission and to encourage appropriate business organisations to contribute to the assessment of the costs and benefits for enterprises related to the potential burden of proposed legislation, with a view to minimising the consequent burdens at both Community and national levels;
- b) to take into account the impact on enterprises of Member States' plans for implementation and enforcement of Community legislation when assessing potential burdens and
- c) to encourage the development of best practice including the best methodology notably on cost/benefit analysis by participation in discussions between Member States and with the Commission."

**INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

The Council had an exchange of views on the Commission communication on industrial competitiveness and environmental protection, after which it adopted the following Resolution:

**"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to the Communication entitled "Industrial Policy in an Open and Competitive Environment: Guidelines for a Community approach" presented by the Commission on 20 November 1990,

Having regard to the Programme entitled "Towards Sustainability" presented by the Commission on 29 April 1992,

Having regard to relevant international agreements, and in particular the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, 3 - 14 June 1992,

Whereas the Community and its Member States subscribed to the Declaration and Agenda 21 which are aimed at achieving sustainable patterns of development worldwide and which recognise the importance of major groups and in particular the role of industry in achieving sustainable growth,

Whereas Article 130R of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, sets out the objectives of the Community relating to the environment and the principles and factors which shall be taken into account in preparing action to achieve those objectives; and whereas the Community shall take action to the extent that the objectives can be attained better at Community level than at the level of individual Member States;

Acknowledging that environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definitions and implementation of other Community policies ;

Acknowledging the contribution which healthy and sustainable growth can make to providing the resources and know-how needed to improve the environment and the central importance of industry and industrial competitiveness to achieving such growth;

Acknowledging that small and medium sized enterprises as well as large enterprises must play a part in protecting and improving the environment in order to achieve sustainable development;

Acknowledging that policies to protect and improve the environment can stimulate the development and use of more efficient processes and create markets for new products and processes as well as adding to the costs of industry ;

Acknowledging the existence of growing public pressure for improvement in industry's environmental performance and of a desire for products which have less adverse impact on the environment;

Acknowledging that the development and implementation of measures to protect and improve the environment should take into account the nature of the problem to be addressed, the efficiency of the measures and the potential benefits and costs of action or lack of action;

Acknowledging that measures shall also seek to improve the competitive position of EC industry in world markets ;

Acknowledging that such measures which distort competition within the Community or restrict trade must nonetheless be avoided in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty;

Acknowledging that the Community's policy for the environment must take account of the balanced development of its regions and recognising that the Cohesion Fund to be established can make a clear contribution to improving environmental protection and industrial competitiveness in the less developed regions and regions undergoing reconversion ;

HAS ADOPTED THIS RESOLUTION:

THE COUNCIL

1. Welcomes the Communication on Industrial Competitiveness and Environmental Protection adopted by the Commission on 4 November 1992 and agrees that close coordination between policies for industry and the environment is essential;
2. Affirms its commitment to integrating environmental objectives into policies affecting industry; considers that industry should take into account environmental considerations into its own strategies and calls on it to develop and adopt clean or cleaner available processes and products and to develop appropriate internal management systems;
3. Considers that a preventative and market-based approach to environmental protection can be beneficial to industrial competitiveness and should be adopted whenever possible;
4. Affirms its commitment to enhanced industrial competitiveness coupled with a high level of environmental protection and declares that it will consider further how this is to be achieved;
5. Welcomes the Commission's intention, as indicated by the Programme "Towards Sustainability", to establish clear, long term environmental objectives for industry, and considers that to play its full part in achieving sustainable development, industry, particularly small and medium sized enterprises must be closely involved from the outset in a dialogue on the development of policies to achieve those objectives;
6. Recognises that economic instruments to provide incentives for improved environmental performance and voluntary action by industry, including agreements between industry and Government provided they are implemented effectively and are compatible with the competition rules of the EEC Treaty, may achieve progress towards the Community's environmental objectives more cost-effectively than compulsory environmental provisions; and considers that such alternative approaches should always be examined as an option to achieve the most appropriate mix of instruments;
7. Considers that measures to achieve the Community's environmental objectives should be coherent, predictable and practicable for industry, taking into particular account the specific needs of small and medium sized enterprises and the environmental conditions of the various regions of the Community and must be enforced consistently in all parts of the Community;
8. Considers that there is a need for improved and systematic methods of assessing the benefit of measures to protect and improve the environment and their costs and benefits to industry;
9. Considers that, as proposals aimed at improving and protecting the environment are of such importance to industry, general procedures concerning the preparation and publication of impact assessments should be followed in most cases;
10. Considers that there is a need for more intensified information to industry on the potential benefits to its competitiveness of the development and use of cleaner technologies;
11. Considers it important that the relationship between trade policy and the environment should be clarified, affirms its intention to cooperate with the work in this area in OECD, GATT and other international fora, and agrees to intensify its examination of this issue;

