

# ***COUNCIL GUIDE***

*Internal document*

## ***I. Presidency Handbook***

*- 1996 -*

General Secretariat

DG F - Information policy

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1997

ISBN 92-824-1295-4

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*Printed in Belgium*

## FOREWORD

The complexity of the tasks facing the Council means that Council working methods need to be redefined regularly. In order to facilitate the work of the Presidency and of the delegations, the Council introduced systematic planning of meetings from the end of 1988 and initiated publication by the General Secretariat of a *Presidency Vade-mecum*. The entry into force of the Treaty on European Union made the organization of proceedings even more complex: consequently, the Council instructed the Secretary-General to draw up a genuine handbook covering all Council activities.



This first edition of the new *Council Guide* presented by the General Secretariat was compiled under its sole responsibility; it has no legal force and is an internal document intended solely as an aid for the Presidency and Member State delegations.

The *Guide* covers the whole range of Council activities. It consists of three sections, each published separately. The first section – the Presidency Handbook – continues the operation begun with *the Presidency Vade-mecum* and sets out in a practical context the arrangements concerning the preparation and running of a Presidency. The second section consists of Comments on the Council's Rules of Procedure, reflecting the current interpretation of that text in practice. The third section – the Delegates' Handbook – contains practical information on the planning and running of meetings, the internal organization of the General Secretariat and the services provided for delegates.

My wish, in making this first version of *the Council Guide* available to those involved in the work of our Institution, has been to satisfy the request voiced by the Council and to contribute towards efforts to ensure information and transparency. Any suggestions concerning the content of this Guide will be welcome.

The Secretary-General

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Jürgen Trumpf". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jürgen TRUMPF

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# **Part I**

## **Presidency Handbook**



## Chapter I – General

### 1. Sources

The Treaty on European Union <sup>(1)</sup> and the Treaties establishing the three European Communities contain a number of provisions dealing with the role of the Council Presidency and the conditions in which it is exercised.

- **Article 146 of the Treaty establishing the European Community** <sup>(2)</sup> as amended by Article 12 of the Act of Accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden stipulates that the office of President shall be held in turn by each Member State for a term of six months in the order determined by the Council Decision of 1 January 1995, which is as follows: France, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Netherlands, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, Austria, Germany, Finland, Portugal, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark and Greece. This sequence may be amended by the Council acting unanimously. **Article 147 TEC** (and the corresponding Articles in the ECSC and Euratom Treaties: Article 27a ECSC and Article 117 Euratom) gives the President in particular the task of convening the Council. Other Articles specify the role of the Presidency by field or sector. The Presidency's overall role, inherent in the office, is not described by the Treaty.
- In the field of economic policy, the **second subparagraph of Article 103(4) TEC** gives the President of the Council certain tasks (report to the European Parliament on the results of multilateral surveillance, explaining the Council's public recommendations to European Parliament committees).
- For the common foreign and security policy (CFSP), **Article J.5 TEU** lays down the responsibilities of the Presidency (representing the Union in matters coming within the CFSP, implementing common measures, expressing positions of the Union in international organizations and international conferences).

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<sup>(1)</sup> Subsequently referred to as the TEU.

<sup>(2)</sup> Subsequently referred to as the TEC. See also Articles 27 of the ECSC Treaty and 116 of the Euratom Treaty.

- On cooperation on justice and home affairs (JHA), **Article K.6 TEU** defines the role of the Presidency (regularly informing the European Parliament and consulting it on the principal aspects of activities in Title VI).
- **Article N(1) TEU** gives the President the task of convening the Conference of Representatives of the Governments of the Member States to adopt amendments to the Treaties on which the European Union is based.

The CRP supplement and further define this general framework by highlighting the tasks of the President throughout the Council's decision-making process and, by analogy, within its preparatory bodies.

Finally, **practice** is the third well-spring for defining the role of the Presidency. Discounting the (more or less) marked aspects of national character which can set their stamp on the role for six months, experience over the years has fleshed out the broad lines of the Presidency's role, the main features of which are described below.

## 2. There is one Presidency

The counterpart of the single institutional framework – an essential element of the structure of the Treaty on European Union – is the single Presidency which is held by the same Member State in every sphere of activity of the Union (Community matters, CFSP and JHA) and at all levels (from working parties to the European Council).

There are, nevertheless, certain gradations or exceptions to the principle of a single Presidency stemming from the need for the greatest possible efficiency and cohesion, while ensuring continuity of action by the Union. These are essentially:

- (a) **Evolving programmes**, like the one put in place to implement the internal market or **programmes spread over several Presidencies** (experimented with by the German, French, Spanish and Italian Presidencies), or even **instances of**

**overlapping** stipulated within the CRP <sup>(1)</sup>, (which provide that the place of the Presidency-in-Office is taken by the following Presidency on committees and Coreper where it is certain that the Council meeting at which the decision will be taken cannot be held before the following Presidency) or **temporary rules**, constitute other instances of such qualifications.

- (b) **The Troika** is an institution which associates around the Presidency-in-Office the preceding and succeeding Presidencies as a way of meeting the need to give Union action a broader basis and a higher profile, as well as greater continuity (see Article J.5(3) TEU).
- (c) The possibility of **twofold external representation** by the Presidency and Commission, which is used particularly at international conferences, corresponds both to the requirement for consistency and to a longstanding practice whereby the Commission has often been chosen as Community spokesman to the outside world.

### 3. **The Presidency is neutral**

The Presidency must, by definition, be **neutral and impartial**. It is the moderator for discussions and cannot therefore favour either its own preferences or those of a particular Member State. This presupposes both good coordination with its own State's spokesmen so that they can voice the national position without impeding the work of the Presidency, as well as taking due account, on their own merits, of all positions expressed.

This duty to be neutral exists alongside the **political dimension** which informs the conduct of Union business and which is particularly apparent in the order of priority set in the choice and handling of items of business. This order of priority is occasioned by considerations of topicality and of deadlines, as well as by the political tone which the Presidency wishes to set for its six-month period. In its role as moderator, the Presidency must also take action where it notes that a stalemate has occurred; this will take the form of **compromise suggestions** to endeavour to reconcile the different interests involved on a subject or a set of subjects (package deal) which inevitably means that political choices have to be made.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Such overlapping is mentioned in Article 19(3).

#### 4. **The Presidency deploys national resources**

Major deployment of the entire national administrative apparatus is required to get the Presidency up and running. Each Member State uses its own working methods conditioned by its traditions and culture, as well as more incidental considerations linked to its size or the nature of its interests. The size of this extra workload for national administrations (both capitals and Permanent Representations), even for the larger Member States, should not be underestimated. The success of a Presidency is largely determined by how it responds to this problem. Nevertheless, the administration of the Member State taking on the Presidency is not working in isolation since it has the **support of the General Secretariat of the Council.**

#### 5. **The Presidency is always in the hands of the Council**

Any procedural decision by the Presidency may be challenged by the Council by a simple majority. Any statement by or letter from the Presidency expressing the Council position, particularly in relations with the other Institutions, must meet with the Council's agreement.

#### 6. **The General Secretariat of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>**

Article 151(2) TEC stipulates that the General Secretariat, under the direction of a Secretary-General, shall assist the Council, which shall decide on its organization. This task, which the General Secretariat performs alongside the Presidency, embraces several types of function:

- (a) Besides the logistical support as described in Chapter VII, the General Secretariat **supports the Presidency** in its responsibilities for organizing work (drawing up the timetable, setting the dates of meetings, convening meetings – telexes, briefings before meetings, etc).
- (b) The General Secretariat, if necessary, informs **the Presidency** during the course of meetings about the procedures applicable, and **draws up the minutes of meetings**, as well as all the documents reporting on progress or summarizing results, at

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also Part III, Chapter II.

every stage of the decision-making process (working parties, committees, Coreper and Council) and makes sure that those results are disseminated <sup>(1)</sup>.

- (c) It acts as the registrar and **memory** of the Council's discussions and decisions.
- (d) Besides its notarial-type work, the General Secretariat has progressively built up an **advisory role** with the Presidency which manifests itself in different ways; in particular it is involved - to varying degrees - in working out the terms of the Presidency compromises, in respect of both drafting and content.
- (e) **The Legal Service** of the Council has a specific role to play which should be emphasized. Representatives attend certain committee, Coreper, Council and European Council (and often working party) meetings and are called upon to decide on legal issues raised in discussions. The Legal Service also has to provide legal clarification of certain aspects of proceedings. Such oral contributions, which are in some cases set down in written form, are important factors for the Presidency in its conduct of proceedings. Finally, it represents the Council before the Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance.
- (f) As part of the policy of **transparency**, the General Secretariat has responsibility for implementing on behalf of the Council, Council Decision 93/731/EC <sup>(2)</sup> on public access to Council documents in compliance with the Council's powers under the same Decision. It also manages public access to statements and extracts from minutes made accessible to the public under the Code of Conduct of 2 October 1995.
- (g) The Secretary-General gives notice of Council acts.
- (h) The Secretary-General or senior Council officials may, acting on the Presidency's instructions, represent the Council before European Parliament committees.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See below (Press Service).

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 340, 31.12.1993.

(i) **The Press Service**, which reports to the Private Office of the Secretary-General, provides information on the Council to the outside world by drafting:

- press releases circulated prior to Council meetings; these basically give the agenda;
- background notes on certain items under discussion which are available for the briefing which the Presidency gives to the press in the week before the Council meeting, and
- press releases circulated after the Council meeting containing the outcome of proceedings and the text of any statements, resolutions or agreements decided on by the Council and including the results of public votes (!) in the Council, together with any explanations of vote.

The Press Service also publishes and circulates any Council statements adopted outside Council meetings (written procedure) and, finally, arranges contacts with journalists, particularly briefings prior to Council and Coreper meetings. In performing these tasks, the Press Service is an instrument at the heart of the policy of transparency.

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The General Secretariat of the Council, including its Legal Service, performs the same role in all areas of the Council's activity, including the CFSP and JHA.

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(<sup>1</sup>) See Chapter III, point 4(g).

## Chapter II – Getting ready for the Presidency

### 1. Timetable of meetings <sup>(1)</sup>

Every Presidency draws up a timetable of Council meetings which has to be available **seven months before the start of the six months of the Presidency** when it is notified to the General Secretariat of the Council (Article 1(2) CRP).

**This timetable is drawn up** to take account, as far as possible, of public holidays in the various Member States and at the General Secretariat. Generally speaking, the Presidency must try and spread work in as balanced a way as possible throughout the six months to prevent an excessive concentration at the end of its term of office; it must also try to avoid overlapping meetings so that members of Coreper (I or II) can attend the Council meetings on matters for which they are competent. As a general rule it is not advisable to have more than two Council meetings on the same day. The Presidency also makes every endeavour not to schedule General Affairs and ECOFIN Council meetings in January and September.

### 2. Changes to the timetable

If it considers it advisable, the Presidency can always **change** the timetable by dropping or adding a meeting.

For practical reasons involving the availability of Ministers, in particular, limited use should be made of the option of changing the dates of Council meetings. It is also generally accepted that a month's notice is needed before the date of the Council meeting. If it does change the timetable, the Presidency must be sure to consult the members of Coreper. Any requests from the Commission or delegations for changes to the timetable must also be made in Coreper.

The Presidency examines the other delegations' requests and comments carefully but it

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also Part III, Chapter I, points 1 and 2.

is accepted that, since it is in charge of organizing work, it is the Presidency which determines the timetable (even if, formally, such a procedural decision is a matter for a simple majority).

With regard to **venues** for meetings, it should be noted that in accordance with the Decision taken by common agreement between the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on 12 December 1992 on the basis of the relevant Articles of the Treaties establishing the European Communities, the Council has its seat in **Brussels**. During the months of April, June and October, the Council holds its meetings in **Luxembourg**. In exceptional circumstances and for duly substantiated reasons, the Council, acting unanimously, may decide to hold a meeting elsewhere (Article 1(3) of the Rules of Procedure).

The Presidency must try to limit as far as possible the **formations** in which the Council is called upon to meet and shall therefore endeavour to group together subject matters so as to enable the number of specialized Councils to be reduced. Before convening a Council meeting in a new formation, the General Affairs Council must decide whether such a new idea is appropriate.

### 3. **Planning of work – preparing indicative agendas**

Following the conclusions on the improvement of working methods adopted by the Council at its 1292nd meeting on 10 December 1988, it was stipulated that "in order to prepare more effectively for Council meetings, as regards both **content** and **timing**, (...) it appears desirable for a detailed "**work programme**" to be drawn up for each Presidency before the start of the six-month period". The work of the Council is organized on the basis of this work programme.

**The work programme takes the form of an indicative agenda** for each Council meeting scheduled to be held. It may be used to identify by sector the objectives assigned to the Council, work to be organized upstream of the Council (working parties and Coreper) to clear the way for achieving those objectives, and to organize relations with the other institutions or bodies of the Union due to take part in the decision-making process. A further use is enabling Member States to conduct their internal procedures in line with the progress of work within the Council.



In substance, it is of an indicative nature since it is impossible to plan for every contingency as events develop; for planning to remain entirely credible, however, the main point to remember is that changes should be confined solely to instances of "force majeure". This kind of planning must be carried out long enough in advance to ensure a smooth transition between each Presidency.

This work programme is drafted in coordination with the General Secretariat of the Council and in liaison with the General Secretariat of the Commission, the European Parliament General Secretariat and the preceding and succeeding Presidencies.

