

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

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1123rd meeting of the Council

- Energy -

Brussels, 26 November 1986

President: Mr Peter WALKER
Secretary of State for Energy
of the United Kingdom

Luxembourg:

Mr Marcel SCHLECHTER

Minister for Energy

Netherlands:

Mr R.W. de KORTE

Minister for Economic Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Leonardo MATHIAS

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

United Kingdom:

Mr Peter WALKER

Secretary of State for Energy

Mr David HUNT

Parliamentary Under-Secretary
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Commission:

Mr Nicolas MOSAR

Member

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Council gave high priority in its discussions to the topic of energy efficiency.

It discussed the broad outlines of progress made and the measures planned in the sphere of energy efficiency throughout the Community and in the individual Member States. It recorded its agreement on a statement stressing in particular the need to continue and, if necessary, intensify efforts to improve energy efficiency. The text of the statement is given below (see pages 5 and 6).

Furthermore, with respect to the rational use of energy in transport, the Council noted a Commission communication on the potential for and problems with achieving greater fuel efficiency in certain transport sectors. After an exchange of views on the subject, it approved the conclusions set out below (see pages 7, 8 and 9).

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY

1. At its meeting on 26 November 1986 on energy questions, the Council reviewed progress on energy efficiency in the Community as a whole and in the various Member States.
2. It noted that the efficiency of energy use had improved by over 20 per cent in the Community since the first oil crisis of 1973 following which the Council resolved in 1974 that a structured and integrated programme of energy efficiency should be pursued by the Community and its Member States. This commitment was reaffirmed in 1980 and 1985.
3. Despite this progress, the Council agreed that the current oil situation may not prevail and that in any event opportunities for cost-effective energy efficiency measures continued to be numerous. The efficient use of energy increases security of supply, improves European industrial competitiveness and is beneficial to the environment. All these reasons made it more necessary for the Community and Member States to continue and if necessary intensify their efforts to achieve the objective of improving energy efficiency by 20 per cent by 1995 agreed in the Council Resolution of 16 September 1986.
4. For the purposes of realizing this potential, the Council agreed that the Community and the individual Member States will:
 - (a) publicize the need for greater energy efficiency, making available full information and advice on how this can be achieved;

- (b) promote good techniques and the use of new and existing technologies in order to ensure that their potential contribution for further energy savings is fully realized;
 - (c) regularly exchange information and experience at all levels, particularly under Commission auspices, on effective measures to improve energy efficiency in order to enable all the relevant lessons to be drawn by all concerned;
 - (d) reassess existing methods and examine novel methods for private financing in this field.
5. The Council restated the need for diversified promotion of technological innovations through research, development and demonstration and by rapid dissemination of the results throughout the Community. The Council reaffirmed the value of the programmes currently being implemented at national and Community level.
6. Finally, the Council noted that Member States and the Commission will ensure that a special effort will be made to inform the public about the steps they will take to give effect to these undertakings.

RATIONAL USE OF ENERGY IN ROAD, RAIL AND INLAND
WATERWAY TRANSPORT - CONCLUSIONS OF THE COUNCIL

1. The Council welcomed a communication from the Commission on the potential for and problems with achieving greater fuel efficiency in certain transport sectors. The communication, intended as a discussion document, stimulated a wide-ranging first exchange of views, in which a number of problems were tackled.

2. The Council noted that:
 - the transport sector remained, particularly due to structural reasons, almost totally dependent on oil products;

 - despite progress made in improving energy efficiency in specific sectors, particularly in motor vehicles, overall consumption of oil products in the transport sector had increased markedly since the first oil crisis, mainly as a result of traffic growth;

 - this differed from the trends in the industrial and domestic sectors, which had seen significant reductions in energy consumption and major decreases in oil dependence;

- the increase in levels of oil consumption in the transport sector was a matter of concern.

3. The Council agreed that further work was necessary to explore the potential for energy saving and reduced oil dependence. In particular, in the light of the options already identified by the Commission in its communication, it requested that attention should be paid to:

- (a) the relationship with other Community policies, particularly in the transport, environmental and research fields, and the separate responsibilities discharged and action taken by different Government agencies at central and local levels;
- (b) the essential role of the consumer, the many factors which affect consumer behaviour including the effects of consumer response to lower oil prices and the continued need to promote awareness of fuel efficiency;
- (c) the relationship between fuel prices to the final consumer and consumption in transport;
- (d) the roles of Government and industry in bringing improved technologies to market, deriving in particular from advances in research, development and demonstration;
- (e) an examination of additional options, suggested by Member States.