12. Considers that competition within the Community will be improved if industrial and private consumers are provided with more reliable and consistent information on the environmental performance of firms and products;
13. Affirms its commitment to the polluter pays principle;
14. Considers that in certain areas there is a need also for an improved statistical framework and for clarification of the scope and size of the Community market for environmental technologies;
15. INVITES THE COMMISSION TO
- i) promote an effective dialogue with industry and ensure that general procedures concerning consultation with interested parties, particularly small and medium sized enterprises, are followed in relation to its new proposals for legislation or other instruments to implement environmental policy;
  - ii) have regard to the most cost-effective instruments to achieve the Community's environmental policy objectives, taking into account, in particular, the scope for voluntary action by industry and the advantages of economic instruments as an alternative or complement to regulation;
  - iii) have regard to the balance between the costs to industry, including small and medium sized enterprises, of measures to protect and improve the environment and their benefits to industry and the environment;
  - iv) develop, as a matter of urgency, in consultation with Member States and other interested parties, improved and systematic methods for determining the best instrument or mix of instruments to give effect to environmental policies and for assessing the costs to industry and benefits to the environment of those policies;
  - v) ensure that measures to protect and improve the environment provide maximum flexibility for industry to develop and adopt the most appropriate and economically feasible technologies and techniques for achieving environmental targets based on effective and clean technology;
  - vi) consider further and so far as necessary how the statistical framework required to inform the Community's policies towards the environment and the environmental technology industry might be improved;
16. INVITES THE COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES TO:
- a) cooperate to encourage the development of environmental technologies, including cleaner technologies and their diffusion to industry, including to small and medium sized enterprises, in all regions of the Community;
  - b) give greater emphasis to the development of environmental technologies including cleaner technologies within existing or planned programmes for the support of research and development relevant to industrial processes;
  - c) cooperate to maintain the integrity of the internal market whilst promoting protection of the environment at a high level by avoiding the creation of new trade barriers at national level;
  - d) encourage standards-making bodies at national and international level to give adequate weight to environmental considerations in the development of industry standards;



- e) give greater priority to ensuring, for example by Ecolabelling, that consumers receive information on the environmental performance of products which is reliable and consistent throughout the Community;
- f) cooperate to ensure compatibility between an open trade policy and protection of the environment and to avoid unilateral trade measures.

17. DECLARES its intention to consider these issues further in the first half of 1993."

**ECSC TREATY AND FINANCING ACTIVITIES - Council Conclusions**

The Council had a debate on the financing activities within the framework of the ECSC Treaty on the basis of a Commission communication, after which it adopted following conclusions:

"The Council reaffirms the conclusion reached at its meeting on 29 April 1991 supporting the Commission's view that the ECSC Treaty should continue until its expiry in 2002, with an increasingly flexible application of its provisions in the interim. The Council recalls its view that the Commission should undertake a more detailed analysis of the implications, and looks forward to studying that analysis as soon as possible.