As part of the coordination mentioned previously between the various bodies of the European Union <sup>(1)</sup>, and in order to ensure a smooth transition between every Presidency, each Presidency should:

- update dossiers to be examined in the six-month period,
- cross-check the timetables for procedures to take place within each institution. In the case of the European Parliament, it is vital to know the timetable for plenary sessions and committee meetings,
- assess the importance of each dossier and its political or technical nature which may affect the course of the procedure to be followed by the Council,
- allocate dossiers under the decision-making procedures arising from the Treaty, in order particularly to take into account more effectively the new arrangements for legislative procedure (consultation, cooperation, co-decision, assent).

The CRP stipulate (Article 6(1)) that the Council will hold **policy debates** on the six-monthly work programme submitted by the Presidency and where appropriate, on the Commission's annual work programme. These debates are retransmitted publicly by audiovisual means.

The work programme is forwarded in good time by the General Secretariat of the Council to the various delegations and the Commission for information.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also Chapter IV, point 1 (a).

#### 4. The machinery of the Presidency

The prime task when setting up the Presidency is to **appoint the chairmen of the various working parties and committees**. Depending on the kind of working party or committee, the Presidency will decide whether, besides the chair, it should appoint a deputy chairman, as well as a national spokesman.

The roles of Chairman and national spokesman are (in principle) separate. It is essential that the appropriate contacts take place before meetings so that, among other things, this distinction can be clarified.

Nevertheless, Article 19(3) CRP states that "for the preparation of meetings of Council compositions meeting once every six months (e.g. Culture or Education) and held during the first half of this period, the meetings of committees other than Coreper and those of working parties held during the preceding six months may be chaired by a delegate of the Member State whose turn it is to chair the said Council meetings.". This exception has, to date, never been applied.

If the Presidency is unable to attend any Council meeting, it will be chaired by the following Presidency.

It is thus for the Presidency to:

- determine the national chairman and spokesman for each working party and committee;
- appoint, before the start of the six months, the persons who will be chairing the meetings of Coreper I and II, the Political Committee, the K.4 Committee, the SCA, the Article 113 Committee <sup>(1)</sup>, as well as the Antici Group and the Mertens Group;
- appoint spokesmen at each level in each sector.

In order to coordinate every aspect of the organization of meetings, the Presidency must also designate someone at the Permanent Representation as an **official responsible**

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(<sup>1</sup>) With the exception of the Monetary Committee.

for the physical organization of meetings who will remain in regular contact with the General Secretariat departments responsible for reserving rooms and teams of interpreters (1).

This person is empowered to notify the General Secretariat of the Presidency's priorities, particularly where the number of meetings theoretically planned for a given day exceeds interpretation or meeting-room capacity. Depending on new priorities, a meeting (even if planned for a long time) may also have to be called off at the last minute.

This person must be able to negotiate with working party chairmen and, if need be, arbitrate. It is essential for him to have a genuine understanding of how the decision-making system works, of the procedures for organizing meetings and of the respective roles of civil servants from the capitals, from the Permanent Representations, from the General Secretariat of the Council and from the Joint Interpreting and Conference Service. He is acting on behalf of the Chairman of Coreper, and on his authority.

He will have to devote a great deal of time to this role which is essential for the smooth running of the Presidency and should, therefore, as far as possible, be relieved of other duties.

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(1) See also Part III.

## Chapter III – How the decision-making process works

Leaving aside developments concerning purely procedural aspects <sup>(1)</sup> (which are discussed in Part II) and any consultation of the other institutions and bodies of the Union which may influence the course of examination within the Council <sup>(2)</sup>, this Chapter concentrates on the organization of the various stages of examination within the Council until the final decision is taken (with regard to the co-decision procedure, see Chapter IV, point 1(f)). A number of peculiarities relating to Titles V (CFSP) and VI (JHA) are dealt with in Chapters V and VI.

A list of Council working parties is given in **Annex III** to this volume.

### 1. Working parties

Once the General Secretariat has received a Commission proposal <sup>(3)</sup>, the relevant working party is convened on the instructions of Coreper (or the SCA <sup>(4)</sup> for most agricultural questions) as follows:

- with the Presidency's agreement, the General Secretariat sends a telex to the members of the working party – in theory, at least one week before the meeting – convening the meeting (and advising them of the agenda);
- in choosing the date for the meeting, the availability of rooms and interpreters must

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<sup>(1)</sup> The reference here is essentially to the procedures laid down in Articles 189b and 189c TEC and those peculiar to the budget, international agreements and Titles V and VI TEU.

<sup>(2)</sup> It is for the General Secretariat to advise the Presidency of the procedural context in which examination within the Council will take place and of the consultations which will be required in that context. The Council conclusions on the improvement of working methods adopted on 10 December 1988 state: "Under existing guidelines, the Secretariat is to ensure that delegations have available to them the Opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, as soon as these have been issued. The Chairmen at Working Party level will ensure that the Opinions of the Parliament and Economic and Social Committee are given due weight in deliberations, so that the Secretariat can report to the Permanent Representatives Committee and can draft more appropriately the explanatory memoranda covering the Council common positions addressed to the Parliament."

<sup>(3)</sup> Proposals for Community matters can, as a general rule, come only from the Commission. For Titles V and VI TEU, the initiative may come from the Presidency, the Member States or the Commission except in the areas provided for in Article K.1(7), (8) and (9) TEU.

<sup>(4)</sup> The SCA (Special Committee on Agriculture) was set up in 1960.

be taken into account <sup>(1)</sup>, as well as foreseeable dates for going on to Coreper (or the SCA) <sup>(2)</sup>. In view of the time which must elapse between the referral to Coreper and the Council (see below: 2 or 3 weeks), it is evident that the last working party examination must normally be 3 to 4 weeks before the Council meeting at which it is to be examined;

- the documents (proposal or, for a second examination by the working party, the working party report) must reach delegations at least one week before the date of the meeting <sup>(3)</sup>.

The Presidency, with the assistance of the General Secretariat of the Council, prepares the agendas for working party meetings. It may be helpful, when organizing proceedings, to set up an advance meeting between the Presidency and the relevant Secretariat officials (briefing) which the Commission representative may be invited to attend where the subject so warrants.

Relations between the chairman and the spokesman of the State holding the Presidency need to be clarified before the meeting in order to avoid both blatant collusion and contradictory situations which would compromise the clarity of discussions. In some instances, if no spokesman is appointed, the chairman may have no alternative but to assume both roles. Should he find himself in such a situation – which should be avoided wherever possible – the chairman should make it clear, when speaking, which hat he is wearing.

The working party **operates** on similar lines to the Council and Coreper (except for voting, see below). It is intended to provide an opportunity for delegates from the Member States to compare and contrast their respective positions in order to iron out the difficulties occasioned by the proposal under discussion insofar as those difficulties are not substantive, horizontal or institutional in nature and thus warrant discussion by Coreper.

The working party generally carries out a thorough examination of the proposal, article by article, and reports to Coreper only when it considers that the dossier has been

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<sup>(1)</sup> For rooms and interpreting, see Part III.

<sup>(2)</sup> Article 20 CRP states that the Presidency shall organize the meetings of the various committees and working parties so that their reports are available before the Coreper meetings at which they are to be examined.

<sup>(3)</sup> See Part III, Chapter I, point 4.

scrutinized sufficiently and all the questions which could have been resolved at its level have been.

As far as the **results** are concerned, while it is possible to compare delegations' positions at working party level, no final decision is possible since no formal vote can be taken. To get an indication, however, the chairman can hold an informal poll of delegations' positions. At the end of the meeting he will then draw conclusions summarizing the content of the discussions and listing the points on which agreement seems possible, those raising political or horizontal questions to be referred to Coreper, and perhaps also those requiring further examination. Depending on the conclusions, the chairman can either refer matters to Coreper, or else decide to hold a further meeting of the working party to iron out those issues which, by their nature, need to be resolved before referral to Coreper.

## 2. The General Secretariat <sup>(1)</sup>

The General Secretariat of the Council drafts, on its own responsibility and as quickly as possible, a **report** summarizing the content of the discussions and the conclusions reached by the working party. This report is distributed ready for the working party's next meeting or for referral of the item to Coreper.

A minimum of two weeks is required to make a document of about 10 pages available to delegations in Coreper. That amount of time may not reflect the urgency of the matter and can, if necessary, be shortened provided that the time allowed remains compatible with proper preparation of the dossiers and with the General Secretariat's logistical capacity, given the constantly rising number of documents for translation. It is customary to send out notice of meetings and documents simultaneously (8 days in advance) <sup>(2)</sup>.

Once a working party chairman thinks that **a matter should be included on the agenda for Coreper**, he must notify the Presidency coordinator, as well as the Presidency representatives on the Antici/Mertens Groups who will make the necessary contacts with the Conferences Department of the General Secretariat in order to have the item placed on the preliminary draft agenda for the appropriate Coreper meeting.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also Part III, Chapter II.

<sup>(2)</sup> The Presidency may, if it thinks it necessary, convene the working party at shorter notice, particularly in order to inform it about practical arrangements for further work.

### 3. Coreper <sup>(1)</sup>

Article 151 TEC stipulates that a committee consisting of the Permanent Representatives of the Member States shall be responsible for preparing the work of the Council and for carrying out the tasks assigned to it by the Council. This horizontal task applies to the Council in all its compositions (except for the Agriculture Council, for which preparations are, for the most part <sup>(2)</sup>, traditionally carried out by the Special Committee on Agriculture) and for all areas falling within the sphere of competence of the Union including the CFSP and JHA). Article 19(1) CRP <sup>(3)</sup> states that all items on the agenda for a Council meeting shall be examined in advance by Coreper unless it or the Council decides otherwise.

Coreper is divided into two parts:

- Coreper Part One (Coreper I), composed of the Deputy Permanent Representatives, which meets on Wednesdays as a rule, but sometimes also on Fridays;
- Coreper Part Two (Coreper II), composed of the Permanent Representatives, which usually meets on Thursdays except for weeks preceding General Affairs or ECOFIN <sup>(4)</sup> Council meetings, when it meets on Wednesdays.

The allocation of tasks decided by Coreper itself is as follows:

- Coreper II: institutional matters, preparation of General Affairs, ECOFIN, Development, Justice and Home Affairs and Budget Council meetings;
- Coreper I: preparation of Internal Market, Energy, Research, Industry, Telecommunications, Fisheries, Transport, Environment, Consumers, Labour and Social Affairs, Health, Education, Culture, Tourism and Agriculture (veterinary and plant-health questions) Council meetings.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex I for working methods.

<sup>(2)</sup> Veterinary and zootechnical harmonization, as well as the harmonization of plant-health, animal feedingstuff and plants and seed legislation go through Coreper.

<sup>(3)</sup> Without prejudice to the role of the Monetary Committee as determined in Article 109c TEC and the existing decisions of the Council which concern it.

<sup>(4)</sup> Customary abbreviation for Economic and Financial Affairs.

(a) **Provisional agenda**

The **provisional agenda** is adopted by each Coreper Chairman the week before the meeting, generally on Thursday morning for Coreper I and Thursday evening for Coreper II.

The Coreper agenda is divided into **two parts**:

- **Part I** contains items on which agreement has been reached within the working party and which may therefore be approved by Coreper without discussion, unless a delegation is opposed, in which case the item is entered in Part II for the following meeting;
- **Part II** contains items requiring substantive examination by Coreper, and "**Other business**" items entered at the request of the Presidency, a delegation or the Commission. These items will give rise to a communication from those requesting them, but cannot culminate in a decision.

An item can be included on the agenda with the indication "**Possibly**" so that the Presidency can withdraw or retain the item at very short notice. It is, however, advisable to make only limited use of this procedure which complicates planning and the work of delegations.

Lastly, if one or more delegations so request, and Coreper agrees unanimously, a new item may be added when the final agenda is adopted at the start of the meeting. Use should be made of this possibility only where absolutely justified by exceptional circumstances.

(b) **Preparation for Coreper**

Working from the provisional agenda, the General Secretariat drafts for the delegates, as the case may be, reports, short notes on the items in Part I or notes summarizing the progress of discussions (possibly with a footnoted text) for items in Part II. There are also notes intended only for the Presidency giving information on the best procedure to



follow for the examination of the item, and giving a number of pointers which might help discussions forward, which should be kept relatively confidential.

The dossier should be available to the Presidency the day before the meeting at the latest.

Where it is appropriate, the Presidency can even take the line of making a **specific contribution** itself, generally in the form of a compromise, to get work moving. Such contributions are drafted by the Presidency, assisted by the General Secretariat of the Council, usually in conjunction with the Commission.

A preparatory meeting (briefing) is held the day before the Coreper meeting, attended by the Coreper Chairman, together with the coordinator, officials of the General Secretariat of the Council dealing with the matters on the agenda, and a representative of the Legal Service. Coreper II briefings are attended by the Secretary-General and the Legal Adviser to the Council.

The Antici Group is made up of immediate assistants to the Permanent Representatives and a Commission representative. Meetings of the Group are attended by a member of the Secretary-General's Private Office and a member of the Legal Service. The Group is responsible for deciding on the organization of the proceedings, particularly the order in which agenda items will be discussed. The meeting, chaired by the Presidency's representative in the Antici Group, is also the time when delegations state what items they want entered under "Other business". The Group also has the task of checking that the minutes of previous Coreper meetings can be approved by Coreper, preparing decisions on "I" items on the agenda and preparing Council proceedings on transparency.

The Mertens Group, which was set up in 1993, performs more or less the same function for Coreper I.

