

ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

THIRTY-SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION

(First Part)

Arms control: force reductions and the rôle
of multinational units –
Reply to the annual report of the Council

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Defence Committee
by Mr. Uyttendaele, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur

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1. Adopted unanimously by the committee.

2. *Members of the committee: Sir Dudley Smith (Chairman); Mrs. Baarveld-Schlaman, Mr. Uyttendaele (Vice-Chairmen); MM. Alloncle, Bassinet, Borderas, Cariglia, Chevalier, Cox (Alternate: J. Thompson), De Decker, Dees (Alternate: Tummers), Ewing (Alternate: Lord Newall), Fernandes Marques, Fiandrotti, Fillon, Fioret (Alternate: Mezzapesa), Fourré, Irmer, Jung, Mrs. Lentz-Cornette, MM. Maris (Alternate: De Hoop Scheffer), Marten, Mota Torres, Moya, Pecchioli, Perinat (Alternate: de Puig), Scheer, Sinesio, Speed, Steiner, Sir John Stokes (Alternate: D. Thompson), MM. Vazquez (Alternate: Bolinaga), Vieira Mesquita, Zierer.*
N.B. *The names of those taking part in the vote are printed in italics.*

Rapporteur's Preface

In preparation for this report, *the Rapporteur* met or received evidence from the following:

SHAPE, Mons – 18th March 1991

General John R. Galvin, US A, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe;
Lieutenant General Antonio Milani, IT A, Deputy Chief of Staff, SACEUR's WEU Liaison Officer;
Brigadier General Dieter Schott, GE A, Deputy Chief, Arms Control Branch;
Minister Kent Brown, US, Political Adviser;
Mr. Harry Brown, UK, Special Assistant for Strategic and Global Events;
Colonel Jacques Fontaine, BE A, Belgian National Military Representative;
Colonel Kleffner, GE A, Operations Division;
Colonel Graham Messervy-Whiting, UK A, SHAPE Special Briefer.

Brussels – 18th March 1991

General Joseph Charlier, Chief of the Belgian Defence Staff.

NATO Headquarters, Evèrè – 19th March 1991

General Antoon Everaert, BE AR, Belgian Military Representative;
Mr. Marcel Leroy, Head, NATO/Multilateral Affairs and Policy Planning Section, Political Affairs Division;
Mr. M. Jochems, Head of Defence Policy Section, Defence Planning and Policy Division;
Mr. W. Kischlat, Head of Disarmament and Arms Control Section, Political Affairs Division, and Mr. P. K. Augustine;
Mr. H. Pfeiffer, Director of Force Planning, Defence Planning and Policy Division;
Colonel M. Bracher, GE AF, Strategic and Planning Branch, Plans and Policy Division.

Belgian/Netherlands Joint Mine-Warfare School (EGUERMIN), Ostend – 19th March 1991

Captain J. Timmerman, BE NA, Commandant.

The committee as a whole visited the *Headquarters of the Franco-German Brigade in Böblingen* on 8th November 1990 and was briefed by:

General Jean-Pierre Sengeisen, Commandant, and his staff.

The committee and the Rapporteur extend their thanks to those ministers, officials and senior officers who met the Rapporteur or committee and replied to questions.

The opinions expressed in the report, unless otherwise attributed, are those of the committee.

Draft Recommendation

on arms control: force reductions and the rôle of multinational units

The Assembly,

- (i) Conscious that Soviet redeployment undermines the provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Armaments in Europe signed in Paris in November 1990, but insisting on full respect for both the letter and the spirit of this international agreement;
- (ii) Looking forward to a convention on a global ban on the manufacture, possession and use of chemical weapons, together with appropriate verification methods;
- (iii) Insisting that discussions should now begin on considerably reducing numbers of short-range nuclear weapons;
- (iv) Determined that general agreement should be reached on the regulation of arms sales, preferably within a United Nations context;
- (v) Noting that unco-ordinated defence budget cuts in the majority of member countries are proceeding apace;
- (vi) Reiterating the need to maintain transatlantic solidarity through NATO;
- (vii) Emphasising the development within the Atlantic Alliance of a European pillar, which should be comprised of all European NATO members who wish to be associated;
- (viii) In the knowledge that the WEU Chiefs of Defence Staff Committee has already discussed the creation of a European multinational rapid action force and that NATO's Military Committee has endorsed the idea of a NATO multinational rapid reaction force;
- (ix) Respecting the sovereignty of each member nation,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Encourage member nations to begin the ratification process of the Treaty of Paris while remaining firm with the Soviet Union on respect for both the letter and the spirit of the CFE Agreement;
2. Encourage member nations to give a common impetus to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament with a view to obtaining a convention on a global ban on the manufacture, possession and use of chemical weapons, together with an appropriate verification régime;
3. Make the services of the WEU Agency for the Control of Armaments available to the United Nations for advice on verification of the chemical arms ban on Iraq;
4. Urge the United States and the Soviet Union to begin the promised discussions on considerably reduced numbers of short-range nuclear weapons;
5. Institute a register of arms sales by member countries, support European initiatives to ensure transparency in this domain and urge the United Nations Security Council to begin the process of seeking a general agreement on the regulation of arms sales;
6. Initiate discussion within WEU on the co-ordination necessary to ensure that a sufficient level of security is maintained in Europe despite cuts in national defence budgets;
7. Express its wholehearted support for the need to maintain transatlantic solidarity through NATO and emphasise that the European pillar within the alliance should be composed of all European members of NATO who wish to be so associated;
8. Instruct its chiefs of defence staff to begin work on the creation of a permanent multinational command structure capable of planning, co-ordinating and exercising WEU actions in the context of Article VIII of the modified Brussels Treaty.