4. The Council noted that the Commission:

- will examine in depth the options and other areas of importance identified in discussion of this communication;

- has the intention of completing its examination of rational use of energy in the transport sector, and extending it to the fields of air and sea transport, including coastal transport;
- will assess the effect of lower oil prices on consumption trends in the transport sector.

NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

The Council adopted the following Resolution on a Community orientation to develop new and renewable energy sources:

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having taken note of the Commission communication of 29 January 1986 on a Community orientation to develop new and renewable energy sources,

Having regard to the Opinion of the European Parliament ⁽¹⁾,

Having regard to the Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee ⁽²⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 227, 8.7.1986, p. 28.
⁽²⁾ OJ No C 207, 18.8.1986, p. 11.

Having regard to the Council Resolution of 9 June 1980 concerning Community energy policy objectives for 1990 and convergence of the policies of the Member States ⁽¹⁾, and the Council Resolution of 16 September 1986 on new Community energy objectives for 1995 and the convergence of the policies of the Member States ⁽²⁾;

Whereas in the Council Resolution of 25 July 1983 on framework programmes for Community research, development and demonstration activities and a first framework programme for 1984 to 1987 ⁽³⁾, the development of renewable energy sources is considered to be one of the research, development and demonstration objectives which will achieve the Community aim of improving the management of energy resources;

Whereas the development of a Community energy strategy calls for a greater use of new and renewable energy sources insofar as their future prospects of economic viability are demonstrated and whereas greater exploitation of these sources will help achieve these objectives;

Whereas Regulation (EEC) No 1972/83 ⁽⁴⁾ introduced a Community programme of financial support for demonstration projects in the field of alternative energy sources and whereas, following a favourable assessment of this programme, Regulation (EEC) No 3640/85 ⁽⁵⁾ provided for it to be continued from 1986 to 1989;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 149, 18. 6.1980, p. 1
⁽²⁾ OJ No C 241, 25. 9.1986, p. 1
⁽³⁾ OJ No C 208, 4. 8.1983, p. 1
⁽⁴⁾ OJ No L 195, 19. 7.1983, p. 6
⁽⁵⁾ OJ No L 350, 27.12.1985, p. 29

Whereas the energy research and development programmes adopted by Decisions 75/510/EEC ⁽¹⁾ and 79/785/EEC ⁽²⁾ have produced positive results and opened up promising prospects of achieving the objectives pursued; whereas a new programme for 1985 to 1988 was adopted by the Council on 12 March 1985;

Whereas the measures now in progress to develop the use of new and renewable sources of energy offer a guarantee of increased energy supplies for the Community in the long term;

Whereas Community and national research, development and demonstration programmes should gradually provide appropriate technologies to exploit new and renewable energy sources;

Whereas, in addition to these programmes, although it should be remembered that new and renewable energy sources are often dependent on local conditions and the interest in their exploitation varies throughout the Community, new and renewable energy sources in the Member States must be adequately and harmoniously developed;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 231, 2.9.1975, p. 1.
⁽²⁾ OJ No L 231, 13.9.1979, p. 30.

Whereas a common orientation to develop new and renewable energy sources should therefore be adopted;

1. TAKES NOTE of the Commission communication to the Council on a Community orientation to develop new and renewable energy sources;
2. AGREES that a Community orientation to develop new and renewable energy sources must seek to:
 - (a) optimize the exploitation of those sources in the Community, taking into account what is available in each Member State;
 - (b) make its efforts as profitable as possible, avoiding, inter alia, duplication and enabling all potential exploiters at Community level to benefit from the experience acquired;
 - (c) ensure co-operation at Community level with a view to the coherence, if necessary, of national legislative, financial and information measures;
 - (d) prepare, if appropriate, measures at Community level, without prejudice to those already undertaken, designed to encourage the use of new and renewable energy sources;

(e) facilitate industrial co-operation and the extension of markets;

and REQUESTS the Member States to support the Commission in the implementation of the above guidelines.

A major criterion governing the Community's promotion of, and involvement with, any particular source of new and renewable energy will be the ultimate prospects of economic viability for that source;

3. AGREES that Member States should engage in a tighter exchange of information on the development of the exploitation of new and renewable energy sources through concerted action and, if necessary, ensure co-ordination at Community level;
4. CALLS upon the Commission to continue and develop its work under the demonstration programme and to examine the possibility of setting up a suitable system for collecting statistics on these sources;
5. CALLS on the Member States to examine the need to set up agencies, in those Member States where there are none, to promote the use of new and renewable energy sources in order to advise contracting public authorities, local authorities and small and medium-sized businesses in the planning of feasibility studies and on the technical and financial aspects of implementing projects to exploit these sources; such agencies should also devote special attention to informing the public of the genuine possibilities for exploiting new and renewable energy sources;

6. CALLS upon the Commission to report to it on a regular basis on the development of the exploitation of new and renewable energy sources in Member States and on the implementation of the orientation;
7. REQUESTS the Commission to submit proposals to the Council as appropriate.