The Council recognises the need to work towards phasing out the regime established by the ECSC Treaty, so that coal and steel industries can be treated in the same way as other industries e.g. in the area of competition policy.

The Council recognises that the Community's coal and steel industries are currently experiencing severe difficulties which have led to calls for ECSC assistance towards, inter alia, the restructuring of the industries, and the associated social costs.

The Council recalls the frequently expressed view of the industries that the levy hinders competitiveness and should be ended and the reserves used for the benefit of the industries. It welcomes the small reductions made in recent years in the rate of the levy.

The Council considers that it is essential to examine the efficacy of ECSC financial mechanisms and the arguments for and against their continuation. Moreover, it believes that a clear picture of the size and shape of ECSC financing activities during the period to 2002 is indispensable to the proper consideration of individual financing proposals.

The Council welcomes the increased flexibility which the Commission has shown in its application of the ECSC Treaty. The Council encourages the Commission to apply the ECSC provisions in order to take account of developments in the market.

The Council calls on the Commission to:

- make the most substantial possible reductions in the levy in order to achieve a rapid phasing out and make proposals for using the reserves, in the transitional period, in the way most suitable directly and indirectly for the industries concerned in order to ensure a smooth transition to the period post 2002 including a rapid reduction of ECSC lending and borrowing activities;
- consider the phasing out of Article 54 loans, bearing in mind that this may be of limited benefit to the industries in particular those loans relating to encouraging consumption;
- examine the continued need for Article 56 loans, bearing in mind the view of some Member States that there is little justification for interest subsidies on such loans, and the view of others that there are considerable benefit;
- take account of the social aspects in considering ECSC financial matters;
- examine ways in which the financial bodies, among them the EIB could take over some ECSC financing activities without excluding the possibility of making available reserves backing up such activities in the run-up to 2002;
- examine ways in which current ECSC research activities could be brought within the EC framework, bearing in mind the importance which the Council attaches to these activities;

The Council notes that the Commission has just agreed detailed communications on this issue and the wider question of problems in the steel industry, and undertakes to consider these in detail in the first half of 1993."

## **STEEL**

1. The Council heard a statement by Vice-President BANGEMANN on the Commission communication concerning the need for further restructuring of the steel industry in order to boost competitiveness in that sector.

The Commission document presented a new overall diagnosis of the market situation and production structures, listing all the measures which the Commission would be ready to implement as rapidly as possible in order to stimulate and facilitate a new restructuring drive, while providing back-up for the measures which steel undertakings would have to take in that connection.

2. The Council also held a policy debate on the restructuring plans of the Spanish companies CSI (Corporación de la Siderurgia integral) and SIDENOR, which the Spanish Government had notified to the Commission.

In the Commission's opinion, the two plans included aid elements that were incompatible with the ECSC Treaty and the current Steel Aids Code. The Spanish Government's proposed aid measures could not therefore be authorized unless the Commission adopted a derogating decision in accordance with Article 95 of the ECSC Treaty, which required unanimity of the Council and consultation of the ECSC Consultative Committee.

3. Following discussion of these two issues, the President noted that Ministers were not prepared to accept the proposals concerning the Spanish companies' restructuring plans at today's meeting. The issues would be further explored and more information provided in bilateral discussions. The matter would be put before another meeting of the Council under the Danish Presidency when the time was ripe; this would be done either in the context of a wider response to the problems of the steel industry in Europe or by addressing the Spanish case separately.

Regarding the further restructuring of the European steel industry, the Council took note of the Commission's communication and invited the Commission to continue with its work.

The Presidency also noted that a large majority of delegations and the Commission confirmed the need for speedy and effective action concerning imports from Eastern Europe and the former USSR, compatible with the Community's international obligations.

### COMPETITION POLICY

The Council discussed the XX1st Commission report on competition policy.