(c) **Conduct of meetings**

Coreper first adopts its definitive agenda. This is when requests are made for items to be taken under "Other business" and/or for new items to be placed on the agenda (see above) and the Chairman states in what sequence items will finally be discussed.

The Chairman then calls upon Coreper to confirm the outcome of the Antici/Mertens Group meeting and approve the items entered in Part I. Such approval may occasion reservations and statements, but no real discussion can take place.

The Presidency decides on **procedural** matters in the light of the CRP (see Part II).

Coreper's discussions follow a similar pattern to those in Council (see below) except that they cannot de jure culminate in any final decision (except for decisions to initiate a written procedure or, in other cases, procedural decisions).

As a rule, Coreper avoids long drafting exercises. Where it appears that improved wording is required for further work to proceed, the Presidency, aided by the General Secretariat, is responsible for redrafting the text.

**(d) The outcome**

At the close of discussions, the Chairman of Coreper may:

- note Coreper's agreement on the item under discussion and therefore suggest that it be entered as an "A" item for a forthcoming Council meeting;
- or note agreement on a number of points, as well as substantive differences of views remaining on other aspects that need discussion at Council level to be resolved. In such circumstances, he suggests that they be entered as Council "B" items;
- or note that some matters need further study by Coreper before going on to Council, and thus re-enter the item on the agenda for a future meeting;
- or, finally, instruct the relevant working party to examine more closely certain technical difficulties, insufficiently discussed at first reading or which have emerged in the Coreper meeting.

Following the Coreper proceedings, the General Secretariat of the Council issues a note summarizing progress to assist further discussion at Council level, as well as a note to the Presidency. If full agreement is reached at Coreper level, the General Secretariat issues an "A" item note listing the references of the texts for formal adoption by the Council, together with any statements there may be.

The General Secretariat draws up a **summary record** of the proceedings.

Deadlines for sending documents to the Council: Article 2(3) CRP stipulates that "only items in respect of which the documents have been sent to the members of the Council and to the Commission at the latest by the date on which the provisional agenda is sent may be placed on that agenda", i.e. (Article 2(1)) **at least 14 days before the beginning of the meeting** <sup>(1)</sup>. In practice, however, the Council sometimes agrees to discuss a matter when it has proved impossible to meet these deadlines.

#### 4. The Council <sup>(2)</sup>

In line with the timetable presented seven months before the beginning of the six months of the Presidency (see above, Chapter II), the Council meets when convened by its President on his own initiative or at the request of one of its members or of the Commission (Article 1(1) CRP).

The Council consists of a representative of each Member State who holds ministerial rank and is authorized to commit his Government (Article 146 TEC).

The Commission is invited to take part in meetings, although the Council may decide to deliberate with the Commission not present. The President and members of the Commission as well as of the Council may be accompanied by officials who assist them (Article 4 CRP).

**Each Council meeting is chaired** by the appropriate Minister of the Member State holding the Presidency.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also Part III, Chapter I, point 4.

<sup>(2)</sup> See working methods in Annex II.

Should it prove impossible for the Member State holding the Presidency to provide a President for the Council, that place is filled temporarily by the Member State next in line to hold the Presidency.

The Council meets in **different formations** depending on the subjects for discussion, the main formations being: General Affairs, Agriculture, Budget, Consumers, Culture, Development, Economics and Finance, Education, Energy, Environment, Fisheries, Health, Industry, Internal Market, Justice and Home Affairs, Labour and Social Affairs, Research, Telecommunications and Transport.

**The frequency** of Council meetings varies with the formation. Besides General Affairs Councils, only the Ecofin and Agriculture Councils meet every month.

(a) **The agenda**

The President draws up **the provisional agenda** for each meeting on the basis of the material available at least 14 days before each meeting.

It is mandatory **to enter an additional item** if a delegation or the Commission so requests at least 16 days before the Council meeting and if the documents are available. On the other hand, once that deadline has passed, Council members must agree **unanimously** to a further item being entered.

The provisional agenda is distributed to Coreper by the Presidency (usually three weeks before the Council meeting). Items on which a vote may be taken are asterisked. It is important that, as far as possible, the agenda also makes a distinction between items down for negotiation and those for decision.

For each item on the agenda, the General Secretariat of the Council drafts **a note to the Presidency** supplementing the report(s) for all delegations. This note sets out the latest information which the General Secretariat has on the state of the dossier, and outlines the main substantive, legal, procedural and tactical points which will assist the Presidency in conducting discussions.

Like the agenda for Coreper, the Council's agenda is divided into two parts:

- "A" items which the Council may adopt without any discussion.

However, a member of the Council may always request the withdrawal of one of these items on the actual day of the Council meeting (the item then being held over until a forthcoming Council, or kept on the agenda by a simple majority if the item had been entered 14 days beforehand, and turned into a "B" item).

Delegations may, additionally, make statements when "A" items are adopted <sup>(1)</sup>;

- "B" items. These are the items which the Council will discuss.
- The agenda may also include "Other business" items which may be placed on the provisional agenda at the request of a delegation without any advance notice but may occasion neither a discussion nor a decision by the Council.

#### (b) Preparations

A preparatory meeting (briefing) is held before the Council meeting (the day before or even on the same morning), attended by the President, the Permanent Representative or his Deputy, the Secretary-General of the Council and/or his colleagues, including the representative of the Council Legal Service. This meeting is held at the Council Secretariat building, in the Presidency's room.

The Chairman of Coreper, assisted by the Secretary-General for General Affairs and ECOFIN Councils, takes stock of the various items of business. For all the other Council formations, the Chairman of Coreper is assisted by the appropriate Director-General from the General Secretariat. The Legal Service is represented.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also (g) "Publication of votes".

(c) **Access to the Council chamber**

Access to the Council chamber is open <sup>(1)</sup> to six people per delegation, including the Minister and Permanent Representative or his Deputy. Other members of delegations can follow discussions in a listening room, unless decided otherwise.

The Presidency is at liberty to adjust the composition of delegations around the table depending on the degree of technicality or of political sensitivity of the matter discussed (meetings in restricted session, Ministers plus one person, Ministers only, etc.).

(d) **The Council proceedings**

As regards **conduct of business**, the Presidency proceeds in turn to:

- take note of "Other business" items and any requests for changes to the agenda;
- adopt the agenda;
- adopt the "A" items, taking account of any statements <sup>(2)</sup> or reservations. These "A" items are normally adopted en masse. If an item is the subject of a reservation by one or more members of the Council, it can either be withdrawn or turned into a "B" item (see above);
- discuss the "B" items.

**Discussions** may be of several types:

- **discussions leading to a decision**, when negotiations may be initiated to overcome the final obstacles to an agreement (agreement on a legislative text, on a resolution, a statement, negotiating directives, etc.). By and large, agreement is recorded on the substance of a legislative act without any formal adoption of the texts, which happens subsequently as "A" items (after the requisite revision of the texts by the Legal/Linguistic Experts).

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<sup>(1)</sup> Access to Council meetings is subject to production of a pass. See Part III, Chapter II.

<sup>(2)</sup> Council members who make a statement may request that it appear in the Council minutes. See (g) "Publication of votes".

- **policy debates**, which give members of Council a chance to express their general positions on an issue without really embarking on negotiations; in such discussions, it is customary for each delegation to take the floor only once on the substance of the issue; moreover, the time-consuming practice of "tours de table" should be avoided as far as possible.

As far as **the conduct of the proceedings** is concerned, the Presidency may ask members of the Council to advise it beforehand in writing of any reservations, suggestions and/or drafting changes they would like made to the text.

- **points of information for the Council**; this is usually the Commission giving a situation report on an issue, or a member of the Council reporting information; the Council is not then called upon to formalize the outcome of any ensuing discussion.

The Presidency has every latitude where it deems fit, particularly in the event of a longstanding stalemate, to draw up a **compromise** on a specific aspect or on the whole text. It may happen that such a compromise is also presented as part of a package deal covering several texts <sup>(1)</sup> under discussion. Such compromises may also be tabled in Coreper or even in the working party.

In addition to the 15 Council members and the members of the Commission, the representative of the Council Legal Service may make a statement in the Council.

After the discussion, **the President draws the conclusions** which may be reduced to three main cases: unanimous agreement, referral back or a vote;

- in the event of unanimous agreement, the text is deemed to be approved provided there is also a qualified majority if one is needed, but will as a rule still have to appear as an "A" item at a subsequent Council meeting for formal agreement after legal/linguistic alignment;
- in the event of a referral, it is customary for the President to give some indications as to the procedure for subsequent proceedings, outlining the main points under

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<sup>(1)</sup> Observing the majority voting rules applying to each text forming part of the package in the event of a vote.

discussion, stressing wherever possible the potential solutions to which delegations are asked to give further consideration;

- in the event of a vote, the following rules apply:

(e) **Voting**

**The rules for voting in the Council** are determined in Article 148 TEC <sup>(1)</sup> and explained in Articles 7 and 8 CRP. Part II expands on this aspect in the light of various procedures.

The different kinds of vote are:

- **simple majority** voting: although this is presented as the norm in Article 148 TEC, in fact it applies only in limited instances (e.g. Article 151), adoption of the Rules of Procedure; Article 213, Commission's right to collect information), in the absence of details as to any other voting arrangements to be used and for procedural decisions;
- under the TEC, **unanimous** voting is required in certain fields (certain policies or certain sensitive sectors – Article 235 TEC). Generally speaking, unanimity is necessary for the Council to be able to depart from a Commission proposal <sup>(2)</sup> (subject to Article 189b(4), (5) and (6) and to the need for a qualified majority for the adoption of acts whose legal basis requires it); it is also the rule in the case of joint actions or joint positions adopted by the Council under the CFSP or JHA (Articles J.8 and K.4 TEU) and Conventions (Article K.3 TEU). Under unanimous voting, **an abstention** does not prevent a decision from being taken (Article 148) except in special cases (ECSC in particular).
- For adoption by a **qualified majority**, each vote is **weighted** as follows:

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also the corresponding provisions in the ECSC and Euratom Treaties.

<sup>(2)</sup> But not from a "recommendation" (see various articles on EMU and Article 228(1)).



Germany, France, Italy, United Kingdom . . . . .	10 votes
Spain . . . . .	8 votes
Belgium, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal . . . . .	5 votes
Austria, Sweden . . . . .	4 votes
Ireland, Denmark, Finland . . . . .	3 votes
Luxembourg . . . . .	2 votes

Threshold

The **qualified majority threshold** is set at 62 votes if the decision is adopted on a Commission proposal and in other cases the 62 must include votes in favour by at least 10 Member States. A qualified majority vote requires 62 votes in favour, which means taking abstention as a vote against.

The Ioannina Compromise, which is incorporated in a Council Decision of 29 March 1994 <sup>(1)</sup>, provides that if members of the Council representing a total of 23 to 25 votes indicate their intention to oppose the adoption by the Council of a decision by qualified majority, the Council will do all in its power to reach, within a reasonable time and without prejudicing the obligatory time limits laid down by the Treaties and by secondary legislation, a satisfactory solution that can be adopted by at least 65 votes.

During this period, and with full regard for the CRP <sup>(2)</sup>, **the President**, with the assistance of the Commission, will undertake any initiatives necessary to facilitate a wider basis of agreement in the Council.

Voting procedure

As regards voting procedure, Article 7 of the Rules of Procedure provides that:

- the Council votes on the initiative of its President. The President is required to

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<sup>(1)</sup> Council Decision of 29 March 1994 concerning the taking of decisions by qualified majority by the Council (see OJ No C 105, 13.4.1994, p. 1), as amended by the Council Decision of 1 January 1995 (see OJ No C 1, 1.1.1995, p. 1).

<sup>(2)</sup> See Article 7(1).

open a voting procedure on the initiative of a member of the Council or of the Commission, provided that a majority of the Council's members so decides;

- members of the Council vote **in the order of the Member States laid down in Article 146 of the EC Treaty**, beginning with the member who follows the member holding the office of President;
- delegation of the right to vote may only be made to another member;
- the presence of eight members of the Council <sup>(1)</sup> is required to enable the Council to vote.

**(f) Written procedure**

Under Article 8 CRP, acts of the Council on an urgent matter may be adopted by a **written vote** where the Council or Coreper decides unanimously to use that procedure; in special circumstances the President may also propose the use of that procedure subject to the agreement of all members of the Council. The Commission must also give its agreement where the written vote is on a matter which the Commission has brought before the Council.

For certain procedural decisions, the Council has introduced a "slimmed-down" written procedure.

In the CFSP context, the Council may also, on the initiative of the Presidency, act by means of the **simplified written procedure** (COREU). In that case the proposal is deemed to be adopted at the end of that procedure, within the period laid down by the Presidency depending on the urgency of the matter, except where a member of the Council objects.

**(g) Publication of votes**

The Final Act of the Treaty on European Union includes a declaration on the right of access to information which states that "the transparency of the decision-making process strengthens the democratic nature of the institutions and the public's

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(1) See definition, Article 146 TEC.

confidence in the administration". The Council amended its Rules of Procedure in order to increase the number of **situations in which votes are made public**.