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The Council also held an initial exchange of views on the follow-up to this Resolution. In the light of the discussions, it asked the Commission to arrange a meeting of scientists responsible for new and renewable energy sources in the various Member States early in 1987 to exchange information on new and renewable energy source programmes in progress in the Community.

INDICATION BY LABELLING OF THE ENERGY CONSUMPTION OF HOUSEHOLD
APPLIANCES

The Council examined a number of questions outstanding with respect to this dossier, in particular the permissible tolerance margin in checking the accuracy of the consumption shown on labels.

The three draft Directives concerned are designed to apply the labelling requirements provided for in the framework Directive adopted in 1979 ⁽¹⁾ to the specific cases of washing machines, dishwashers and electric refrigerators, frozen food cabinets, freezers and their combinations, for the purposes of both consumer protection and rational use of energy.

In conclusion, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to press on with its work on the matter in the light of today's discussions so that the Council can adopt the Directives in question as soon as possible.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 145, 13 June 1979, p. 1

NUCLEAR QUESTIONS - PRESIDENCY CONCLUSIONS

The Council:

- had a useful discussion of nuclear issues in the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident;
- agreed that the development and use of nuclear power requires the maintenance of the highest standards of safety and environmental protection, as well as co-operation within the Community and internationally;
- took note of the Commission's report on progress with the programme of work outlined in its framework communication of 16 June 1986, and invited the Commission to bring forward detailed proposals, emphasizing that they should be soundly based and bring concrete benefits to the peoples of the Community;
- instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the Commission's proposals and bring them forward for discussion by the Council as quickly as possible;
- agreed, in view of the importance of the issues covered by these communications both for a safe nuclear industry as well as for the protection of health and environment, that it should keep these matters under urgent review.

NEW COMMUNITY ENERGY POLICY OBJECTIVES FOR 1995

The Council began by pointing out that by adopting new Community energy policy objectives for 1995 in September 1986, it had clearly demonstrated the political will of the Community and the Member States to persevere with restructuring of the energy economy so as to ensure greater security of supply.

At today's meeting the Council noted that the Commission would submit to a later meeting a more detailed analysis of the impact of the new market situation and an assessment of the efforts needed to achieve the 1995 objectives.

It was also noted that at the end of 1987 the Commission would examine the Member States' energy policies so as to pinpoint the problems experienced and the progress made towards the objectives.

SITUATION OF THE OIL MARKET - REFINING PROBLEMS

The Council examined the latest data on the situation and asked the Commission to continue to keep a close watch on all developments with respect to trade in and consumption of oil and the situation of the Community refining industry.

BROWN COAL AND PEAT

The Council heard a communication from Commissioner MOSAR on progress in the Commission with work on solid fuels. A number of delegations stressed the importance they attached to this dossier.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Machine-translation system - EUROTRA

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision amending, with regard to the accession of Spain and Portugal, Decision 82/752/EEC on the adoption of a European Economic Community research and development programme for a machine-translation system of advanced design (EUROTRA).

The accession of Spain and Portugal increases the number of official languages to be handled by EUROTRA from seven to nine which, in view of the contrastive treatment of language pairs planned for the system, will result in a substantial increase in such language pairs. The technical and financial implications of this extension call for substantial modifications to the EUROTRA programme.

Consequently, the original 1982 Decision on EUROTRA has been amended; the programme has been extended by eighteen months, and is thus due to finish in November 1989, and the financial allocation for the second phase, which is currently in progress, has been increased by 4,5 MECU (to 20,5 MECU from 16 MECU).

Atomic question

The Council took note of a Commission communication regarding a Memorandum of Understanding between the European Atomic Energy Community, represented by the Commission of the European Communities, and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, concerning reserach on the health and environmental effects of radiation.

Commercial policy

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities:

- a Regulation extending (for no longer than two months) the provisional anti-dumping duty on imports of roller bearings originating in Japan imposed by Regulation No 2516/86;
 - a Regulation imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of potassium permanganate originating in the People's Republic of China and definitively collecting the provisional anti-dumping duty imposed on imports of potassium permanganate originating in Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of China. The amount of the duty is equal to either the amount by which the price per kilogram net free-at-Community-frontier, not cleared through customs, is less than 2,30 ECU or 28% of that price, whichever is the higher.
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