

European Communities

Delegation of the Commission
of the European Communities
to the United Nations.

1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza
245 East 47th Street
New York, NY 10017
Telephone: (212) 371-3804

Information Service

Background Information



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THE EEC AND THE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (CMEA)

A Chronology:

1973

- 27 August CMEA Secretary-General, Nikolai Faddeyev, received in Copenhagen by Ivar Norgaard, Danish Minister for External Trade and President of the Council of the European Communities, for unofficial discussion. Faddeyev proposes EEC and CMEA* establish contact with a view to strengthening détente and cooperation, and suggests two "representative" delegations should meet to discuss the scope and content of future talks.
- 20 September Council discusses Faddeyev démarche and instructs President to inform CMEA that if they wish to approach the Community, the Commission is the proper body to receive any communication or démarche.
- 27 September Danish Ambassador sees Faddeyev in Moscow to transmit message (terms made public in answer to written question 307 from Mr. Patijn in Official Journal of E.C. No. C 114/7 of 27 December: "...that if the CMEA wishes to approach the Community, the appropriate body to receive all relevant communications and to approach was the Commission.")

* Members of EEC: Belgium, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, United Kingdom.

Members of CMEA: Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, USSR.

1973 (cont'd)

21 November Polish leader Gierak on visit to Brussels for signature of economic cooperation agreement, calls for general agreement between EEC and CMEA: "after CMEA's initiative the ball is now in the EEC's court".

1974

6 February Faddeyev during press conference in Moscow on 25th anniversary of CMEA complains no reply received from EEC to proposal for closer contacts.

11 February Professor Dahrendorf, Member of the Commission, tells European Parliament that no reply is outstanding because the Council's message (of September) has already made position clear.

4 March Commission suggests to Council that the President should make a new diplomatic démarche in Moscow, to repeat the Council's previous reply in September and to explain that this was in no way negative.

13 March Sir Christopher Soames in reply to a question from Mr. Patijn tells European Parliament that the Council's reply to CMEA was in no way negative but the normal Community response: "If CMEA wishes to pursue the matter, the Commission stands ready to have an exploratory discussion with them about areas of possible cooperation".

7 May Council reviews relations with CMEA and decides to instruct Presidency (then the Federal Republic of Germany) to confirm reply given by Danish Ambassador in September 1973, namely that if CMEA wishes to approach the Community, the Commission is ready to receive any communication or démarche.

15 May Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Moscow sees Faddeyev to transmit message.

16 September Secretary Faddeyev sends letter inviting President Ortoli to Moscow for talks.

1974 (cont'd)

- 16 October Sir Christopher Soames replies to oral question to European Parliament on relations with CMEA, indicating that a positive reply will be sent to the letter and that discussions will be on matters within the competence of both organisations.
- 14 November President Ortoli sends reply to Secretary Faddeyev, suggesting preliminary meeting at senior official level.

1975

- 4-6 February Mr. Wellenstein, Director-General for External Relations, leads delegation of Commission officials to Moscow, has talks with Mr. Moissenyenko of the CMEA Secretariat, and invites the Secretariat to send representatives to Brussels to continue the talks.

1976

- 16 February Mr. Gaston Thorn, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Luxembourg and President of Council of Ministers, receives Mr. Gerhard Weiss, Vice-President of Council of Ministers of German Democratic Republic and President of the CMEA Executive Committee.
- 2 March Council instructs Mr. Thorn to transmit an accusé de réception to Mr. Weiss, informing him that the CMEA proposals will be examined according to normal Community procedure.
- 17 November The Dutch Presidency delivers the Community reply to the CMEA proposals. Concerning trade relations, the Community recalls its offer of November 1974 to negotiate trade agreements with each country of CMEA. In the non-trade areas of exchange of information on environmental matters, statistics, etc., the Community is ready to negotiate suitable forms of collaboration with the CMEA.

1977

- 7 February Polish Presidency of CMEA sends an accusé de réception to the British Presidency of the Council adding that the Community reply will be studied further.