

PRESS RELEASE

10523/92 (Presse 235)

1628th Council meeting

- GENERAL AFFAIRS -

- POLITICAL CO-OPERATION -

Brussels, 7 December 1992

President: Mr Douglas HURD,
Secretary of State
for Foreign and Commonwealth
Affairs of the United Kingdom

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

Belgium:

Mr Willy CLAES Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Robert URBAIN Minister for Foreign Trade and European Affairs
Mr André BOURGEOIS Minister for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses and Agriculture

Denmark:

Mr Uffe Ellemann-JENSEN Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Laurits TOERNAES Minister for Agriculture
Mr Jørgen ØSTRØM MØLLER State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Klaus KINKEL Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Jürgen W. MÖLLEMANN Federal Minister for Economic Affairs
Mr Ignaz KIECHLE Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Mrs Ursula SEILER-ALBRING Minister of State, Foreign Affairs
Mr Walter KITTEL State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry

Greece:

Mr Michel PAPACONSTANTINOU Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Christos KOSKINAS Minister for Agriculture
Mr Georges PAPASTAMKOS State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Claudio ARANZADI Minister for Industry and Energy
Mr Pedro SOLBES MIRA Minister for Agriculture
Mr Miguel Angel FEITO HERNANDEZ State Secretary for Trade
Mr Carlos WESTENDORP State Secretary for Relations with the European Communities

France:

Mr Roland DUMAS Ministre d'Etat, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mrs Elisabeth GUIGOU Minister for European Affairs
Mr Jean-Pierre SOISSON Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development
Mr Dominique STRAUSS-KAHN Minister for Industry and Foreign Trade

Ireland:

Mr David ANDREWS Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Pádraig FLYNN Minister for Industry and Commerce
Mr Joe WALSH Minister for Agriculture and Food
Mr Tom KITT Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach with special responsibility for Arts and Culture, Women's Affairs and European Affairs

Italy:

Mr Emilio COLOMBO
Mr Giovanni FONTANA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Mr Jacques POOS
Mr René STEICHEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture and
Viticulture

Netherlands:

Mr Hans VAN DEN BROEK
Mr Piet BUKMAN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture, Nature
Conservation and Fisheries
Minister for Foreign Trade

Mrs Y.C.T. VAN ROOY
Mr Piet DANKERT

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr José Manuel DURAO BARROSO
Mr Arlindo CUNHA
Mr Vitor MARTINS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture
State Secretary for European
Integration
State Secretary for Foreign Trade

Mr Antonio SOUSA

United Kingdom:

Mr Douglas HURD

Secretary of State for Foreign and
Commonwealth Affairs

Mr Tristan GAREL-JONES

Minister of State, Foreign and
Commonwealth Office

Mr David CURRY

Minister of State, Ministry of
Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

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Commission:

Mr Jacques DELORS
Mr F.H.J.J. ANDRIESSEN
Mr Ray MAC SHARRY
Mr Peter SCHMIDHUBER
Mr Abel MATUTES

President
Vice-President
Member
Member
Member

PREPARATION FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

The Council noted the details given by the Presidency concerning the programme of work of the European Council in Edinburgh on 11 and 12 December.

The European Council's discussions will focus mainly on the following issues: progress of ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and the question of Denmark, subsidiarity and transparency, the economic situation, the Delors II package, enlargement and political co-operation topics (including former Yugoslavia).

The session will begin with a meeting with the President of the European Parliament at which, for the first time, an exchange of views will be held on the main subjects to be discussed by the European Council.

IMMIGRATION POLICY AND FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

With a view to the Edinburgh European Council's discussions on immigration, the Council drew up a draft text on the principles governing the external aspects of migration policy.

The Council also arrived at a consensus on outline conclusions in the field of the free movement of persons, to be submitted to the Edinburgh European Council.

DELORS II PACKAGE

The Council, continuing its discussions held during the conclave of 27 November on the Delors Package, devoted particular attention at this meeting to the financing of the Community's internal policies and its administrative expenditure, in the light of the Presidency's latest suggestions and President DELORS' recent letter evaluating the impact of those suggestions.

At the close of the discussion, the Presidency stated that, when drawing up a revised overall compromise proposal, it would also give thought to the positions expressed by the delegations today.

The new draft overall compromise will be submitted as soon as possible with a view to the discussions at the Edinburgh European Council.

ENLARGEMENT: EFTA COUNTRIES

(a) Norway's application for accession

Having received Norway's application for accession to the European Communities, the Council decided to implement the procedures laid down by the Treaties. The Commission is therefore asked to draw up its opinion.

(b) General negotiation framework - conclusions

In the light of the conclusions of the Lisbon European Council and discussions held since, the Council reviewed the progress of preparations for the enlargement negotiations concerning the EFTA countries seeking membership of the European Union. In so doing, it was able to draw on a report from the Permanent Representatives Committee concentrating on the preparation of the "Union's general negotiation framework", which it duly noted.