Draft Recommendation

replying to the annual report of the Council

The Assembly,

Considering the security and defence aspects of the annual report of the Council,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Instruct its Defence Representatives Group to make a study of the suggestions in the present report concerning multinational units and report;
2. Provide the Assembly with fuller accounts of the discussions held by its various bodies and give the Assembly priority of information concerning its decisions;
3. Instruct the WEU Institute for Security Studies to prepare unclassified versions of its reports and discussion papers and forward them to the Assembly;
4. Continue to provide the Assembly with information regarding inspections carried out by the WEU Agency for the Control of Armaments.

Explanatory Memorandum

(submitted by Mr. Uyttendaele, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur)

I. Introduction

1. This subject cannot be approached without considering as a background the situation in greater Europe lying between the Atlantic Ocean and the Urals a short time after the calming effect of East-West détente.

2. The former Eastern Europe is in fact divided into Central Europe (a former, now updated notion) and the Soviet Union. The two parts of Germany have been reunited and this situation is causing many difficulties. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania are liable to be engulfed in a political and economic vacuum. Internal political tension is shaking the Soviet Union which is having enormous difficulty in transforming its economic system into a freer one. Separatist movements are active in various neighbouring republics. Albania and Yugoslavia give an old-style picture of the Balkans where a mosaic of nationalities and ethnic minorities is creating unrest, spreading uncertainty and causing tension.

3. The vacuum in Central Europe must be filled. The whole of Western Europe should endeavour to do this jointly, thus preserving the best chances of peace. The danger inherent in any action taken to this end by a single western country or by a newly-balanced Soviet Union seems quite evident. Former East-West opposition might be resuscitated should a dominating state in Central Europe demonstrate its strength by mastering the idea of a peaceful Europe. In any event, the Soviet Union will remain a power to be feared which will permanently represent an imminent threat, whatever its future evolution.

4. Many Western European countries are almost feverishly seeking greater European unity. However, numerous reasons indicate that progress will have to be gradual. If a true, well-balanced European security and defence policy is to be achieved in the framework of the alliance, a European foreign policy must first be defined. This policy will first serve to avert conflicts and if, notwithstanding preventive measures, a conflict should become imminent, political, diplomatic and non-armed means should be mobilised to find a peaceful solution without European defence proper, in the strictest meaning of the word, having to be used. To be able to introduce such a policy and concept, which seem quite natural, all the partners – starting with the larger states – will

have to accept a European imprint on their countries and abandon the idea of imposing their own views of Europe; in other words, the Europe of tomorrow, even unified, will in this area, for a very long and even unforeseeable time, remain a compromise Europe determined by the wisdom or lack of wisdom of participants.

5. The so-called neutral states such as Austria, Sweden and Switzerland realise that the reason for their neutrality is becoming less logical, economically at least, and they are doing their utmost to draw closer to Europe, which is becoming increasingly unified at economic level.

6. The states of Eastern Europe (Central Europe by any other name) are insisting on being allowed to accede to Western Europe's economic unity and to this end are also invoking reasons of security and independence. They are being encouraged in this by certain members of the European Community which is already seen by some as possibly the Twenty-four, rather than the Twelve.

7. The approaches referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 in no way simplify the definition of a European foreign, security and defence policy. To involve in this process too many countries which have not yet attained the required stage of maturity from a European standpoint could but lead to extreme confusion and risk total failure in these areas.

8. In order to have an idea of the arms control, force reductions and European defence that would result from a strengthening of the European pillar in NATO, there must be agreement from the outset on what Europe we are talking about. It is clear that a report emanating from WEU considers its own organisation to be the most appropriate for developing these ideas. Even a superficial comparison between the possibilities and difficulties suggests that, in spite of the magnitude of the difficulties and obstacles that WEU must overcome, the latter are in any event far less than those of other bodies in terms of choosing the framework for European defence. It must never be forgotten that it is possible to hold talks and conclude agreements with absolutely anyone on arms control and force reductions, but it must be realised that one's own defence can be worked out on a joint basis only by turning to friends, persons of like mind and allies.

II. Arms control

9. In Paris on 19th November 1990, twenty-two countries, including the nine WEU member states, signed the treaty on conventional forces in Europe. A protocol dated the same day made applicable for twelve months a number of provisions in this treaty even before ratification.

10. The signatory states have not yet ratified this treaty. The Soviet Union has withdrawn some of its troops (or is planning to do so) to the other side of the Urals, i.e. outside the area covered by the treaty. This is in conformity with the letter of the treaty but in no way respects its spirit. Furthermore, the Soviet Union had forecast sending a number of armed forces, about three divisions, elsewhere; they have been assigned to naval forces. This measure infringes both the letter and the spirit of the treaty. The United States claims that this is one of the reasons which encourage it not to ratify the treaty.