Article 7(5) CRP of 6 December 1993 lays down four examples of cases when votes are to be made public:

- publication of votes is **mandatory** only in the case of votes cast in the Conciliation Committee set up by Article 189b TEC;
- publication of votes is **mandatory where the Council is acting as legislator<sup>(1)</sup> unless the Council decides otherwise** by a simple majority. It should be noted that the Council has not made use of this possibility (see conclusions of 29 May 1995). Mandatory publication also applies when the Council, acting as legislator, adopts a common position pursuant to Article 189b or 189c TEC. This excludes preparatory acts, internal measures, administrative or budgetary acts, acts concerning international or interinstitutional relations and non-binding acts (conclusions, recommendations, resolutions);
- publication of votes is **subject to unanimous decision of the Council** taken at the request of one of its members when the Council acts pursuant to Titles V and VI TEU;
- in other cases, (for example if the Council is not acting as a legislator in a situation not listed above), publication of votes is by Council decision taken at the request of one of its members and **by a simple majority**.

Article 5 CRP provides for **explanations of vote** made when a vote is made public also to be made public at the request of the Council members concerned, with due regard for the Rules of Procedure, legal certainty and the interests of the Council.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See part II, Annex to the CRP.

(h) **The outcome of Council meetings**

Formal adoption of a text

This follows on from finalization of the text in all the official languages of the Union by Legal/Linguistic Experts.

The texts of acts adopted jointly by the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189b TEC are **signed by the President of the Parliament and the President of the Council**. Acts are signed on the occasion of a Council meeting (usually during a break in the meeting).

Article 11 of the Rules of Procedure provides that such acts and those adopted by the Council are also to be signed by the Secretary-General of the Council, who may delegate his signature to Directors-General of the General Secretariat.

Acts adopted by the Council are published in **the Official Journal** of the Union in all the official languages of the Union.

The minutes

The outcome of Council meetings is recorded in **the minutes** drawn up by the General Secretariat within 15 days of each meeting. Article 9 CRP specifies the content of minutes (indication of documents submitted to the Council, decisions taken or conclusions reached by the Council, statements made by the Council or those by a member of the Council or the Commission whose entry has been requested).

Draft minutes are approved by the Council after each member of the Council or the Commission has had the opportunity to check their content. On approval, minutes are signed by the President-in-Office and the Secretary-General.

The press release

The outcome of the Council meeting is the subject of a **press release** drafted by the

Council Press Service, which contains the main conclusions of the meeting. The press release commits only the Secretary-General and not the Council.

## **5. Informal meetings of ministers**

The main purpose of **informal meetings** is to permit joint consideration and as free as possible an exchange of views on topics of general scope; they are not Council meetings and therefore cannot replace the Council's normal activities. The number of informal ministerial meetings is restricted to seven per Presidency, plus one in the JHA framework.

### **(a) Characteristics of informal meetings**

In order to preserve the informal nature of the meetings in question, the following guidelines adopted by the General Affairs Council must be followed:

- there is no official agenda;
- the presence of assistants is limited to the absolute minimum;
- discussions must under no circumstances cause official documents to be prepared, either before or after the meeting; meetings cannot under any circumstances arrive at conclusions, far less formal decisions (see Council conclusions of 29 May 1995).

### **(b) Logistics**

At logistical level (see Chapter VII), the Council General Secretariat is not involved at all. The Presidency has to take direct responsibility for organization.

There is one exception to that rule, however: where an informal meeting of Agriculture Ministers is held immediately before or after a meeting of the SCA, the General Secretariat provides Ministers with technical assistance in all matters relating to meeting-room organization and facilities, including interpreting.

## 6. The European Council

One meeting of the European Council is held under each Presidency, in practice in June and December (Article D TEU provides that the European Council "shall meet at least twice a year"). However, that does not exclude the possibility of convening extraordinary meetings of the European Council. It is for the Presidency to set the dates, choice of venues, practical arrangements and topics for discussion.

### (a) Preparation

Preparations for meetings of the European Council are made by the General Affairs Council. When the European Council has to conduct actual negotiations (as in the case of the "Delors package"), preparations are of the "traditional" type, i.e. a series of successive meetings of the Council (and of Coreper 2) on the basis of written reports and/or draft conclusions.

### (b) Role of the Secretariat

The Secretariat for the European Council is provided by the Secretary-General of the Council, aided by a number of assistants.

The extent to which the General Secretariat is involved in preparing for the European Council varies according to the Presidency. As a general rule, it is the Secretariat's responsibility before the meeting to provide the Presidency with all the necessary documentation and to prepare a draft letter from the President of the European Council to his colleagues relating to the conduct of the proceedings (note that the European Council differs from the Council of Ministers in that there is no "provisional agenda" in the strict sense: it is replaced by the President's letter). In addition, the General Secretariat prepares a speaking note for the President of the European Council and the Secretary-General normally takes part in the briefing for the President of the European Council on the day before the meeting.

At the European Council itself the Secretary-General aided by the Legal Adviser to the Council and two or three assistants and three note-takers provides secretarial services for the meeting, with all the tasks which that implies.

He assists the Presidency on the evening of the first day of the meeting in preparing the draft Presidency conclusions which are circulated to delegations during the night and will serve as a basis for the second day's discussions.

**(c) The conclusions**

At the close of the European Council, the Council General Secretariat takes responsibility for preparing and circulating the final version of the conclusions in the light of the discussions in the European Council on the basis of the draft.

## Chapter IV – The Presidency’s relations with the other institutions

During its six-month term the Presidency will have to carry out a number of other more specific tasks in connection with the Council’s obligations towards the other institutions.

### 1. The European Parliament

#### (a) Presentation of the programme – general debates

The Presidency **presents its programme** to the European Parliament at the beginning of its term of office. At the end of the term, it **reports to the Parliament on progress achieved**. Each of these interventions is followed by a debate.

Article J.7 (CFSP) and Article K.6 (JHA) also provide for annual debates (in plenary session) on progress in implementing the CFSP/JHA.

The President of the European Council submits an oral report to the European Parliament following each of the meetings of the European Council.

Article D TEU also provides for the European Council to submit to the European Parliament a yearly written report on progress achieved by the Union.

The extent to which the Presidency is represented at **formal sittings of the European Parliament** on the occasion of visits of Heads of State has varied at different times. The President of the Council is not expected to make a statement on these occasions but is invited to the meal which generally accompanies such visits. There may also be private meetings between the President of the Council and Heads of State visiting the Parliament.

The European Parliament and the Commission made a joint declaration on **the annual legislative programmes of the Commission** <sup>(1)</sup> for 1994 and 1995. A declaration was made by the Council following the proceedings of the European Parliament pursuant to paragraph 2 of the Interinstitutional

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Presidency-in-Office took part in a discussion on the Commission’s legislative programme to the extent that it concerned the internal market.



Declaration of 25 October 1993.

**(b) Plenary sittings**

The Presidency's commitments consist chiefly in the President-in-Office of the Council (General Affairs) – who may be the Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Minister/State Secretary for European Affairs – being present at each plenary part-session of the European Parliament on a specific day (currently Wednesday) and:

- (i) **answering questions** – and additional questions – put at **Council Question Time** (currently Wednesday afternoon during part-sessions in Strasbourg);
- (ii) answering any **oral questions on the agenda for the part-session**;
- (iii) occasionally taking part in **certain debates** of particular importance or making a **statement on a specific subject**, either at the Council's initiative or in response to a request from the European Parliament "Conference of Presidents".

At the "**Conference of Presidents**", (during which the preliminary draft and then the final draft agenda for the following month's part-session of the European Parliament are drawn up) the Council is represented by the Director-General in the General Secretariat responsible for relations with the European Parliament (see Article 25 of the Rules of Procedure).

**(c) Involvement in committees**

Another aspect of relations between the two institutions is the appearance of Presidents of the various Councils before the relevant European Parliament committees.

The Presidency (normally the minister responsible for the matter) will be called upon to reply to the invitation of most European Parliament committees to make a statement to them and answer parliamentary questions on matters within its jurisdiction. The Council General Secretariat assists the Presidency in preparing the statement.

During each Presidency there is **normally one appearance before each parliamentary committee** but increasingly some committees (for example, Social Affairs and Environment) are asking for two appearances, one at the beginning and the other at the end of the Presidency's term.

In this context, **the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security** always has on its agenda an item entitled "exchange of views with Council and Commission representatives", the aim of which is to cover topical events in the sphere of Foreign Affairs and Security (Article J.7, TEU). The President of the Council or, in his absence, his representative or the Director-General for External Relations at the Council General Secretariat regularly take part in the exchange of views.

The President takes part in a **colloquy with this Committee** twice during his Presidency. One of these colloquies may take place in the country of the Presidency.

The Treaty (Article K.6 TEU) stipulates that the President of the Council has certain obligations as regards informing and consulting the European Parliament on **home affairs and judicial cooperation** <sup>(1)</sup>.

The Council may also be represented before the committees by its Secretary-General or by senior officials of the General Secretariat <sup>(2)</sup> acting on instructions from the Presidency. The Council may also present its views to the European Parliament by means of a written statement <sup>(3)</sup>.

**(d) "LUNS" and "WESTERTERP" procedures**

Under the **"LUNS" and "WESTERTERP" procedures** (which refer respectively to association agreements and trade agreements), the President of the Council or his representative may be asked before the beginning of the negotiations and subsequently before the signing of agreements to inform the relevant parliamentary committees orally of the substance of the negotiating directives issued by the Council to the Commission and then of the substance of the agreements negotiated.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Chapter I, point 5.

<sup>(2)</sup> See Article 25(1) CRP.

<sup>(3)</sup> See Article 25(2) CRP.

(e) **Meetings of the triologue**

**Meetings of the triologue**, which are usually informal and linked to specific issues, involve the President of the Council, the Commissioner responsible and usually the President or one of the Vice-Presidents of the European Parliament and/or the Chairman of the relevant European Parliament committee as well as some officials. This procedure is most frequently applied to budgetary matters, horizontal issues and the management of procedures. Such meetings are also becoming increasingly frequent when difficulties arise in connection with conciliation on matters covered by co-decision.

(f) **Co-decision procedure – how the conciliation process operates**

Where the Council does not accept all the amendments the European Parliament has passed on second reading, the conciliation procedure is opened in accordance with Article 189b of the TEC <sup>(1)</sup>.

In preparation for the proceedings of the **Conciliation Committee**, talks are held between the Council Presidency, assisted by the General Secretariat, the Commission and the chairmen of the relevant committees, and the European Parliament rapporteurs, assisted by the General Secretariat.

These talks take the form of either a **technical meeting** between the Chairman of the Council Working Party, assisted by General Secretariat officials, the rapporteur and/or officials from the European Parliament's General Secretariat and Commission officials, or an **informal triologue** between the Chairman of Coreper, the Chairman of the relevant Committee and the European Parliament rapporteur and the relevant Commission Director-General. The purpose of these meetings is to examine the European Parliament's amendments in detail with a view to their possible acceptance by the Council and to explore possible compromise formulae for unacceptable amendments.

The Treaty provides that "the President of the Council, in agreement with the President of the European Parliament, shall forthwith convene a meeting of the Conciliation Committee". The Presidency must therefore ensure that the preparatory phase leading up to conciliation is as short as possible.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex III.

When convening the Conciliation Committee, the Council Presidency must take into account the European Parliament's timetable.

The Conciliation Committee consists of 15 members of the Council, or their representatives, and 15 members of the European Parliament.

The Committee is chaired jointly by a Vice-President of the European Parliament and a Minister from the Member State holding the Presidency.

The other 14 Member States are usually represented by their Permanent Representatives.

The Commission takes part in the work of the Conciliation Committee and takes all the necessary initiatives to help reconcile the positions of the European Parliament and the Council.

The Committee's objective is to reach agreement on a **joint text**. That joint text is adopted by a qualified majority of the Council – except for matters covered by Articles 128 (Culture) or 130 L (Research framework programme), where unanimity is required – and by a simple majority of the representatives of the European Parliament.

The Conciliation Committee meets alternately at the European Parliament and at the Council.

Within the period of six weeks allowed to it, a period which may be extended by two weeks, the Conciliation Committee may hold as many meetings as its co-Chairmen deem necessary. The dates for Conciliation Committee meetings are fixed by mutual agreement. Every meeting of the Committee is preceded by a **formal dialogue** between the two co-Chairmen and the Commission, represented by a Commissioner.

Where the Conciliation Committee agrees on a joint text, it undergoes legal/linguistic finalization conducted jointly by Legal/Linguistic Experts from the Council and the European Parliament before being approved by the two co-Chairmen.

The finalized joint text is then forwarded to the Presidents of the European Parliament and the Council under **cover of a letter** signed by both co-Chairmen.

The institution which hosts the first meeting of the Conciliation Committee is responsible for drawing up the joint text and the covering letter as well as for the signing of the legislative act in question by the Presidents of the European Parliament and the Council once it has been finally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, and for its publication in the Official Journal.

**(g) Other contacts**

Before Council meetings, it may happen that the President-in-Office (and exceptionally all the members of the Council in the context of the budgetary procedure) meets the President of the Parliament or rapporteurs or parliamentary delegations.

**(h) Delegations and joint parliamentary committees in the context of agreements with third countries**

The President of the Council is asked to attend meetings of joint parliamentary committees for half a day and give a speech. When it is not possible for a Minister to be present, the Presidency is represented by an ambassador or senior official.

**2. The Commission**

Apart from the relations established with the Commission in the context of the normal operation of the institutions, the Presidency has no specific obligations. However, it has become practice, when planning the six-monthly programme, for the Presidency, represented by the relevant Minister, to meet the Commission (President and relevant Members) for the purposes of drawing up the work programme.

**3. The Court of Justice**

Apart from courtesy visits, the Presidency has no specific obligations. There are, however, continuous contacts between the Legal Service of the General Secretariat and the Court of Justice in the context of legal actions.

