

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

10479/89 (Presse 235)

1375th Council meeting

- Telecommunications -

Brussels, 7 December 1989

President: Mr Paul QUILES

**Minister for Posts,
Telecommunications and Space
of the French Republic**

10479/89 (Presse 235 - G)

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Minister for Posts and
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Mr Alex BODRY

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Deputy Permanent Representative

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Minister for Public Works, Transport
and Communications

Mr Eduardo CORREIA MATOS

State Secretary for External Transport
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Department of Trade and Industry
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Commission

Sir Leon BRITTAN

Vice-President

Mr Filippo Maria PANDOLFI

Vice-President

COMPLETION OF THE INTERNAL MARKET IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

After a comprehensive discussion based on a Presidency draft for an overall compromise on the liberalization of telecommunications services and open network revision, the Council arrived at political agreement on a common position concerning the proposal for a Directive on open network provision (ONP). The Council thus took a decisive step towards the establishment of an open telecommunications market.

On the first point, it should be noted that the Commission has adopted a Directive based on Article 90(3) of the Treaty with regard to competition in all markets in telecommunications services.

With the proposal for a framework Directive on open network provision, the aim is to lay down the ground rules for harmonization of the conditions of access to and use of public telecommunications networks and/or services.

Under the overall compromise, "the Council:

- notes that a large majority of delegations express their agreement with the content of the amendments made by the Commission to Articles 3 and 10 and the recitals of its Directive on competition in markets in telecommunications services enabling the Council to adopt the ONP Directive as part of an overall compromise, while some delegations continue to have reservations on that content;
- welcomes the spirit of co-operation shown between the Commission and the Member States, which has made possible a significant step forward in the completion of the internal market in telecommunications services;

- notes that a large majority of Member States nevertheless dispute the legal basis chosen by the Commission for its Directive and reaffirms that Article 100a provides the appropriate basis for implementing the aims set out in the Commission's Green Paper and the Council Resolution of 30 June 1988".

NEW FORMS OF COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION IN THE FIELD OF
BROAD-BAND INTEGRATED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Council adopted the following statement:

Council statement

The Council reaffirms the importance that must be given to developing broad-band integrated communications in Europe and stresses the need to pursue research efforts at European level in order to provide transnational integrated services, without prejudice to the decisions to be taken in connection with the R&D framework programme (1990-1994).

The Council invites the Commission to set up a working party composed of representatives of the Member States, which could, if necessary, call on the services of experts, the task of which would be:

- to study the possibility of establishing an appropriate structure to pursue the Community research and development programmes in the field of broad-band telecommunications, by making use for example of the provisions contained in Article 130o of the Treaty of Rome, thus facilitating concerted action among telecommunications operators, manufacturers and users, in order to prepare for the introduction of broad-band communications services throughout the Community;

- to define the advantage and role of such a structure in implementing the R&D framework programme projects adopted by the competent Council bodies.

Furthermore, with this in mind, the Council welcomes with interest the suggestion by network operators within CEPT that the establishment of a European research and Strategic Planning Institute (EURESCOM) in the field of telecommunications be considered.

The Council acknowledges that each initiative has its own specific characteristics and would stress the importance of ensuring that the activities carried out in this field both by the Community and the CEPT are closely co-ordinated in order to make optimal and complementary use of available resources.

The Council requests the Commission to report to it on this basis before the Telecommunications Council scheduled for April 1990.

PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONTRACTS

The Council discussed the telecommunications aspects of the proposal for a directive on the procurement procedures of entities operating in the "excluded sectors" (telecommunications, water, energy and transport),

That proposal is designed to introduce a flexible system of procedures for the award of works, supply and software service contracts, while ensuring compliance with the principles of non-discrimination and transparency.

Delegations raised some aspects relating in particular to thresholds for application, reference to European standards in the telecommunications sector and relations with third countries.

The proposal is on the agenda for the next Internal Market Council meeting, on 21 December 1989.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONSFisheries

The Council adopted the Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters concerning the temporary extension from 8 August 1989 to 31 December 1989 of the Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Government of the Republic of Guinea on fishing off the coast of Guinea.

Agriculture

The Council adopted the Regulation on the total alcoholic strength by volume and the total acidity of certain imported quality wines and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2931/80. This is to enable certain wines originating in Hungary and Switzerland to be imported into the Community.

Commercial policy

The Council adopted the Regulation opening and providing for the administration of an autonomous Community tariff quota for newsprint (1989) and extending this quota to include other types of paper (50 000 tonnes duty-free).

The Council went on to adopt Regulations opening, allocating and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for 1990 for

- prepared and preserved sardines of the type *Sardina pilchardus*, originating in Morocco (17 500 tonnes duty-free)
- fresh or dried hazelnuts, shelled or not, originating in Turkey (25 000 tonnes duty-free).

High-Definition Television

Following substantive agreement on 7 November, the Council adopted the Decision on the common action to be taken by the Member States with respect to the adoption of a single world-wide High Definition Television production standard by the Plenary Assembly of the International Radio Consultative Committee (CCIR) in 1990. (see press release 9587/89 (Presse 196) of 7.XI.89).