11. However this may be, ratification is preferable, since it will then be possible to apply all the verification measures, so that if a signatory makes a wrong move it may, without prejudice to other steps, be the subject of legal action. It may also be considered that ratification in these circumstances would be proof of a positive attitude inspiring confidence. It is also true that various signatories, including some members of WEU, are already taking steps to reduce their arsenals of weapons even below the levels of authorised ceilings laid down in the treaty. To hesitate about ratifying would create an incomprehensible and uncomfortable situation.

12. This treaty is clearly not an end in itself. For instance, the Geneva negotiations should lead in the future to a worldwide ban on all chemical weapons. Furthermore, it must be ensured that all short-range nuclear weapons are banned as soon as possible. (United States-Soviet talks on the subject are supposed to begin soon after the implementation of the CFE Treaty.)

13. The rôle of the arms trade is worthy of close attention. Since Western Europe is one of the world's leading arms producers, there will have to be regulations banning supplies of arms at European level. These must be as wide-ranging as possible, possibly starting with the WEU partners. In this connection, national legislation is not enough as long as it can be overridden by other national legislations – even by friendly nations. The recent past brought out sufficiently well and on several occasions that it is these very uncontrolled or furtive supplies of arms which can jeopardise the containment of conflicts.

III. Force reductions

14. The logical effect of East-West détente, further accentuated by the abovementioned treaty of 19th November, is a reduction of forces in Europe. Cuts in the defence budgets of the WEU member states certainly prove that we are on the right road but that WEU or NATO allies seldom consult each other, in spite of the Assembly's strong recommendation emanating from the session last December¹.

15. This reduction will not necessarily lead to security being endangered as long as "national" reductions are applied everywhere in a concerted manner and by common agreement with the other members of the alliances.

16. In view of the disappearance of the former threat but taking account of its different nature and the existence of new hotbeds of unrest in regions along Europe's frontiers, it may be necessary to offset the smaller number of troops and armaments by increased mobility and flexibility.

17. A very clear distinction must be drawn between security and defence. Defence may prove necessary to ensure security. As said above, it is not always necessary to have the same partners in talks on security and/or defence.

18. Easy though it may be to speak or write about mobility and flexibility, it is difficult to put them into practice. Efforts, mainly financial, are required. Quite astronomical sums have to be invested if the goal we have set ourselves in this connection is to be attained in practice. Hence the need to share the costs.

19. Subject to the consideration in paragraph 4, it is perhaps now time to establish full European defence which would be a major, essential and even vital instrument of European foreign policy and diplomacy. To this end, the following principles should be borne in mind:

- (a) maintenance of national sovereignty;
- (b) building within existing structures and maintenance of the Atlantic Alliance;
- (c) readiness to extend the number of members actively concerned.

20. Better than any other existing European organisation, WEU is the body par excellence for achieving this European defence. By means of treaties, on the one hand, the WEU member states have confirmed their intention to move

1. Recommendation 493, paragraph 10:

"Noting that defence budget cuts in the majority of member countries are forcing an unco-ordinated reappraisal of defence priorities, the Assembly RECOMMENDS that the Council institute consultation within WEU on the optimum future structure of European forces, preferably before further cuts in national defence budgets are made."

steadily towards the achievement of European union while, on the other hand, the modified Brussels Treaty admits that the WEU countries organise their defence through the collective structures of NATO. Furthermore, WEU is still a useful forum in which France (which left the NATO integrated military structure in 1966) has an opportunity to discuss defence matters openly and unrestrictedly with its European partners. This in no way means that the course to be followed to give tangible shape to WEU as a European pillar vis-à-vis NATO and WEU vis-à-vis the Economic Community will not be long and difficult. In any event, it will have to be ensured that the flow of information is harmonious and that efficient co-ordination of security and defence policy can be achieved.

21. The organisation of European defence has the advantage of allowing Europe to become, in part, more independent of the United States. This in no way means that the United States presence in Europe in the framework of NATO is useless or no longer of importance. Quite the reverse. The reasons underlying the existence of NATO and the presence of – certainly fewer – United States troops are still valid. It must also be realised that the very presence of United States armed forces protects Europe against itself since their physical presence prevents one or more European states – in a period of virulent nationalism – being a danger for other member states.

22. The United States, on the other hand, is afraid the development of European defence may become a centrifugal force in NATO, thus weakening and not strengthening it. However, there seem no grounds for this fear since it is evident that it is not intended to build European defence entirely outside NATO structures. Nevertheless, the United States should understand that situations may arise in Europe that in no way require its presence which indeed might even be undesirable if, for instance, there was a risk of automatically making the Soviet Union react in such a manner as to make a given situation immediately seem far more serious. European defence in the framework of WEU also means that WEU might act outside the NATO area as an entity provided national sovereignty is respected (as has been the case during the Gulf crisis where WEU has directly supported the United Nations embargo).

IV. Multinational units

23. Paragraph 14 of the London Declaration provides that NATO will have multinational corps made up of national units.

24. It would be better to describe these units as "European units" in the context of the European pillar of NATO. This description by

definition covers the notion of multinationality but also suggests that these formations contain no non-European units. Europe will indeed always be a body composed of various nationalities. It is enough to think of WEU where there are nine members and seven different languages.

25. The formation of multinational units raises a series of problems, including:

- differences in the status of personnel: regulars, volunteers, militia. Differences in financial and social status. Different disciplinary systems;
- different weapons and equipment;
- different training;
- different language, customs and mentalities.