#### 4. The Economic and Social Committee

Provision has to be made for Presidency Ministers to appear before the Committee to present the Presidency's work programme. Occasionally, Ministers have been present at plenary sessions for certain discussions on specific subjects.

#### 5. The Committee of the Regions

There is as yet no clearly established practice as regards appearances of Presidency Ministers before the Committee. The Greek Presidency was present at the inaugural meeting in 1994. Since then, the practice of one appearance by a Minister during each six-month term has become established. The General Secretariat of the Council represents the Council at meetings of the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions.

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The President of the Council is often asked to participate in his own capacity at **conferences** on matters relating in varying degrees to European construction. In the past the President took part in conferences such as the Conference of the Regions of the Community organized by the European Parliament and in meetings of the Conference of bodies concerned with Community affairs in the Parliaments of the European Community (COSAC), which are also attended by a European Parliament delegation (mainly members of the Committee on Institutional Affairs).

## **Chapter V – The Union’s external relations**

### **1. The role of the Council and the Presidency in general**

Preparation for all activities connected with the Union’s external relations is in principle carried out in the General Affairs Council. Nevertheless, where the conclusion and/or implementation of international agreements relates to internal sectoral Community activities and policies, work takes place in the Council’s specialized compositions (for example, Environment Council, Fisheries Council). The Presidency must ensure the necessary consistency in all these activities, in particular their institutional aspects (division of powers between the Community and the Member States, procedures for exercising their respective powers, procedures for representation at international level). It is often necessary for the Working Party on External Relations to become involved in the preparatory work in order to ensure this "horizontal" consistency.

The role of the Council and the Presidency in defining and conducting the Union’s external relations differs according to whether the powers are those of the European Community or will be exercised under Titles V and VI TEU, or are the powers of the Member States acting within the Council.

Where the Council acts on behalf of the European Community, the problems which arise vary according to whether it is a matter of adopting internal legal acts or administering international agreements concluded by the Community, which involves defining the line the Community will take in international fora. In the first case, the role of the Council and the Presidency is the same in the external relations sphere as in the other spheres of Community activity (taking into account the special features of the procedure for concluding international agreements: Article 228 TEC). The second case, on the other hand, poses specific problems relating to representation of the Community and definition of its position, which are discussed below (points 2 to 4 of this Chapter).

Where the Council is acting in the CFSP context, the role and powers of the Presidency are different from its powers in areas covered by Community competence. They will therefore be discussed in a specific section in this guide (points 5 and 6 of this Chapter).

The external powers of the Community and the Member States may also be exercised jointly when concluding and implementing international agreements ("mixed" agreements). In that case, preparatory work in the Council often relates without distinction to subjects falling within Community competence and those falling within national competence (in particular those not specifically covered by Titles V and VI of the Treaty on European Union: services, investment, taxation, intellectual property, etc.)

## **2. The administration of international agreements concluded by the Community**

As regards the role of the Council and the Presidency in the administration of agreements, a distinction should be made between those concluded by the Community (alone or jointly with the Member States) with a third State (or with several third States acting together) and participation by the Community (alone or jointly with the Member States) in international organizations (which is discussed in point 4 below).

### **(a) Composition of mixed bodies**

The roles of the Council and the Presidency differ according to whether the agreements are exclusively Community ones or "mixed" agreements concluded jointly by the Community and the Member States.

Exclusively Community agreements generally entail the creation of a Joint Committee responsible for monitoring the implementation of the agreement; the Community is normally represented by the Commission assisted by representatives of the Governments of the Member States (however, see below the examples of the ISTC and the GCC).

Mixed agreements generally entail the creation of two bodies to administer them, a Council at ministerial level and a Joint Committee at senior official level. The Association Council is made up of members of the Council of the Union and of one Member of the Commission and representatives of the third country/countries; the representatives of the Member States are also members, together with the Commission, and with the representatives of the third country/countries, of the Joint Committee set up by the agreement. The secretariat of the Association Council is usually provided jointly by the General Secretariat of the Council and a secretary from the associated country.



**(b) Spokesman**

In exclusively Community agreements the Community spokesman, who is responsible for expressing the Community's position is, unless otherwise provided (again, see the case of the ISTC and the GCC below), the Commission, which represents the Community. In mixed agreements, the role of single spokesman for the Community and the Member States is normally assigned to the Presidency or the Commission, depending on whether the position is that of the Council or the Joint Committee set up by the agreement.

However, the Commission also participates in meetings of the Association Council on matters falling within the Community's sphere of competence; the time at which it will make its statements is arranged by mutual agreement but the precise purport of its statements is not negotiated.

**(c) Defining the Community position**

No matter who is the Community spokesman in a body set up by an international agreement to which the Community is a party, the Council plays a crucial role in defining the Community position with regard to the activities of that body. The Presidency is responsible for ensuring that this is the case.

When bodies set up by an international agreement adopt decisions with legal effects, the position which the Community spokesman will have to adopt in relation to them must be defined in advance by the Council (Council, Coreper, working party). If the decision to be taken by a body set up by international agreement falls not only within the Community's sphere of competence, but also within that of the Member States, a common position must be established. Member States' positions may possibly be the subject of a decision by the Representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council; this method guarantees the consistency of the Union's international action (Community + Member States), which the Presidency always has to ensure.

When the work of these bodies will not result in the adoption of decisions with legal effects, the position to be expressed on behalf of the Community is established in the relevant working party. Matters not involving decisions with legal effects are not referred to the Council and Coreper if a consensus has been reached in the working party.

#### **(d) The holding of meetings**

In the case of exclusively Community agreements, the Commission is in principle responsible for holding and convening meetings of the Joint Committee set up by the agreement. In the case of mixed agreements, the President of the Council is co-President or takes his turn as President of the Association Council (as the Commission does in the case of the Joint Committee); in this capacity he is responsible for the holding of meetings.

It is also the responsibility of the Council and the Presidency to organize the meetings, in particular at ministerial level, which are held with third countries outside or alongside the legal framework set up by an agreement (for example, the conferences with the Rio Group or the countries of Central America, the EU-ASEAN Conference or the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona).

In recent years meetings involving Council members have proliferated, leading to some problems for the smooth running of the General Affairs Council. Some measures have already been adopted to remedy the situation (see Chapter VII) and others have been suggested in the interests of more rational organization of the Council's work.

As far as possible, meetings at ministerial level are held alongside meetings of the General Affairs Council. Very often, a working meal is held which permits discussion in an informal context. There is now a tendency to schedule meetings of two Association Councils with third countries belonging to the same geographical area and sharing the same type of concerns on the same day.

### **3. Relations with third countries**

This section analyses by geographical area the various agreements linking the Community (alone or together with the Member States) with a third country or group of third countries. Brief comments simply illustrate the specific characteristics of each case in relation to the general criteria set out in the previous section.

**(a) EEA/EFTA relations**

A distinction must be made between:

- the Free Trade Agreements (subsequently referred to as FTAs) with Switzerland/Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway. These are exclusively Community agreements. In practice, only the Agreement with Switzerland still applies, since the EEA Agreement almost entirely replaced the FTAs with Iceland and Norway;
- the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA Agreement) with Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. This is a mixed agreement.

An implementing Regulation established the internal procedures for administering the EEA Agreement. Pursuant to that Regulation, the bulk of the decisions taken by the Joint Committee are the province of the Commission alone; the Council is called upon to intervene in exceptional cases only.

The EEA Council is convened twice yearly by its President and also whenever circumstances so require, in accordance with its Rules of Procedure. It is chaired alternately, on the basis of a 6-month rotation, by the President of the Council and a representative of the EFTA countries.

**(b) Relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe**

(Baltic States, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia)

The agreements with these countries (Europe Agreements) are mixed association agreements. Pending their definitive conclusion, interim agreements on an exclusively Community basis are in force.

Association Councils meet once a year and the Presidency rotates annually between the President of the Council and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the associated country.

### Structured dialogue

In addition to bilateral relations under the Europe association agreements, the Essen European Council defined a strategy which would allow these countries to prepare for accession. In particular, this strategy provides for a so-called "structured dialogue". This dialogue is open to countries with which the Union has signed Europe association agreements (even if they have not yet been concluded definitively), i.e. the seven countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the three Baltic countries. Each Presidency is allowed a certain degree of flexibility in managing this dialogue and its timetable.

#### **(c) Relations with the States of the former USSR**

In parallel with the process begun with the CCBE, and without prejudice to the political dialogue which has become more intense in recent months, the European Union has attempted to step up cooperation with the States of the former USSR. The keystone for increased integration is provided by **partnership and cooperation agreements** with each of the Republics concerned <sup>(1)</sup>.

As in the case of the Europe association agreements, these are mixed agreements. A very similar structure to the one introduced for the Europe association agreements has been set up here. There is no "structured dialogue" with these countries. However, a political dialogue is planned.

Pending conclusion of these agreements other, exclusively Community, agreements have been signed on trade on an interim basis. The Interim Agreements with Russia and Ukraine entered into force on 1 February 1996.

#### **(d) ISTC**

A specific Agreement has been concluded between the Communities (EEC and EAEC), Russia and other third countries establishing an International Science and Technology Centre (ISTC). The Centre's aims include the development, financing and monitoring of science and technology projects for peaceful purposes.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Agreements with Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus have already been signed and are being ratified. Those with the three Caucasian Republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) have recently been initialled.

The Communities are represented on the Centre's Governing Board by the Council Presidency and the Commission. Community positions are expressed either by the Commission (in most cases) or by the Presidency (particularly in the case of arrangements for participation by other countries in the Agreement).

**(e) Relations with the Mediterranean States**

(Turkey - Cyprus - Malta - Andorra - San Marino)

Agreements in force:

- (i) - with Turkey: 1964 "mixed" Association Agreement and 1995 Decision on customs union;
- with Cyprus and Malta: exclusively Community Association Agreements.

The Association Agreements with Turkey, Cyprus and Malta are relatively old agreements. The institutional structure for which they provide is slightly different from that of the Europe Agreements. The President of the Council is spokesman for the Community (and for the Member States in the case of Turkey), not only in the Association Council but also in the Association Committee. These bodies meet after being convened by the two co-Secretaries and after informal contacts between the Presidency and the third country regarding the date, time and agenda for the meeting.

The procedures for participation in the Joint Committee of the Customs Union with Turkey have not yet been finalized. The Community is in any case represented by the Commission.

There are Customs Cooperation Committees with Turkey and Cyprus and a Trade and Economic Cooperation Committee with Malta in which the Community is represented by the Commission.

- (ii) - with Andorra: Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the EC and the Principality of Andorra;

- with San Marino: Interim Agreement between the EC and the Republic of San Marino.

These Agreements are exclusively Community. The joint bodies which they set up have met only twice.

#### Cyprus and Malta: structured dialogue

In the context of the structured dialogue begun with the aim of preparing these States for accession, a joint half-yearly meeting is planned at the level of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs. It is for the Presidency to set the dates of these meetings to coincide with meetings of the General Affairs Council and the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

In addition, regular meetings at ministerial level on subjects of common interest take place in principle once a year. The EU is represented by one Presidency Minister and one Member of the Commission. These meetings may take place jointly with Cyprus and Malta and cover various subjects at the same time; they generally take place in the States concerned or alongside the Council, as convenient. The dates of the meetings are set after consultation between the Presidency, the Commission and Cyprus or Malta. The topics on the agenda are: environment, transport, trade questions, tourism, education, research and the internal market, economic and financial questions.

Preparation for all these meetings within the structured dialogue framework is the responsibility of the Presidency, assisted as necessary by the Secretariat (background notes or outline statements).

#### **(f) The Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements and the Euro-Arab Dialogue**

Maghreb, Mashreq, Israel (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Israel)

All the agreements concluded with these countries are mixed. They date back to 1978, but are being renewed through new Euro-Mediterranean association agreements. So far, three such agreements have been negotiated with Tunisia,

Israel and Morocco. Those with Tunisia and Israel have been signed, but have not yet entered into force. The Agreement with Morocco is due to be signed shortly. Provisional application is planned in the case of Morocco and Israel.

Both the original 1978 agreements and the new Euro-Mediterranean agreements provide for an institutional structure similar to that of the agreements with Turkey, Cyprus and Malta (see 3(e) above).

The new agreements also provide for a political dialogue to be conducted either at ministerial level or between senior officials (Political Directors).

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain)

The current Cooperation Agreement is exclusively Community. Nevertheless, it provides for a structure similar to that of the mixed agreements: in addition to a Joint Cooperation Committee, it also sets up a Joint Council and a ministerial meeting. It is customary for the co-Presidency on the Community side of both of these bodies to be shared by the Presidency and the Commission, with the Presidency being responsible for convening meetings after contacts with the Commission. The Presidency has a more prominent role in relation to the ministerial meeting and political issues.

Yemen

The Cooperation Agreement is exclusively Community.

Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD)

In principle, the leading role ought to be played by the Presidency. However, in view of the current political difficulties (participation of Iraq and Libya), the EAD is being conducted through contacts between the Commission and the Arab League. It is for the Presidency to decide when the time is right to revert to the customary formula (Presidency-Commission) for the proceedings of the General Committee of the Dialogue.

### Euro-Mediterranean partnership

The Barcelona Conference on 27 and 28 November 1995 established a Euro-Mediterranean partnership <sup>(1)</sup> covering three areas: politics and security; economic and financial aspects, including the creation of a free trade area by the year 2010; social, cultural and human aspects.