The Council confirmed the favourable reception given at its meetings on 5 and 6 October and 9 November 1992 to the Commission's positive overall assessment of the applications for accession made by Austria, Sweden and Finland. It congratulated the Commission on the considerable amount of work done within a very short time and noted that the Commission intended subsequently to submit its opinion on the application by Switzerland and its opinion on the application by Norway.

The Council also noted that, in accordance with the request made by the Lisbon European Council to the Institutions, the essential elements of the "Union's general negotiation framework" had been identified. Here the Council took particular note of the three documents drawn up for this purpose, of which:

- the first contains key components for the eventual drawing up of the general statement to be made at the opening of the negotiations ⁽¹⁾;

(1) These key components, with particular reference to the description of the Treaty on European Union, will be supplemented and developed in greater detail by the complete draft of the general statement for the opening of negotiations, which will be examined by the Permanent Representatives Committee in due course. That draft will also incorporate the Union's approach concerning the CFSP and the field of Justice and Home Affairs, on which work is in progress.

- the second lays down the procedures to be followed in preparing and determining the Union's negotiating position and allocates negotiating responsibilities between the Presidency and the Commission;
- the third sets out the arrangements to be proposed to the applicant countries regarding the procedure for and organization of the negotiations.

The Council pointed out that the Lisbon European Council had agreed that the official negotiations would begin as soon as the Treaty on European Union had been ratified and an agreement had been reached on the Delors II package.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA - COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

The Council notes, and fully respects, the result of the Swiss EEA referendum.

It noted that the EEA Agreement included arrangements for considering the situation, in the event of a party failing to ratify.

Without Switzerland, the Agreement will require modifications, which will have to be satisfactorily agreed.

Subject to that agreement, the Council expressed the hope that the EEA would be rapidly set up.

It asked the Commission to have early contacts with EFTA Member States on the timing of the next steps and to report to the Foreign Affairs Council on 21 December 1992.

GATT - COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

The Council heard a report from the Commission on the latest developments on the Uruguay Round, covering inter alia an analysis of the compatibility with CAP reform of the outcome of the negotiations with the United States, including on oilseeds. In the light of points made, and questions put by delegations, it concluded that the analysis should be actively pursued in the appropriate fora, including the Agriculture Council, and due account taken of those discussions in the Geneva process.

The Council reaffirmed the great importance of non-agriculture sectors for success in the Uruguay Round. The Council considered that substantial results in these sectors were essential for the conclusion of a global and balanced agreement. Development in Geneva of the technical aspects of the agriculture dossier would have to take due account of the concrete results achieved in the other sectors.

The Council noted that examination of the overall outcome of the GATT negotiations would be necessary in due course.

TRADE POLICY

The Council held a wide-ranging exchange of views on the Commission's proposals concerning, on the one hand, the revision of the Community's decision-making procedures for instruments of commercial defence and, and on the other hand, common rules to apply from 1 January 1993 to imports from third countries with market economies and State-trading countries.

The Council referred these proposals back to COREPER for further work and agreed to place this item on its agenda again at its meeting on 21 December 1992.

The Presidency appealed to delegations and the Commission to display the degree of flexibility necessary in order to make decisive progress in future work.

STEEL - US ANTI-DUMPING AND COUNTERVAILING ACTIONS -
COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

The Council, recalling and reaffirming its conclusions on 6 October concerning the numerous anti-dumping and countervailing actions filed in the US against steel imports, notes with grave concern the US Government decision of 30 November to impose provisional countervailing duties on certain flat steel products from the European Community and elsewhere. For some Community exporters, this has resulted in very high countervailing margins.

The Council is deeply concerned by the effect that the closure of a large segment of the US market to a significant volume of steel trade would have on the Community steel industry, which is already severely hit by crisis. The Council once more strongly urges the US Government to join its main steel trading partners in working to establish a multilateral steel arrangement that is both fair and liberal.

Given the political importance of the issue, the Council invites the Commission to take up the steel issue at political level with the US Government in order to obtain the withdrawal of the anti-dumping and countervailing actions and in the meanwhile to analyse as rapidly as possible the compatibility of the US approach with the GATT subsidies code.

NUCLEAR SAFETY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE
AND IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION - COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

1. The Council recalled the conclusions on nuclear safety adopted at the European Council in Lisbon and reaffirmed its commitment to help improve nuclear safety throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In this context, the Council welcomed the work of the G-24 and the leading role of the Community in this area.

2. The Council emphasized the importance of urgent and concrete action to improve the safety of nuclear power plants since it falls below operational safety levels in practice in the Community.
3. The Council stressed the need for continuing efforts to be made under the Community's PHARE and TACIS programmes to assess the safety needs of reactors of Soviet design, to help to take specific remedial actions most urgently needed and to create or strengthen regulatory regimes in the countries concerned.
4. The Council underlined the urgency of implementing additional specific measures of practical assistance to nuclear plant operators in the region within the agreed PHARE and TACIS programmes. These measures should address the need both for operational safety improvements and for near-term technical improvements which have been identified as priorities.
5. The Council recalled the multilateral programme of action adopted by the G-24 and welcomed by the recipient countries, which should ensure the necessary co-ordination and greater efficiency in all bilateral and multilateral initiatives. It called on members of the G-24 and international organizations to ensure that their specific actions were consistent with the programme of work endorsed in the framework of the G-24.
6. The Council encouraged the Commission to continue its efforts towards the establishment of a multilateral fund and invited the Commission to be ready to contribute to that fund whenever created, in accordance with the conclusions of the Lisbon European Council. It urged other partners also to contribute significantly to this fund.
7. The Council welcomed the Commission's intention to adopt a closely co-ordinated approach to its nuclear safety activities under PHARE and TACIS. It also urged the Commission to hold regular meetings of experts from the Member States to assist, at a technical level, the Commission and the respective management committees in the preparation and implementation of these programmes.