26. Insofar as possible, these differences must be eliminated in the long term, inter alia through:

- standardisation of armaments;
- uniformisation of training;
- organisation of joint manoeuvres;
- joint management and use of manoeuvre areas which should be sufficiently large and numerous;
- jointly-organised recycling and specialisation of officers (cf. the anti-mine operations already organised by the mine warfare school at Ostend);
- improved knowledge of languages among officers.

27. It is usually considered that multinational units should have two sections: rapid (immediate) forces and main defence forces.

28. Generally speaking, it is agreed that each partner, even the smallest, would provide units for the rapid reaction forces and would be responsible for equipment, armaments, transport and supplies. Although for each specific intervention national sovereignty might continue to operate, there should nevertheless be provision for certain procedures and scenarios to ensure that the significance of this force is not a dead letter.

29. Both for the rapid reaction forces and the main defence forces, a European command structure would be set up and would be the only visible and permanently present organisation of European defence. The size of the armed force to be engaged would be determined on a case-by-case basis in the light of the nature of the conflict and the desired degree of intervention.

30. The troops should therefore remain national and, in practice, have a threefold task to carry out, i.e. at national level, in the NATO framework and in the European context.

31. In some circles it is considered that multinational corps should be formed with a particular "leading nation". But it does not take a great deal of imagination to foresee that, on the day of the race, that particular nation may have some very good reason, politically perhaps, not to participate in a given action. What price then the "leading nation"?

32. Much more preferable, in your Rapporteur's opinion, to form a multinational headquarters unit, with a measure of international duplication and even redundancy, for action only in the light of a particular situation requiring European intervention.

33. It is obviously essential to retain the major NATO multinational command structures that exist because at that high and very important level all the member states represented have a say.

34. In view of the composition of the various national armies and the trend of organisation in certain countries, a brigade or brigade equivalent should be the smallest national contribution to the multinational main defence forces.

35. It is obvious that there would be considerable cost incurred in creating these multinational units as your Rapporteur has already emphasised. Hence the need to use the same units for national, NATO and WEU purposes, depending on the prevailing priority. This idea is of course merely an extension of present arrangements whereby forces "earmarked" for NATO may be withdrawn in case of national need (cf. British units for operations in Northern Ireland or in the Falklands in 1982; British and American units for the Gulf crisis).

36. As well as the idea advanced by the Secretary-General of dual-hatting certain NATO commanders with a WEU hat as well, the idea of dual or even triple-hatting certain units must be examined. These units would also have to be reasonably versatile and adaptable for different geographical (and hence climatological) areas.

37. Your Rapporteur was somewhat surprised to meet some opposition to such ideas, especially from certain United States commanders who have themselves used this system of dual-hatting ever since NATO was invented! In passing it is worth mentioning that if dual-hatting of certain NATO European commanders comes to pass, one at least will have come full circle: Commander-in-chief Channel, based at Northwood, was originally a WEU creation...

(a) *Specific units and proposals*

38. In his report for the Assembly in 1989 (State of European security – intervention forces and reinforcement for the Centre and the North, Document 1183), Mr. Speed, Rapporteur, drew the attention of members to a number of specific forces:

- 24th Airmobile Brigade (United Kingdom);
- the Force d'Action Rapide (France);
- the United Kingdom/Netherlands Landing Force;
- the Franco-German Brigade;
- the NATO Airborne Early Warning Force.

The conclusions and recommendations of that far-seeing report bear rereading and re-examination now.

39. In their various ways these specific forces and others such as the NATO Standing Naval Forces Atlantic and Channel and the Mediterranean On-call Force have made important contributions to the cause of multinationality and may well serve as examples for further multinational co-operation.

40. *The British 24th Airmobile Brigade* is likely to form part of the new multinational European Corps discussed by the NATO Military Committee at its meeting in April 1990 (the day after the nine member countries of WEU, also at the level of chiefs of defence staff, had included the same item on their agenda. We wait with interest to see which of the NATO countries will be participating!). It is obvious that elements of the NATO rapid reaction force will have also to be earmarked for WEU for so-called out-of-area operations.

41. *The French Force d'Action Rapide*, or at least part of it, participated with élan in the coalition's re-taking of Kuwait. In many ways this force, created in 1985, has pioneered the art (and science) of rapid action. What better recognition of the fact (and also of France's initiatives during its presidency of WEU) than to position the future headquarters of a WEU force d'action rapide at Maisons-Laffitte (headquarters of the French FAR), to plan and execute the exercises such a force would need to practise its rôle? It is worthy of note in passing that various other members of WEU are in the process of following the French example in creating national rapid action forces (e.g. Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain) and that this should lead logically to further multinational co-operation.

42. *The United Kingdom/Netherlands Landing Force* could well be viewed as the nucleus of a WEU amphibious unit, such as envisaged by the Defence Committee when

adopting Document 1139 in May 1988 (Naval aviation; Rapporteur: Mr. Wilkinson). Due to celebrate its 20th anniversary in 1992 this unit has epitomised multinational co-operation (as has the Belgian-Dutch minewarfare school at Ostend in its special domain) and has developed amphibiousness to a fine art. The ideal fire brigade unit in an amphibious context, the United Kingdom/Netherlands Landing Force could easily have an out-of-area rôle as a prime example of two member countries' staunch commitment to WEU. Even as this is written, 400 Dutch marines are leaving, together with 600 other Dutch soldiers, to help establish and protect the enclaves set up for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq. British marines and French troops are also involved in these operations with WEU helping to organise the logistic support.