With regard to follow-up, the Barcelona Conference agreed to hold meetings of Ministers for Foreign Affairs in an institutionalized form (without excluding the possibility of meetings at the level of Heads of State and Government) and adopted an ambitious work programme including regular meetings of Ministers, officials and experts.

The Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process, made up of senior officials (the Troika representing the European Union plus one representative for each Mediterranean partner), is intended to play a central role in the follow-up to the Barcelona Conference since it has the task of preparing for meetings of Foreign Affairs Ministers and monitoring the implementation of the work programme.

The Commission has been instructed to carry out the appropriate preparatory and follow-up work for meetings arising from the Barcelona work programme. However, it has been agreed at internal European Union level that the General Secretariat of the Council will assume responsibility for CFSP and JHA aspects. The Council General Secretariat will also provide the secretariat for the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process and for ministerial meetings attended by Member States.

All these proceedings will demand close cooperation between the Presidency and the Commission, with the Presidency playing a leading role in CFSP and JHA matters while the Commission plays a more important role in other areas.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Between the European Union and Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and also the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.



**(g) Relations with the ACP States**

The Lomé Convention with the ACP States is a mixed agreement with a fairly complex institutional structure. As regards the activities of the Council and the Presidency, the following should be mentioned:

- ACP-EC Council and ACP-EC Committee of Ambassadors

The ACP-EC Council of Ministers meets once a year; it is preceded by a meeting of the ACP-EC Committee of Ambassadors.

Joint meetings are chaired by the EU from 1 October to 31 March and by the ACP Group from 1 April to 30 September. The role of EU spokesman is assumed in both cases by the Presidency assisted by the Commission.

Meetings are convened by the two ACP-EC co-Presidents, who are also responsible for drawing up the provisional agenda.

- participation in the ACP-EC Joint Assembly

The Assembly meets twice a year and the co-Presidents of the ACP-EC Council of Ministers both attend, each making a statement of a general nature and answering questions put by Assembly Members.

**(h) Relations with Asian States**

Relations with these States are conducted within the framework of agreements which are exclusively Community.

However, in the case of ASEAN, an EU-ASEAN Ministerial Conference has also been set up, meeting every 18 months, as well as a group of Senior Officials (SOM). The Conference is chaired alternately by the President of the Council and a Minister of an ASEAN country. It is convened by its Chairman, who also draws

up the agenda in cooperation with the other side. This also applies to the EU-ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting (SOM). When the European Union holds the Chair, the Conference is held in the country of the President-in-Office. The Presidency is responsible for organization.

The first **Europe-Asia meeting (ASEM)** was held on 1 and 2 March 1996. The participants were the Heads of State or Government of the 15 Member States, the Council, the Commission, the ASEAN countries, China, Japan and South Korea. The follow-up to this meeting has still to be determined. However, it must be expected that meetings of this type will continue in future and that the preparation procedures used for the meeting on 1 and 2 March (Union position defined within the Council, with political aspects being prepared within the CFSP framework and Presidency assuming responsibility for convening and organizing the meeting) will serve as a basis for the future.

(i) **Relations with Latin American countries**

Relations with Latin American countries are governed by a set of exclusively Community agreements. However, the Mercosur Agreement, signed subject to conclusion in December 1995, is a mixed agreement. Pending its definitive conclusion, the trade aspects of the agreement (for which the Community has exclusive competence) are being applied provisionally. It was also agreed that the political dialogue provided for in the Agreement would be provisionally initiated; the Presidency is to take responsibility for this.

In addition, Ministerial Conferences are held on a regular basis: **the Annual EU-Rio Group Conference** during the first six months of the year, alternately in the country of the EU Presidency and of the current Rio Group Secretariat; and **the Annual Conference of the Institutionalized EU-Central America Dialogue** on the same basis. The current situation might change in the near future, since the format and timing of these meetings is under review and political dialogues with Mexico and Chile are planned.

Some informal meetings are held alongside the EU-Rio Group Conference (EU-Mercosur and EU Troika-Andean Pact) or alongside the United Nations General Assembly in New York (EU-Rio Group, Troika-Mercosur and Troika-Central America).

Other meetings are held in the form of high-level meetings (annual high-level economic and trade meeting between the EU and the Rio Group in Brussels, the Europe-Central America Trade Forum, convened at the request of either party, but probably more or less every year).

#### **4. Community participation in international organizations and conferences**

Community participation in international organizations depends above all on the rules specific to each organization. The diversity of these explains the diversity of the ways in which the Community participates. The Presidency must pay attention to the particular rules and practice appropriate to each case. The following exposition is not exhaustive but serves to illustrate the main examples.

If the Community is a full member of the international organization, it is normally represented by the Commission. If the matters covered by the organization are also within the jurisdiction of the Member States and the latter are also full members, the problem is to ensure consistency in the international action of the Union (Community + Member States). The Presidency plays a crucial role in resolving this problem in the best way possible.

Whichever way the Community participates in an international organization, the Council plays a decisive role in defining the Community position within the organization. The considerations listed in point 2(c) of this Chapter must be repeated here. The Presidency is responsible for ensuring that the Council's role in this context is always respected.

The action of the Member States as such within an international organization may also be coordinated within the Council. The Presidency is often instructed to express the Member States' common position (UN General Assembly, for example). This possibility becomes an absolute necessity when the proceedings of the international organization fall within the Community's exclusive sphere of competence but the latter cannot participate in the proceedings as such.

Regarding activities conducted outside the Council's headquarters, it should be noted that the General Secretariat is able to assume its duties fully, including assistance to the Presidency, in both Geneva and New York, where it has permanent offices. For conferences and meetings elsewhere, the Secretariat's presence is ensured within the limits of budgetary constraints and staffing resources.

**(a) The World Trade Organization (WTO)**

The Community participates in the WTO jointly with the Member States. The details of this joint participation have not yet been decided in the absence of an agreement between the Council, the Commission and the Member States.

The lack of an arrangement on these details does not rule out the need for the Council to adopt prior decisions enabling the Commission to express the Community's agreement before the WTO bodies adopt decisions with legal effects (see 2(c) above).

**(b) UNCTAD and commodities organizations and conferences**

Participation by the Community (and, in most cases, by Member States) in commodities organizations and conferences is governed by the "PROBA 20" and "PROBA 20a" arrangements.

In UNCTAD the Community is represented either by the Commission (trade aspects) or by the President of the Council (development aspects). As regards proceedings relating to the generalized system of preferences within the UNCTAD Special Committee on Preferences, which meets in Geneva for one week a year, it should be noted that coordinating meetings in Brussels are ensured by the GSP Working Party. On-the-spot coordination is reserved for defining Community positions on unforeseen points.

**(c) FAO**

As a full member, the Community participates in the FAO jointly with its Member

States. It does so on the basis of a declaration of competences dividing responsibilities for attendance at proceedings and the exercise of voting rights between the Community and its Member States.

Internal discussions are prepared on the basis of an ad hoc arrangement between the Council and the Commission (agreed in December 1991). The arrangement provides for consultation and for procedures to establish who has the right to make statements and to vote. If there is disagreement in the Council Working Party on how to apply the arrangement, the matter is referred to Coreper.

**(d) United Nations General Assembly and ECOSOC**

The European Community has a standing invitation to participate with observer status in the sessions and work of the General Assembly.

The Community is represented in the UN by the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (Permanent Representative of the Member State holding the Presidency) and by the Head of the European Commission's delegation to the UN.

Save exceptional cases when the Commission takes the floor, it is the Presidency which in principle expresses Member States' common position at the General Assembly and ECOSOC. To this end internal coordinating meetings, attended by the Commission, are held on the spot in order to establish the European Union's position. In some, increasingly rare, cases the EU Member States make supplementary national declarations.

In the absence of a formally agreed common position on a matter within the Community's exclusive competence, Member States may make national declarations should they see fit.

**(e) Council of Europe**

The Community's status within the Council of Europe enables it to be represented by the Commission in negotiations concerning conventions coming within the Community's exclusive competence.

In addition, regular <sup>(1)</sup>, "quadripartite" meetings are to be held with the participation of the Presidents of the Council and the Commission – for the European Union – and the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

**(f) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**

The Community has signed, subject to conclusion, both the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1994 Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of that Convention. Those agreements, being of the "mixed" type, also come within Member States' competence.

The 1994 Agreement provisionally entered into force on 16 November 1994 (coinciding with the entry into force of the Convention). The Community agreed to its provisional application and thus became a provisional member of the International Sea-Bed Authority (and, hence, of the Assembly, i.e. the organ of the Authority consisting of all the members of the latter). The Community, represented by the Commission, took part in the opening session of the Assembly's Authority in 1995.

The Community further attends, as observer, meetings of the States parties to the Convention concerning, in particular, the budgets of the institutions and bodies established by the Convention and also appointments to those bodies.

**(g) International Labour Organization (ILO)**

The Community enjoys observer status, enabling it to participate, without voting rights, in the General Conference of representatives of ILO members. Moreover, prior to ILO Conferences and throughout negotiations in Geneva, the Member States hold coordinating meetings at which both the Commission and the Council General Secretariat play an active role. Provided that the Member States agree on a common approach, the representative of the Council Presidency will present the Member States' position to the Conference.

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<sup>(1)</sup> One per Presidency.

**(h) Fisheries**

In the field of fisheries, the Community has concluded bilateral agreements with a large number of countries. Given their nature, those agreements can be implemented without the Council's participation.

The Community is also affiliated to various international fisheries organizations. It is represented in them by the Commission, assisted by a committee composed of representatives of Member States' Governments.

The Council is currently considering the accession by the Community and its Member States to, and arrangements for participation in, the United Nations Convention on Straddling Stocks and Highly Migratory Species.

**(i) Conventions on environmental matters**

Many conventions on environmental matters are of the "mixed" type. The Community therefore participates in them jointly with the Member States. Positions to be adopted on behalf of the Community within organizations and at conferences are expressed either by the Commission or the Presidency.

**5. Conduct of political dialogue**

The European Union conducts a political dialogue with a number of countries and groups of countries.

The tables below (pages 69 to 72) list political dialogue commitments, showing details of level (Heads of State or of Government, Ministers, Political Directors, senior officials or experts), format (participation by the 15 Members of the Council, Presidency or Troika), frequency and also references to acts (international agreements or other) having established such a dialogue.

Before the beginning of each Presidency, the incoming Presidency circulates via COREU the planned dates of political dialogue meetings to be held during the six-month period.

As far as possible, both Presidencies cooperate, with the assistance of the General Secretariat, in drawing up the calendar of commitments for a one-year period.

Agendas should relate to topical issues. The agenda should be circulated in advance for information and in order to gather any comments by third countries concerned. A record of the discussions relating to the dialogue must be circulated via COREU.

As part of the enhanced political dialogue with the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Malta and Cyprus (i.e. countries with which the Community has concluded Europe association agreements), those countries may, in addition to the dialogue meetings, be invited to associate themselves with European Union demarches and declarations to third countries, and also with certain types of joint action. They will accordingly need to be informed in time for making possible suggestions for the démarche/declaration concerned. Contacts with associated countries relating to the implementation of those provisions are, as a rule ensured by the General Secretariat acting on the Presidency's instructions.

## 6. Specific arrangements relating to the CFSP

### (a) The Presidency

Article J.5 TEU specifies **the role of the Presidency**. The Presidency represents the Union in matters relating to the CFSP; it is responsible for the implementation of joint actions. In that capacity it in principle expresses the position of the Union in international organizations and at international conferences. In these tasks <sup>(1)</sup> it is assisted if need be by the Member States forming part of the Troika.

### (b) Working parties

As far as **the timetable** is concerned, before the beginning of each Presidency the incoming Presidency circulates via COREU the planned dates for meetings of working parties during the six-month period.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Commission is fully associated in these tasks.



Working parties have certain distinguishing features: in particular there is a distinction between merged working parties (merger between the former EPC Group and the equivalent Community working party) <sup>(1)</sup> and working parties dealing only with items which fall within the CFSP sector <sup>(2)</sup>.

The Working Parties on Drugs and Terrorism also report to the K.4 Committee <sup>(3)</sup>.

The horizontal Working Party of CFSP Counsellors is responsible for the legal, financial and administrative aspects of CFSP matters and, if necessary, prepares the ground for the proceedings of the Political Committee and Coreper in this area. It is also required to consider common positions or joint actions designed to interrupt or to reduce in part or completely economic relations with one or more third countries and also proposals for Community acts based on Article 228a or Articles 228a and 73g.

CFSP matters are also dealt with by other, mixed-competence working parties.

Notices of meetings of merged working parties dealing with CFSP or mixed issues and of CFSP working parties are sent by COREU to the capitals, the Commission and the Permanent Representations, preferably at least a week before the meeting. The notices must indicate the items on the agenda and the practical details of the meeting. They must also clearly identify the CFSP items in the case of meetings of "merged" working parties.

It is of course the Presidency's responsibility to organize its representation in working parties. It is recommended that each merged working party have a single Chairman with sufficient time to attend the Coreper meetings at which the dossiers submitted by the working party are being examined and to maintain the necessary working relationship with the Commission, the Council General Secretariat and the delegations of the other Member States. If this is not possible, chairmanship of the working party will call for even greater internal coordination.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Latin America, Asia, ad hoc Working Party on the Middle East Peace Process, Mashreq/Maghreb, Middle East/Gulf, OSCE, Central Europe, Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, ad hoc Working Party on former Yugoslavia, Southeast Europe.