The report covered competition policy vis-à-vis enterprises and state intervention, contacts with Community and other institutions, and general competition policy.

Following discussion, the Council welcomed the Commission's report and emphasized the need to continue applying Community competition policy punctiliously in every case.

### POLICY TOWARDS SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

The Council discussed policy towards small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on the basis of a Presidency note and in the light of a Commission communication on evaluation of the Community's enterprise policy.

It also noted that the Commission intended to submit a new programme for SMEs for the period 1994-1997 as part of an initiative to stimulate economic growth in the Community.

### MINING INDUSTRY

The Council noted a Commission communication setting out broad guidelines for a Community approach to the mining industries.

After a brief discussion the Council noted that the Commission intended to report to it in a year's time on progress with the work announced in its communication.

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Bruxelles, le 23 novembre 1992

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**Note BIO(92)295 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
cc: AUX MEMBRES DES SERVICES DU PORTE-PAROLE**

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**PREPARATION DU CONSEIL INDUSTRIE le 24 novembre 1992 (Michael Niebel)**

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Le Conseil du 24 novembre sera dominé par le débat sur la sidérurgie. Trois points seront au coeur des discussions:

- le futur du traité SECA
- la situation de la sidérurgie européenne
- la reconstruction de l'industrie sidérurgique espagnole.

Concernant la situation de la sidérurgie européenne la Commission vient d'adopter le 18 novembre une communication faisant une série de propositions répondant aux difficultés exprimées dans une lettre à la Commission par EUROFER. Ces propositions concernent notamment le traitement des problèmes sociaux liés à la restructuration nécessaire du secteur. La Communication est une offre politique à l'industrie. La Commission espère que le Conseil donnera un ferme soutien aux orientations de la Commission et donnera ainsi l'impulsion politique pour accélérer le processus de restructuration. Ce signal politique encouragera l'industrie à prendre rapidement les décisions douloureuses qui s'imposent.

Les Ministres auront un débat au sujet de la restructuration de la sidérurgie espagnole. Le Ministre de l'Industrie, M Claudio Aranzadi, a déjà présenté à la Commission un plan qui vise d'une part la réduction de la capacité de production, et d'autre part des aides à cette opération de restructuration. La Commission a rendu son avis sur le plan espagnol le 21 octobre, en disant qu'en ce qui concerne la Corporacion Siderurgica Integral (CSI), le plan est "viable", "courageux" et "constructif", mais que la relation entre l'intensité de l'aide et le niveau de la restructuration doit être améliorée. Pour la sidérurgie spéciale (Sidenor), la Commission propose au Conseil d'autoriser 505 MECU d'aide.

La Commission a approfondi sa déclaration sous forme de Communication au Conseil, qui sera débattue demain. Des réunions préparatoires au sein de Coreper n'ont pas réussi à trouver un consensus sur le dossier, et les positions vis-à-vis du plan espagnol restent assez divergentes. La Commission s'efforcera de trouver un consensus, mais il est possible que les Ministres ne trouvent pas l'unanimité requise pour régler ce dossier lors de la réunion de demain.

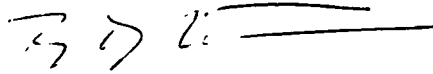
Le Conseil aura également un premier débat sur le thème compétitivité et environnement sur la base de la communication de la Commission du 11 novembre. Le Conseil devrait adopter une résolution visant à améliorer l'interface entre l'industrie et les administrations pour réconcilier les objectifs visant à renforcer la compétitivité industrielle et la protection de l'environnement.

M. Bangemann présentera au Conseil la communication sur les industries maritimes qui expose des propositions sur la base des recommandations du Forum Maritime.

M. Bangemann présentera également la communication sur les industries minières demandée par le Conseil lors de la session du 17 juin.

A l'invitation du Conseil M. Bangemann exposera les suites réservées par la Commission aux résolutions du Conseil sur les industries automobiles et électroniques.