(b) The Franco-German Brigade

43. When the Defence Committee visited the Franco-German Brigade in Böblingen last November, it was impressed with the military sense which had been given to what was originally essentially a political gesture. As an experimental formation, the brigade has spent the past two years studying and testing options for tactical, operational and logistic co-operation and interoperability. The headquarters element has had to wrestle with such thorny problems as discipline, working routines, pay and allowances, uniform, legal questions, etc., etc., as well of course as with equipment compatibility. In essence it is the headquarters unit and the communications and logistic parts of the brigade which are integrated – the other elements remain either purely French or German.

44. It is however obvious that the brigade could have an enhanced rôle: as the embryo of a European airmobile brigade, perhaps, if reformed? (The present rôle is limited either to territorial defence or in support of NATO's Central Army Group.) For operations outside the NATO area the hitherto unsurmountable problem of German participation would require the sort of solution proposed by Chancellor Kohl.

(c) The NATO Airborne Early Warning Force et al

45. Both at sea with the Standing Naval Force Atlantic and in the air with the AWACS force, NATO has been very successful already in creating multinationality and interoperability. What is needed now is flexibility of employment and diversification into other realms.

46. The AWACS aircraft are registered in Luxembourg, a founder member both of WEU and NATO. During the Gulf crisis, various aircraft were deployed on the southern flank to keep an eye open for any airborne threat to

Turkey. But because of the NATO insignia on their tailplane it was not possible to deploy them further afield... It would now be worthwhile investigating the possibility of assigning at least some to a WEU operational organisation (the new verification agency soon to be decided on, we trust, by WEU ministers?), so that future WEU operations might gain some very effective eyes and ears. Both British and French AWACS aircraft are not at present part of the NATO arrangement...

47. Similar principles might have applications in other air force realms as well: maritime patrol, tankers for air-to-air refuelling, transport aircraft – all come to mind. All are expensive to acquire by an individual nation, all were essential during the Gulf crisis. These ideas are further developed by the Defence Committee in a parallel report on the lessons learned from the Gulf (The Gulf crisis – lessons for Western European Union, Rapporteur: Mr. De Hoop Scheffer).

V. Conclusions

48. As a result of reduced East-West confrontation, diminishing levels of armed forces, shrinking defence budgets, increasing costs of technology, etc., etc., our nations are having to co-operate more and more, both where procurement and where operations are concerned. No state wants to rely totally on others for its own defence and rôle-specialisation is too restricting an avenue to follow. The answer is therefore multinationality, which is why the topic is so high on current agendas. But that same multinationality in defence is subject essentially to the political will of the partners concerned to co-operate and take a similar line in foreign affairs and security.

49. Events since the WEU nations reaffirmed their commitments to each other by subscribing to The Hague platform in October 1987 have proved that the Nine are able to make progress in defence matters. They will continue to make progress on the subject of multinationality.

VI. Reply to the annual report of the Council

(a) The committee's remit

50. As previously, the Presidential Committee has referred to the Defence Committee the sections of the Council's annual report concerning:

- the Council's activities relating to security in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, the control of armaments and disarmament;
- the application of Protocol No. II on WEU forces;

- the activities of the Agency for the Control of Armaments.

(b) Information received

51. The second part of the thirty-fifth annual report of the Council (Document 1219) and the first part of the thirty-sixth annual report of the Council (Document 1247), plus the information letters of the Secretary-General, have continued to provide more of the sort of information the Assembly has been requesting over past years and are indicative of the evolving nature of the Council's work and consultations. At the time of writing, the second half of the thirty-sixth annual report of the Council had just been received, so comment has been brought up to date where possible.

(c) The work of the Council

52. At its different levels and in its various bodies, the Council is to be congratulated on the breadth of the discussions which have taken place over the past year and which are now starting to bear fruit. The major activity of note has of course concerned the Gulf crisis and comment on this will be found in a parallel report of the Defence Committee (The Gulf crisis - lessons for Western European Union, Rapporteur: Mr. De Hoop Scheffer).

(i) Activities of the Special Working Group

53. The Special Working Group (SWG) has continued to provide the forum for study of the major politico-military issues affecting European security. The main focus of the group's work during the period has been firstly the impact of the changes in Central and Eastern Europe and the CFE negotiations in Vienna and secondly the future shape of European security.

54. In accordance with the mandate from the November 1989 ministerial meeting, the SWG and Defence Representatives Group (DRG) carried out a study evaluating Europe's likely security environment during the period 1991-1995. The joint conclusions of the group's work were presented to the Council of Ministers in Brussels on 23rd April 1990 along with a series of questions for ministers to discuss:

- the prospects for arms control with a view to the holding of a CSCE summit during 1990;
- how to maintain credible deterrence at reduced levels of forces;
- how to make appropriate changes in strategic doctrines, operational concepts and force structures;

- the general implications for European defence and security co-operation.

55. Ministers took note of the work done by the SWG and the DRG on the European security environment 1991-1995 and their discussions on this subject contributed to the formulation of the communiqué published at the end of the meeting.