<sup>(2)</sup> Africa, Consular Affairs, Drugs, Terrorism, Administrative Affairs, Protocol, Disarmament, United Nations, Security, Public International Law, Policy Planning, Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Non-Proliferation (Chemical and Biological), Arms Exports, Communications, Human Rights, Stability Pact.

<sup>(3)</sup> See Chapter VI below.

**Agendas** are prepared by the General Secretariat together with the Presidency. Following the Presidency's approval, they are circulated outside the Secretariat via COREU.

The agenda must also be distributed by means of a Council telex to ensure that delegates are reimbursed and that certain General Secretariat departments (security, coffee service, etc.) are informed.

Merged working parties deal with all subjects covered by external relations. In the interests of the continuity of the Union's foreign policy, **the agenda for each meeting of merged working parties should offer the possibility of entering an item relating to the CFSP.** For this purpose, when agendas for the various meetings of a merged working party are drawn up, there should be one section listing items for which the presence of officials from the capitals would be desirable and another containing those which may be dealt with by means of instructions to the Permanent Representations, such as regular monitoring of CFSP initiatives and the preparation of texts for the Council. The other Council working parties, which meet less frequently, may refer a matter to the Working Party of CFSP Counsellors between two meetings so that it can follow it up.

As regards **the working methods of the working parties**, participation by delegates from the Permanent Representations in meetings of their working party for all agenda items, which is already a frequent practice, must be encouraged in the interests of continuity of the Union's external action.

Working parties must endeavour to reach agreement in particular on:

- **common analyses** of the situation in third countries or on a multilateral question and the common position which might be adopted by the European Union;
- **proposals** which might be approved by the Political Committee under the heading of practical measures for implementing the CFSP: demarches, requests to be addressed to Representations in third countries and other preparatory measures, declarations by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union;
- **substantive recommendations for future Council initiatives** in the CFSP sphere on which the Political Committee may, if it so decides, submit an opinion to the Council, and the political follow-up to such initiatives.

For each meeting of a working party the Presidency must be assisted by staff of the Council General Secretariat who are competent on Community subjects and CFSP matters. **The Council General Secretariat prepares a single report in good time on each relevant item appearing on the agenda for Coreper meetings.** Hence:

- when geographic or thematic working parties deal with questions covered by the provisions of Title V of the Treaty (CFSP), **records of the meetings** are drawn up by the Council General Secretariat to ensure continuity of working methods from one Presidency to another. As a general rule, they are available twenty-four hours after the working party meeting and are in principle **sent by COREU**. Member States are bound only by the operational conclusions which, after they have been checked by the Presidency, are **approved by the "silent" procedure**, which expires four working days after the COREU has been sent by the Council General Secretariat;
- any matter which one or more working parties has been unable to resolve also becomes the subject of a special report drawn up by the Council General Secretariat in the form of a single working paper, setting out the whole subject-matter. The Presidency is responsible for choosing the items to be discussed and for the handling of the dossier by the Council bodies.

In submitting their dossiers to Coreper and the Council, working parties have to take account of the same timetabling constraints as those prevailing in the Community sphere <sup>(1)</sup>. Accordingly:

- the provisional agenda for the Council must be drawn up at least fourteen days before the beginning of the meeting (Article 2 CRP);
- except where recognized as urgent, the proposal for adoption of a Council act (common position, joint action, decision adopted pursuant to a common position or joint action) must appear on the provisional agenda for a Council meeting;

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Chapter III.

- in any case, such proposals are examined in advance by Coreper, unless the latter decides otherwise (Article 19(1) CRP) or, in the event of an emergency, the Council, acting unanimously, decides to settle the matter without prior examination (same provision);
- the Presidency must organize meetings of working parties so that their reports are available for examination by Coreper when the provisional agenda is drawn up for the relevant Council meeting (Article 20 CRP).

These practices for ensuring sound preparation of the Council's work entail all draft texts for the Council being available two weeks at the latest before the Council meeting to enable Coreper to examine them at least twice. It is Coreper which has overall responsibility for preparation of all the Council's work.

(c) **The Political Committee**

The Political Committee (POCO) is **made up of** the Political Directors of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of the Member States; the Director-General for the CFSP at the Commission also participates.

It is the **task** of the Political Committee to monitor the international situation in areas covered by the CFSP. It contributes to the definition of policies by delivering opinions to the Council at the request of the Council or on its own initiative. It also monitors the implementation of agreed policies, without prejudice to the responsibility of the Presidency and the Commission (Article J.8(5)).

The Political Committee meets in principle **once a month** and more often if necessary, on the Presidency's initiative, without prejudice to meetings alongside General Affairs Councils. Meetings are **convened via COREU** as a rule 10 days in advance on the basis of an agenda adopted by the Presidency together with the Secretariat. Notice of a meeting of the Political Committee must also be distributed by Council telex, referring to the COREU for the agenda.

Meetings are normally held at the **Council's headquarters** on the Thursday and Friday of the week preceding the meeting at which Coreper prepares for the Council meeting. This enables the Working Party of CFSP Counsellors to prepare more thoroughly for the Coreper meeting.

The Political Committee includes an initial meeting of the European Correspondents, who also examine any working party reports that do not require discussion by the Political Directors.

The Presidency informs the Political Committee of the preliminary draft Council agenda (CFSP items) which it intends to submit to the next Coreper meeting.

Taking account of the particular responsibilities of the Political Committee in the CFSP area, the Presidency ensures, through the agency of the Secretariat, that opinions for the Council are passed on efficiently. **Opinions of the Political Committee** (including, among other things, its conclusions or recommendations) for the Council appear on the agenda for Coreper in order to ensure that they are forwarded to the Council in good time. Coreper adds the comments and recommendations it deems useful and endeavours, as far as necessary, to reach an agreement at its own level, for submission to the Council for approval.

The Council asks the Political Committee, meeting alongside the Council, to submit to it, where appropriate, opinions taking into account the latest political developments.

**(d) The Council**

Like all other matters, those relating to the CFSP are normally discussed at **formal Council meetings**. Discussions over lunch are in principle reserved for particularly delicate issues. Any conclusions must then be adopted at a meeting. Where it seems useful, a decision may be taken to meet in restricted session.

Wherever possible, the time limits for preparing the Council agenda (Article 2 CRP <sup>(1)</sup>) must be observed.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Chapter III, point 4.

In accordance with Article J.8(2), the Council acts unanimously, except for procedural questions (simple majority) and in the case referred to in Article J.3(2) (qualified majority).

In the CFSP framework the results of votes are made public only by unanimous decision of the Council taken at the request of one of its members (Article 7(5) CRP).

**(e) Relations with the European Parliament (Article J.7) <sup>(1)</sup>**

The Presidency consults the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP and ensures that the views of the European Parliament are duly taken into consideration. Parliament is kept regularly informed by the Presidency and the Commission of the development of the CFSP. In particular:

The Presidency maintains close contacts with Parliament (see Chapter IV).

It is the Presidency which organizes consultation of Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP (reminder: when written or oral information is organized as described above; at the time of the annual debate provided for by the Treaty; when the European Council has approved general guidelines for joint actions).

At each meeting of the Council the Presidency informs it of the reactions, communications, questions, recommendations or resolutions in which Parliament refers to the CFSP.

**(f) Cooperation between diplomatic and consular missions (Article J.6)**

The Presidency sees to it that diplomatic and consular missions of the Member States and Commission Delegations in third countries and at international conferences, and their representations to international organizations, cooperate in ensuring that the common positions and common measures adopted by the Council are complied with and implemented.

They are to step up their cooperation by exchanging information, carrying out joint assessments and contributing to the implementation of the provisions

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<sup>(1)</sup> This subject is still being discussed with the Parliament.

laid down for implementing Article 8c TEC (protection of citizens of the Union in the territory of third countries).

**(g) International organizations and conferences**

Among the activities covered by Title V TEU, the European Union may be required to participate in a number of international organizations and conferences which are characterized by specific procedures.

In this context, coordinating meetings are held in advance of and, if necessary, during meetings in international fora:

- where the issues at stake in these fora are considered a matter of priority or particularly central to the Union's concerns, joint action (Article J.3) or common positions (Article J.2) are adopted to give greater emphasis to the consistency of Member States' action;
- the representative of the Member State holding the Presidency makes a statement on behalf of the Union at the start of a Conference and may also subsequently make a statement on the Union's behalf;
- the representative of the Member State holding the Presidency is responsible for submitting any written contributions from the European Union and for carrying out, where appropriate with the Troika and in association with the Commission, the agreed procedures for implementing common positions or joint action.

(Statements made and written contributions submitted on behalf of the European Union are previously approved by the written procedure or at coordinating meetings.)

Special attention is paid to the proceedings of the United Nations General Assembly and its Main Committees (memorandum and speech to the General Assembly, European Union statement to the First Committee, etc.) and to the proceedings of the OSCE (statements on behalf of the European Union to the Permanent Council, the Senior Council, the Ministerial Council and the Summit).

The Union also makes its presence felt in international conferences for the negotiation of treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation. The above arrangements apply.

In preparing for and holding coordinating meetings and in implementing their conclusions, in particular when joint actions or common positions have been adopted, the Presidency is assisted by the General Secretariat: in Brussels, Geneva and New York on a permanent basis and at other conference venues as far as staffing considerations permit.



## POLITICAL DIALOGUE COMMITMENTS WITH ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	REF.	DATE	FORM OF DIALOGUE	FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS
BULGARIA	Europe Association Agreement	8.3.1993	Heads of State (multilat.) - Pres. + Cion	1 per year As required
	Council Decision	19.12.1994	Heads of State (bilat.) - Council Minist. (multilat.) - Council Minist. (multilat.) - Troika + Cion Minist. (bilat.) - margins Ass. Council Pol. Dir. (multilat.) - 15 + Cion Pol. Dir. (multilat.) - Troika + Cion Pol. Dir. (bilat.) - Pres. + Cion Experts (multilat.) or Troika + Cion	1 per Presidency As required 1 per year As required 1 per Presidency As required Unspecified 1 per Presidency
CYPRUS	Association Council Resolution	12.6.1995	"	"
	Council Decision	17.7.1995	"	"
CZECH REPUBLIC	Europe Association Agreement	4.10.1993	"	"
	Council Decision	19.12.1994	"	"
ESTONIA	Europe Association Agreement	12.6.1995	"	"
HUNGARY	Europe Association Agreement	16.12.1991	"	"
	Council Decision	13.12.1993	"	"
LATVIA	Europe Association Agreement	12.6.1995	"	"
LITHUANIA	Europe Association Agreement	12.6.1995	"	"
MALTA	Association Council Resolution	12.6.1995	"	"
	Council Decision	17.7.1995	"	"
POLAND	Europe Association Agreement	16.12.1991	"	"
	Council Decision	13.12.1993	"	"
ROMANIA	Europe Association Agreement	1.2.1994	"	"
	Council Decision	19.12.1994	"	"
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	Europe Association Agreement	4.10.1993	"	"
	Council Decision	19.12.1994	"	"
SLOVENIA	Europe Association Agreement	10.06.1996	"	"

## POLITICAL DIALOGUE COMMITMENTS WITH OTHER THIRD COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	REF.	DATE	FORM OF DIALOGUE	FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS
ALBANIA	Joint Declaration	11.5.1992	Minist. Senior Official - Pres. + Cion	Regular Regular
ANDEAN COMMUNITY	Joint Declaration	30.6.1996	Presidency Council, Cion, Andean Council for Aff. Mins. Appropriate level	Unspecified As required
ARMENIA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement	22.4.1996	Heads of State or Government Minist. (Coop. Council) Senior Officials Experts	As required Unspecified Unspecified Unspecified
ASEAN	EU/ASEAN Decision	29-30.10.1992	Minist.- Council " - ASEAN PMC - Tr. + Cion " - ASEAN Reg. Forum - Tr + Cion Senior Officials (Tr. + Cion)	Biennial 1 per year Margins of PMC 1 per year (current practice)
AUSTRALIA	Council conclusion	7.5.1990	Minist. - Tr. or Pres. + Cion Political Directors - Pres. + Cion	Unspecified 1 per Presidency
AZERBAIJAN	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement	22.4.1996	Heads of State or Government Minist. (Coop. Council) Senior Officials Experts	As required Unspecified Unspecified Unspecified
CANADA	Joint Declaration	22.11.1990	Prime Minister - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Pres. + Cion Pol. Dir. - Pres. + Cion	Regular 1 per Presidency 1 per Presidency
CHILE	Framework Cooperation Agreement	21.6.1996	Heads of State/Govt. Ministers Senior Officials	Unspecified Unspecified Unspecified
CHINA	Exchange of letters	9.6.1994	Minist. - Tr. + Cion Minist. - Tr. + Cion HCM Beijing + Chinese MFA Pres. + Chinese Amb. Pol. Dir./Senior Officials - Tr. + Cion	Margins of UNGA Irregular 1 per Presidency 1 per Presidency Irregular
EFTA/EEA	Joint Declaration	30.5.1995	Prime Minist. - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Council Political Directors - 15 + Cion Experts	Regular 1 per Presidency As required As required
GEORGIA	Partnership and Coop. Agreement	22.4.1996	Heads of State/Govt. Minist. (Coop Council) Senior Officials Experts	As required Unspecified Unspecified Unspecified
GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL	Joint Declaration	22.4.1996	Ministers Senior Officials	2 per year 2 per year
INDIA	Joint Declaration	20.12.1993	Minist. - Tr. + Cion	Unspecified
ISRAEL	Euro-Mediterranean Agreement	20.11.1995	Ministers Political Directors Experts	Unspecified As required
JAPAN	Joint Declaration	18.7.1991	Heads of State/Govt. - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Tr. + Cion Pol. Dir. - Tr. + Cion	1 per year 1 per Presidency 1 per Presidency