Amitiés,



Bruno Dethomas

Bruxelles, le 23 novembre 1992

**NOTE BIO(92) 295-SUITE 1 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE PAROLE**

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**Préparation du Conseil Industrie le 24.11.92 (P. Figueiredo-Laiassy)**

Deux points concernant les PME se trouvent à l'ordre du jour des travaux des Ministres:


- **Simplification administrative en faveur des entreprises - communication de la Commission.**

Ce rapport, adopté par la Commission le 27 octobre 1992 (voir IP(92)859) fera l'objet, s'il est approuvé, d'une résolution du Conseil sur la nécessité de réduire au minimum les contraintes que la législation communautaire impose aux entreprises et en particulier aux PME. Le rapport, tout en mettant en évidence le besoin de tenir compte des effets souvent alourdissants de la législation communautaire sur le fonctionnement des PME, décrit la situation pratique dans les divers pays et suggère des mesures à prendre tant par la Commission que par les Etats membres pour remédier à cette situation.

- **Communication de la Commission sur l'évaluation du programme communautaire en faveur des PME - débat d'orientation sur la politique en faveur des PME.**

Les ministres analyseront un rapport établi par des experts externes et approuvé par la Commission le 11 novembre 1992, qui dresse un bilan globalement positif sur les diverses actions lancées par la Commission en faveur des PME et souligne la pertinence d'une politique spécifique dans ce secteur. Les actions menées par la Commission dans le domaine de la fiscalité, les fiches d'impact, Europartenariat, Interprise et les statistiques sont considérées, entre autres, comme les plus intéressantes parmi 22 actions cotées par les experts.

Les Ministres procéderont à un débat d'orientation sur cette politique. De noter que la Commission prépare un projet de communication sur le programme pluriannuel d'actions communautaires pour assurer la continuité et le renforcement d'une politique d'entreprise dans la Communauté (1994-1997) qui sera adopté lors d'une prochaine réunion de la Commission.



Amitiés  
B. Dethomas





Bruxelles, le 25 novembre 1992

**Note BIO(92) 295 (suite 2) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
cc: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE**

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**Conseil Industrie, 24. Novembre 1992 (Michael Niebel)**

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### **1. ECSC**

The Council adopted the resolution.

The Member States consider a quick decision necessary by an accelerated reduction of the ECSC levy in view of the difficult situation of the industry. The use of the ECSC reserves should benefit as well the industries involved.

### **2. Situation of European steel industry/Spanish State Aids**

The Presidency discussed the two subjects at the same time. The majority of the Member States showed great comprehension of the special situation in Spain, in particular the social aspects. A conclusive decision though could not be taken. The Presidency drew the attached conclusions after lunch.

#### **"Presidency Conclusions**

- We had a very useful discussion on Spanish Steel. Ministers were not prepared to accept the proposals today. The issues would be further explored and more information provided in bilateral discussion. The matter would be put before another meeting of the Council under Danish presidency when the time was ripe.
- This would either be in the context of a wider response to the problems of the steel industry in Europe or in anticipation of this response in respect of Spain.
- We also noted the Commission's communication on steel restructuring and invited the Commission to continue with their work".

In this respect we noted that a large majority of delegations and the Commission confirmed the need for speedy and effective action concerning inputs from PECO and CEI compatible with the Community's national obligations.


### **3. Industrial competitiveness and protection of the environment**

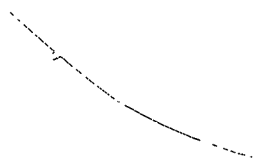
The Council adopted the resolution.

This Resolution can be considered as the first step towards follow up in that it sets out broad agreement with the Commission's approach and provides guidance for the issues on which the Council wishes the Commission to concentrate.

The Commission's Communication contains a number of detailed conclusions which will need to be looked at further in the light of the Council Resolution.

Amittés,  
Bruno De Thomas

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