56. The SWG has since discussed how to fulfil the task given to WEU by ministers at their April meeting (paragraph 9 of the Brussels communiqué), namely, to elaborate a common approach with regard to the 1990 summit meetings of the Atlantic Alliance and the CSCE. In this context the group addressed a number of themes:

- future security architecture for Europe;
- the rôle of Europe in a changing Atlantic Alliance;
- post-CFE arms control objectives.

57. In the second half of the year, the Special Working Group and the Defence Representatives Group held five joint meetings.

58. "In dealing with topical questions, delegates have exchanged information and comment on developments in the Gulf crisis, the co-ordination measures adopted by WEU countries and the diplomatic initiatives designed to strengthen the application of the embargo. The Special Working Group has decided to retain on its agenda the problem created by the existence of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which may well represent an even greater threat in the region by the end of the century."

59. "On the basis of an informal document submitted by the WEU Institute and a Secretariat working document, the delegations to these meetings considered the problems that would have to be solved before the conclusion of the CFE agreement negotiations: air forces and ground-based aeronaval forces; circumvention and verification at a time when the withdrawal of modern Soviet equipment to the east of the Urals is accelerating; the question of parity, taking into account the decisions as to sub-regional apportionment; personnel strength; and the definition of sufficiency, whose implications are as much political as they are military. The Special Working Group prepared for the NATO High-Level Task Force seminar held in Rome on 11th September, devoted to the steps to be taken between the Paris CSCE summit and the Helsinki review conference scheduled for 1992. In the declaration adopted at the London summit, WEU states undertook, together with their allies, "to work for fresh negotiations with the same mandate, the aim being to limit the

strength of armed forces in Europe. Since the bloc-to-bloc criterion no longer applies, in the situation that has existed in Europe since 3rd October and with the German Government's declared intentions as to the organisation of the defence of the unified Germany, the western approach must be adapted to changing circumstances. Steps should be taken here and now to define a European position on the global political concept and on general objectives for the continuance of the conventional arms control negotiations that will follow the Helsinki review conference in 1992. The stress should also be on the gradual development of confidence-building measures which should, despite Soviet hesitancy, be promoted in a pragmatic spirit."

60. As part of the preparations for the Paris summit, delegations discussed the security institutions to be established under CSCE. "The plan to set up a conflict prevention centre, based on the principles set out in paragraph 22 of the London declaration, was the subject of broad-ranging discussion. If a centre of this kind is to be genuinely capable of reducing the risk of confrontation, it must have the benefit of direct means of communication among states to increase the flow of available information and thus prevent misunderstanding and miscalculation. The centre's essential function, then, should be to clarify unusual military activity and implement confidence-building measures. Thereafter, political conciliation at the time when conflict is imminent can be envisaged only if the centre has proved its worth in the priority field of achieving transparency."

61. "The problems of European security co-operation will continue to be debated in the light of developments in the Atlantic Alliance, with due regard for NATO's current strategic review." – how right they were...

(ii) Activities of the Defence Representatives Group

62. The DRG held five meetings in its own right during the first half of 1990, as well as one joint meeting with the SWG. The majority of its activities focused on two broad areas of work in preparation for the Ministerial Council in April.

63. The first of these involved a study, with the SWG, of the European security environment in the period 1991-1995. As a contribution to this study, the DRG produced its own assessment of the need to maintain an undiminished level of security pending full implementation of a CFE agreement, and of the factors affecting the military balance post-CFE.

64. The second area of work concerned verification where the DRG proposed to ministers that member countries should co-operate in:

- preparing a programme of trial bilateral inspections (to commence in autumn 1990) whereby the nations participating could gain experience of the active and passive aspects of a CFE verification régime;
- opening a number of their national inspection teams to participation by inspectors from other member countries, thereby making best use of available resources and assisting member countries in participating fully in the verification process;
- opening their inspector training courses to nationals of other member countries, thereby ensuring a certain commonality of standards;
- indicating, if appropriate, any geographical areas on which they were interested in focusing their verification activities, while retaining the right to inspect wherever they wished, thus enabling them to target their training and to identify an informal division of labour.

65. In their communiqué, ministers welcomed these proposals, as well as the fact that a group of DRG experts had prepared a report on shared data-processing for verification which had subsequently been submitted to the NATO High Level Task Force (HLTF) by WEU countries.

66. After the April Ministerial Council, the DRG concentrated on the remit in the communiqué to prepare for the Atlantic and CSCE summits by discussing the evolution of alliance strategies, the military aspects of multinational forces and the military implications of the institutionalisation of the CSCE.

67. A regular item on the DRG agenda has been the issue of military contacts with the Soviet Union and, in addition to a report on the CSCE seminar on military doctrine, the group has been briefed on visits to the Soviet Union by Belgian, French, Netherlands and United Kingdom Delegations.

68. The Defence Representatives Group met on 9th October 1990 to continue its discussion on the problems of verification of the future CFE agreement and to review experience with bilateral trial inspections conducted by member states. A report on co-operation on verification was submitted to the Enlarged Council meeting on 29th November. The group embarked on preparations for the meeting of chiefs-of-staff (held on 10th April 1991), the agenda for which focused on the lessons to be learned from devel-

opments in the Gulf crisis, but also covered the evaluation of out-of-Europe risks and the advisability of having joint intervention facilities, a review of NATO strategy, and Soviet military capabilities by the year 1995.