POLITICAL CO-OPERATION

- SOMALIA

The Ministers discussed the situation in Somalia. They welcomed the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution. They adopted the annexed statement.

- FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The Ministers discussed the situation in Yugoslavia with a view to the forthcoming European Council in Edinburgh.

The Ministers heard Ambassador O'NEILL's report on relations between the Community and its Member States and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which was requested by the Presidency, and held a discussion on the subject.

- DEVELOPMENT OF COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

The Ministers approved a report on joint measures and development of CFSP in the field of security.

OTHER DECISIONS

Iraq

The Council adopted a Regulation prohibiting the honouring of Iraqi claims with regard to contracts and transactions affected by United Nations Security Council Resolution 661 (1990) and related Resolutions.

Relations with Central and Eastern European countries

The Council adopted decisions concerning the conclusion of agreements in the form of exchanges of letters concerning the extension after 31 December 1992 of the interim agreements with Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The Council also adopted decisions concerning the conclusion of agreements in the form of exchanges of letters amending agreements on transit with Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Making the Single Market work

Following the agreement in principle reached at the Internal Market Council meeting on 10 November 1992, the Council formally adopted the Resolution on making the Single Market work (see press release 9760/92 Presse 197).

Award of public works contracts

The Council adopted the common position on a proposal for a Directive amending Directive 71/305/EEC concerning the co-ordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts. The proposed Directive aims at making certain technical amendments to Directive 71/305/EEC concerning notices, statistical reporting and the nomenclature (NACE) referred to in the Annexes to Directive 71/305/EEC.

Customs union

The Council adopted a Regulation on the definition of the concept of originating products applicable to certain mineral products and to certain products of the chemical or allied industries within the framework of preferential tariff arrangements granted by the EEC to third countries.

Fisheries

The Council adopted a Regulation on the conclusion of the Protocol establishing, for the period from 1 January 1992 to 31 December 1993, the fishing rights and financial compensation provided for in the agreement between the European Economic Community and the Republic of Guinea.

Under that Protocol, applied provisionally since the beginning of 1992, the following Community vessels may fish off the Guinean coast for a period of two years: trawlers up to 12 000 grt a month, annual average, 24 freezer tuna seiners, 8 pole-and-line tuna vessels and 5 surface longliners.

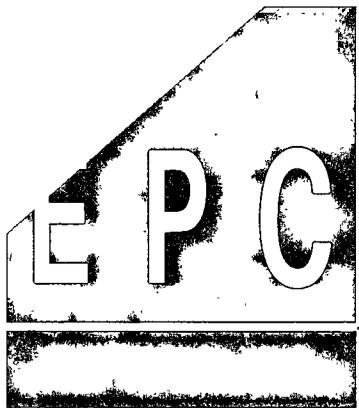
Financial compensation is set at ECU 6 700 000 for the period in question.

The Council also adopted a Regulation opening and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas and ceilings and establishing statistical surveillance for certain fish and fishery products originating in the Faroe Islands, from 1 January to 31 December 1993.

The duty-free quota volume is 5 600 tonnes of live fish, 2 400 tonnes of prepared or preserved fish and 2 000 tonnes of crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates.

The reference tariff ceilings relate to 66 850 tonnes of fish.

Under the existing trade agreement between the Community, of the one part, and Denmark and the Faroe Islands, of the other part, the Faroe Islands may export all fishery products to the Community duty-free and without being subject to ceilings, apart from certain sensitive products covered by this Regulation.



EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION

PRESS RELEASE

P. 113/92

Brussels, 7 December 1992

DECLARATION ON SOMALIA

The humanitarian crisis in Somalia continues to cause the gravest concern. The increasing looting of aid supplies and obstruction to their distribution cannot be accepted.

The Community and its member States fully support the adoption on 3 December of UNSCR 794, which constitutes an important development in international law, since it authorises the UN Secretary General and member States to cooperate to provide for a multinational force to establish a secure environment for the delivery of emergency and relief supplies. They welcome the humanitarian efforts made by the Community and its member States and the contributions of a number of member States to the force as a European initiative. The swift deployment of the force is vital to the success of the efforts of NGOs and international agencies to bring food to the starving in conditions of security. They attach particular importance to ensuring the safety of the personnel involved in the relief effort.

The Community and its member States reaffirm their full support for existing UN operations and the efforts by Ambassador Kittani. They hope that the implementation of UNSCR 794 will encourage national reconciliation that will lead to a lasting political settlement.