69. On 27th September a meeting of verification experts was held in London to compare national experiences with setting up bodies responsible for the implementation of verification missions, training and inspectors' equipment and training.

70. The Defence Committee is particularly pleased that the Defence Representatives Group has come into its own over the past year or so and is making a positive contribution to many aspects of European security which our reports have themselves emphasised.

(iii) Activities of the Mediterranean Sub-Group

71. During 1990, the Mediterranean Sub-Group concentrated its attention on three sets of problems affecting European security.

72. Firstly, developments in the Maghreb and the conflict in the Western Sahara. Members of the group considered that it was vital to encourage the development of the political dialogue and that Europe should step up initiatives to promote regional co-operation aimed at enhancing stability in the Western Mediterranean. The present moves towards establishing CSCM as a forum for discussion are directly relevant to these concerns.

73. Secondly, political consultation within the group focused on events in Eastern Europe and their implications for the Balkans. The collapse of hitherto dominant political régimes, the re-awakening of nationalism and the resurgence of ethnic problems make any prediction about future developments in the region both difficult and uncertain. "Analysis of the repercussions of the current developments will remain uppermost among the group's concerns." Again these reflections should be of immense use in understanding present developments.

74. Lastly, the group embarked upon a study of the potential threat represented by the proliferation of ballistic missiles. The group has analysed the consequences of this proliferation in the Mediterranean basin and in the Middle East and expressed the hope that many more countries will join the MTCR (Missile Technology Control Régime). This work was accomplished before the implications became evident in the current Gulf problems, but once again demonstrated the good work being done in WEU.

75. The group also finished its report on naval deployments in the Mediterranean, the conclusions of which were submitted to ministers.

76. The Chairman of the Mediterranean Sub-group was to have briefed the Defence Committee on the sub-group's conclusions, but with the intervention of the Gulf crisis, the discussion has had to be postponed until the autumn, when the Defence Committee will be preparing its report on Mediterranean security (Rapporteur: Mr. Kittelmann).

(iv) Activities of the ad hoc Sub-Group on Space

77. During this period the ad hoc Sub-Group on Space held eight plenary meetings, as well as other meetings at expert level.

78. The sub-group has continued its work to outline a detailed study on the development of a European satellite observation system with three objectives: verification of arms control agreements, crisis monitoring and the monitoring of environmental hazards.

79. In April 1990, ministers noted the progress which had been made, and called for concrete proposals to be submitted with a view to examining the possibility of establishing a satellite observation agency. The sub-group is currently working to this remit.

80. The ad hoc Sub-Group on Space met on 24th and 28th September and 7th November to finalise the report requested by ministers at their April meeting and to draft a ministerial decision to be referred to the Enlarged Council. Several meetings of experts were also held on technical aspects of the planned space co-operation projects.

81. As a result WEU ministers:

"...underlined the need for a step-by-step approach to the phased establishment of a space-based observation system in which, as a first stage of co-operation, a centre could be an important and concrete element around which co-operation on space observation would be developed.

They decided to mandate the ad hoc Sub-Group on Space:

(a) to study further the practical arrangements for setting up such a centre with a view to taking a decision at the ministerial meeting in spring 1991. Such a centre:

- should be a WEU subsidiary organ, in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 2, of the modified Brussels Treaty;
- should have the immediate task of training European experts in the photo-interpretation of satellite-derived data and the gathering, processing, analysis and interpretation of accessible data, should make data

available to member states and should report the results to WEU and its member states;

- should receive, in order to carry out its tasks, assistance from member states and might also have some of its own resources to enable it to begin work autonomously;
- should have its activities reviewed no later than three years after it has entered into operation.

(b) to define, in time for the next ministerial meeting, the requirements for studies on medium- and long-term space co-operation with a view to establishing a European space-based observation system."

82. The Defence Committee at its March meeting in Palermo was fully briefed on progress to date. The Chairman of the committee has written to all members of the Assembly to encourage them to urge national governments to make a positive decision in favour of the WEU verification agency at the next ministerial meeting (scheduled now for June 1991).

(v) *WEU Institute for Security Studies*

83. The Paris ministerial organs were wound up at the end of June 1990 and the WEU Institute for Security Studies took up its duties officially on 1st July 1990. The Institute, established under the aegis of the Council, has been given two, inter-related missions:

- study and research for the governments of the member states of WEU represented by the Council and in consultation with the Secretariat-General of the organisation. The independent and objective nature of this work is laid down in a number of the main clauses of the ministerial decision of 13th November 1989;
- stimulating the wider debate on European security issues: the Institute will develop links with the other relevant institutes and centres of research; develop new structures for meetings and dialogue with individuals from non-WEU countries, in particular with the countries of Eastern and Central Europe; establish a data-bank on the range of research undertaken in Europe on security issues.

84. In addition the Institute is charged with: "creating networks for exchanges between those concerned in the media, parliaments (in particular the parliamentary Assembly of WEU), national administrations, universities and industry."

85. The initial work programme is concentrated around four broad areas:

- the European security identity;
- the development of European security structures;
- Western European defence issues;
- economic and North-South dimensions of European security.

86. It has been much appreciated that on occasion Rapporteurs from the Assembly's committees have been invited to attend the relevant seminar. Your Rapporteur hopes that such contacts may be increased in the future and that studies carried out by the Institute may be made available to members of the Assembly, as promised by the Secretary-General. (Sadly, not yet the case, given the "highly-classified" nature of such studies...)

(vi) *Agency for the Control of Armaments*

87. In addition to its residual tasks in respect of atomic, biological and chemical weapons control, the Agency for the Control of Armaments followed the work of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva in these areas, particularly the negotiations to bring about a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and those aimed at strengthening the 1972 convention on the prohibition of biological weapons.

88. As for the programme of inspections carried out by the ACA, the area examined has increased considerably with the unification of Germany. The whole of Germany is now in theory subject to the application of the accords on chemical weapons and WEU inspectors should be able to examine the incidence of activity concerning chemical or inter-related materials wherever they may be located.

89. As the only agency which has specialised in chemical arms control for the last 35 years, the WEU Agency for the Control of Armaments should surely have a starring rôle to play in verifying Iraq's compliance with the latest United Nations directives concerning chemical weapons. Has the Council remembered that it possesses such an agency and offered its services to the United Nations?

90. In Document 1204, Force comparisons (NATO and Warsaw Pact military potential) – reply to the annual report of the Council (Rapporteur: Mr. Steiner), the committee expressed its disappointment that information on inspections carried out by the ACA was missing from the Council's 1989 reports. The Council in 1990 has given a little more detail, but nothing like the sort of information which used to be furnished:

" 1. *Atomic weapons*

The ACA does not exercise any control over these weapons.

2. *Biological weapons*

All member states agreed to carry forward to 1990 the 1989 list of biological weapons subject to control. The Council took note.

As in previous years, however, the ACA exercised no control over these weapons.

3. *Chemical weapons*

All member states notified the agency that they agreed to carry forward, during 1990, the list of chemical equipment and products (chemical weapons) subject to control applicable in 1989. The Council took note.

Following the usual procedure, the agency asked member states whether there had been any actual production of chemical weapons on their mainland territory. All member states replied in the negative.

No country reported holding chemical weapons on the mainland of Europe.

Also following the usual procedure, four 'agreed non-production measures' were carried out at the chemical production plants. In exercising these controls, the ACA observed nothing contrary to the undertakings not to manufacture chemical weapons."

VII. *The implementation of Protocol No. II on WEU forces*

91. The committee is grateful to the Council for responding to its last critique concerning information on the implementation of Protocol No. II of the modified Brussels Treaty on Western European Union forces and supplying the following detail in the thirty-sixth annual report:

" 1. *Forces of WEU member states under NATO command: implementation of Article IV of Protocol No. II*

(i) In accordance with Article IV of Protocol No. II, and in order that it may establish that the limits specified in Articles I and II of that protocol are being observed, the Council received information acquired as a result of inspections carried out by the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. The information, which was forwarded by the SACEUR representative, reviewed the situation regarding forces assigned to NATO by WEU member states as of 31st December 1990.

(ii) The presentation by the SACEUR representative, who was accompanied by

other SHAPE representatives, gave rise to a discussion with members of the Council, in particular on the structure of forces, the current process of the NATO strategy review and the concept of multinational forces.

2. The average number of British land forces stationed on the mainland of Europe during the first nine months of 1990 in accordance with the commitment in Article VI of Protocol No. II was 50 023. In addition there were on average 1 103 personnel, excluded from the above, deployed on short tours of duty to Northern Ireland to meet the continued need for the presence of troops there. An average of 460 personnel, excluded from the above, were also deployed to meet commitments in Cyprus. As previously stated these units would have been speedily returned to their duty station in an emergency affecting NATO.

So far as the strength of the United Kingdom's contribution to the second tactical allied air force in 1990 is concerned, there is no change to the 1989 figures. For convenience these are shown below:

<i>Rôle</i>	<i>Aircraft/ equipment</i>	<i>Squadrons</i>
Strike/attack Offensive support	Tornado	7
	Harrier	2
Reconnais- sance	Tornado	1
	Phantom	2
Air defence	Rapier	
	surface-to-air missiles	4
	Puma	1
Air transport	Chinook	1
	RAF regiment	1


In the last quarter of 1990 some 23 000 land forces, 27 Tornado GR1 aircraft and elements of the RAF regiment were deployed to the Gulf from Germany as part of the coalition forces. The bulk of these have now returned." (In itself this was a remarkable logistic operation.)

92. The committee is pleased that the statutory information for 1990 has been made available. Although the European situation is evolving faster than one may sometimes write, the Council should continue to respect the provisions of the modified Brussels Treaty unless and until it is formally revised.

VIII. Postscript

93. Throughout this reply to the annual report of the Council it is obvious that the Council and its organs are infinitely more active than even only a few years ago. In this sense, as well as in an operational context where the Gulf crisis is concerned, WEU is well and truly reactivated. The information-flow from the Secretary-General to the Assembly is vastly improved also. But while regular information is now given on what is being done,

(“ this meeting, that seminar ”, etc., etc.) very little substance of what is actually being discussed, the pros and cons of such and such a course of action, details of deliberation in the various instances (such as the SWG, DRG, etc.) is in fact transmitted to parliamentarians, who often come to hear of the Council’s opinions through third parties or the press. This is particularly important at present when the current structure of European security is under review and decisions of far-reaching consequence are imminent.

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