COUNTRY	REF.	DATE	FORM OF DIALOGUE	FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS
MERCOSUR	Cooperation Agreement	15.12.1995	Heads of State/Govt. Minist. + Cion Senior Officials	Unspecified 1 per year Unspecified
MOROCCO	Euro-Mediterranean Agreement	26.2.1996	Minist. Senior Officials	1 per year Unspecified
NEW ZEALAND	Political Committee Decision	6.9.1990	Minist. - Pres. + Cion Pol. Dir. - Pres. + Cion	As required 1 per Presidency
NON-ALIGNED	Political Committee Decision	6.6.1990	Minist. - Tr. + Cion	1 per year (margins of UNGA)
OAU	Political Committee Decision	15.12.1994	Minist. Geo. Dir. (15 + Cion) (Brussels) (Troika + Cion) (Addis Ababa) Experts	As required 1 per Presidency As required
PAKISTAN	Political Committee Decision	12.2.1992	Dep. Pol. Dir. - Tr. + Cion	Unspecified
RIO GROUP	Joint Declaration	20.12.1990	Minist.	1 per year Margins of UNGA
RUSSIA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement	24.6.1994	Heads of State - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Cooperation Council Minist. - Tr. + Cion Pol. Dir. - Tr. + Cion Senior Officials - Tr. + Cion Experts	1 per Presidency 1 per year Ad hoc 1 per Presidency 1 per Presidency Ad hoc
SADC	Joint Declaration	6.9.1994 16.6.1995	Minist. - 15 Minist. - Troika	As required 1 per year
SAN JOSE GROUP	Joint Communiqué	21.3.1996	Minist. Senior Officials	1 every 2 years 1 every 2 years
SOUTH KOREA	Framework Agreement Joint Declaration	29.2.1996	Heads of State/Govt. - Pres. Cion Minist. Troika - For. Aff. Mins. Senior Officials	Unspecified
SRI LANKA	Joint Declaration	7.4.1994	Minist. (Tr.) Pol. Dir. (Tr.)	As required
TUNISIA	Euro-Mediterranean Agreement	17.7.1995	Minist. Senior Officials	Unspecified Unspecified
TURKEY	Association Council Resolution	6.3.1995	Heads of State/Govt. - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Association Council Minist. - Tr. + Cion Pol. Dir. - Tr. + Cion Experts	1 per year 1 per year 1 six-month period without Association Council 1 per Presidency Unspecified
UKRAINE	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement	14.6.1994	Heads of State/Govt. - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Association Council Minist. - Tr. + Cion Senior Officials - Tr. + Cion	As required 1 per year Unspecified Unspecified
UNITED STATES	Joint Declaration	23.11.1990	Heads of State - Pres. + Cion Minist. - Council Minist. - Pres. + Cion Pol. Dir. - Tr. + Cion Experts	1 per Presidency 1 per Presidency Ad hoc 1 per Presidency 1 per Presidency
UZBEKISTAN	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement	21.6.1996	Heads of State/Government Minist. - Cooperation Council Senior Officials Experts	As required 1 per year Unspecified Unspecified

**NB:** Where appropriate, political dialogue meetings are held with other countries at ministerial level in the margins of the UN General Assembly.

CRITICAL DIALOGUE

COUNTRIES	REF	DATE	FORM OF DIALOGUE	FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS
IRAN	Edinburgh European Council	11- 12.12.1992	Unspecified	Irregular

## Chapter VI – Specific arrangements for JHA

Before the beginning of each Presidency, the incoming Presidency draws up **the timetable** for the meetings of working parties scheduled for the six-month period. The dates of the meetings of JHA Councils, the K.4 Committee and steering groups are notified at that point; a timetable covering working party meetings for the coming month is circulated at the end of the preceding month.

### 1. Working parties

**Working parties**, like all other groups, are set up by decision of the Permanent Representatives Committee.

Meetings of working parties are convened by the General Secretariat, following the Presidency's agreement, by telexes addressed to members of the working parties and the Permanent Representations, in principle at least one week before the meeting. Meetings of the Working Party of JHA Counsellors are convened by the Presidency by telexes addressed to the JHA Counsellors in the Permanent Representations.

### 2. Steering groups

Working parties report back to **the steering groups** to which they are attached. The steering groups are:

- Steering Group I for matters relating to asylum, immigration, visas and external frontiers;
- Steering Group II for matters relating to police and customs cooperation;
- Steering Group III for judicial cooperation on civil and criminal matters.

In addition, steering groups are responsible for proposing each year to the K.4 Committee a programme-timetable to be reviewed six months later.

The steering groups report back to **the Coordinating Committee** consisting of senior officials **provided for in Article K.4(1) TEU** and hence known as the "K.4 Committee".

### 3. K.4 Committee

The tasks of the **K.4 Committee** are to:

- give opinions for the attention of the Council, either at the Council's request or on its own initiative;
- contribute, without prejudice to Article 151 TEC, to the preparation of the Council's discussions in the areas referred to in Article K.1 TEU and, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 100d TEC, in the areas referred to in Article 100c of that Treaty.

As a general rule, the K.4 Committee meets **once a month**.

When dossiers are submitted to Coreper and the Council, account has to be taken of the same timetabling constraints as in the Community sphere. The rule in Article 2 CRP that the provisional agenda must be drawn up at least 14 days before the beginning of the meeting is applicable: however, there is a statement in the Council minutes to the effect that "the President will endeavour to ensure that, in principle, the provisional agenda for each Council meeting devoted to implementation of Title VI of the Treaty on European Union, and the documentation relating to the items on that agenda, are received by the members of the Council **at least 21 days** before the beginning of the meeting."

All meetings of working parties, the steering groups and the K.4 Committee are held in the Council headquarters in **Brussels**, with the exception of one meeting of the K.4 Committee and one meeting of each of the steering groups which in principle are held in the Member State of the Presidency.

### 4. The Council

**Each Presidency in principle organizes one or two Council meetings** in the JHA sector. In addition, it will also convene an informal meeting (or two separate informal meetings for the Justice Ministers and Home Affairs Ministers); these informal meetings must comply with the rules laid down for meetings of this type (see Chapter VII).

The Council acts **unanimously**, except on procedural matters and in cases where Article K.3 TEU expressly provides for a different voting rule (Article K.4(3)). Article K.3 TEU provides that the Council may decide unanimously that measures implementing joint action are to be adopted by a qualified majority. As regards conventions, unless otherwise provided therein, any measures implementing them are adopted within the Council by a majority of two-thirds of the High Contracting Parties.

**Publication of instruments under Title VI** takes place in accordance with the following rules (laid down in Article 18(4) CRP):

- decisions to publish in the Official Journal joint positions defined and joint action adopted on the basis of Article K.3 TEU and their implementing measures are taken on a case-by-case basis when the instruments in question are adopted;
- conventions drawn up pursuant to Article K.3(2) TEU are published in the Official Journal with a reference to the date of their entry into force;
- resolutions, recommendations and other texts are published after a unanimous Council decision. As a rule, publication of acts and other texts relating to asylum and immigration is authorized by the Member States, unless there is a decision to the contrary.

## **5. Relations with the European Parliament**

As regards relations with the European Parliament (Article K.6 TEU), the Presidency (and the Commission) keep Parliament regularly informed of proceedings. Information may be passed on by means of a written document, participation in debates at plenary sessions of the Parliament, or a report to one of the Parliament committees responsible for matters covered by Title VI (Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs and Legal Affairs Committee).

In addition, the Presidency consults the European Parliament on the main aspects of activity in the areas covered by Title VI and ensures that Parliament's views are duly taken into consideration.

Each year Parliament holds a debate on progress with regard to the implementation of the areas referred to in Title VI; the debate, which is normally held at the end of the year, is attended by the President of the JHA Council.

Lastly, the written report on the progress achieved by the Union which is submitted annually to the European Parliament also contains information on the JHA sector.

## **6. Relations with third countries**

Relations with third countries under structured dialogues comply with the rules laid down for the Council in general.

Relations with other third countries are governed by provisions specific to the Third Pillar.

The Council, in association with the Commission and after consulting the K.4 Committee and Coreper, takes decisions regarding the eligibility of the third countries with which relations are established under the Third Pillar.

Contacts with third countries (currently the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Norway and Morocco) take place at three levels:

1. the Presidency, in principle acting through the General Secretariat of the Council and in close association with the Commission, is responsible for organizing contacts with third countries and the necessary exchange of information;
2. the Presidency as such or the Troika meets with third States only when it seems necessary to negotiate or draw up arrangements or agreements. The same applies when there are highly political issues to discuss or when specific circumstances or situations call for direct action or contact;
3. as a rule, Ministers conduct a dialogue with third countries only when political decisions actually have to be taken or agreements concluded.

The Presidency, assisted by the General Secretariat of the Council, reports to the K.4 Committee on its contacts with third countries and on exchanges of information.



## **Chapter VII - Protocol and logistics**

### **1. Accreditation of Ambassadors from third countries to the Community.**

The Commission receives the request for accreditation. After delivering a favourable opinion, it passes on the request from the third country, together with its opinion, to the Council. After receiving the communication from the Commission, the Council sends the request for accreditation, together with the curriculum vitae of the Ambassador appointed, to the capitals by telex. Member States have one month in which to reply. As soon as the General Secretariat has received all the replies, it notifies the Commission, which informs the Embassy concerned of the Council's approval.

The President of the General Affairs Council is responsible for receiving Ambassadors from third countries, who present their credentials to him during a short ceremony on the occasion of a Council meeting.

Credentials are presented at almost every meeting. In general, the President receives between two and eight Ambassadors, involving an interview of about ten minutes each on average. The date and time are fixed by common agreement between the Embassies concerned, the Presidency and the Protocol Department of the Council General Secretariat. It is sometimes difficult to arrive at a definitive timetable a few days in advance. The Secretariat insists that the utmost be done to avoid last-minute changes, which are often badly taken by the Ambassadors. The President of the Council may delegate his duty to a State Secretary if this helps to finalize appointment times.

The ceremony - which is not in any way "grand" - is normally attended by the President of the Council, the Chairman of Coreper, the Secretary-General and/or the Head of Protocol of the Council and the Director-General for External Relations at the Council General Secretariat.

In practice, the Chairman of Coreper and the Secretary-General of the Council are very rarely able to be present. Often, the President of the Council (or the State Secretary) is accompanied by his Head of Private Office.

A few days before the meeting the President of the Council receives a brief note on the relations which the Ambassador's country has with the Community, to which is attached the curriculum vitae of the new Ambassador.

## **2. Meals and functions (organized by the General Secretariat and charged to the Council budget) <sup>(1)</sup>**

### **(a) Meals during Council meetings**

The principle is as follows:

- General Affairs + ECOFIN Councils: one lunch per meeting;
- all other Councils: in principle, one lunch at the beginning and one at the end of a Presidency.

Lunches are working lunches connected with the meeting. They are organized by the General Secretariat.

Those invited are: Ministers, Members of the Commission, State Secretaries, Permanent Representatives (or Deputy Permanent Representatives) and - at meetings of the General Affairs Council - Political Directors. Guests are divided between two separate rooms: in one the President shares his table with Heads of Delegation; the other guests lunch in the same room as the delegates. In addition to the Heads of Delegation, the President has at his table:

- for General Affairs and ECOFIN Councils: the Secretary-General of the Council, the Chairman of Coreper and/or the Chairman of the Political Committee and the Secretary-General of the Commission (or the Deputy Secretary-General). When the President of the Commission is not present at a lunch, he himself chooses the Commissioner who will replace him. If several subjects are being discussed, he may choose more than one Commissioner;
- for other Councils: the Chairman of Coreper (Part 1) and the relevant Director-General from the General Secretariat.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The General Secretariat is willing to provide assistance beyond the events described in this chapter but the costs are borne by the Presidency.

Whatever the Council, additional guests are invited to the Presidency's table only if a President so requests because of the subject being discussed. This applies equally to, for example, Members of the Commission and Chairmen of committees in the context of the ECOFIN Council. In the case of ECOFIN Council meetings, the Chairman of the Monetary Committee and the Chairman of the Committee of Governors of the Central Banks are invited automatically.

**(b) Larger functions**

ACP/EC Council

When the meeting takes place in Europe, the Presidency gives a meal for Heads of Delegation plus one person and a meal or reception for other delegates. The General Secretariat is responsible for organization and costs.

When the meeting takes place in an ACP country, the host State generally gives a very large reception for all those attending. The European side endeavours to return hospitality by organizing a reception on a smaller scale.

It is traditional for the President of the Council to take part in the annual meeting of the **ACP-EC Joint Assembly** and on that occasion to give a meal for a small number of people.

Other Association or Cooperation Councils

As a general rule, the Presidency gives a meal. The formula varies depending on the venue and the programme.

Participation in negotiations in the framework of international organizations (UN, UNCTAD, GATT, etc.)

The Community spokesman in these fora is usually either the Commission and the Presidency of the Council together or the Commission alone. It is for the Presidency to decide whether it is appropriate to hold a reception for Heads of Delegation. If it decides to do so, it may give the reception jointly with the Commission. Organization is entrusted to the General Secretariat.

(c) **Other meals**

Standing Committee on Employment:

In principle, one meal/buffet at each meeting, given alternately by the Council and the Commission.

Coreper (Part 2):

Precedent created by recent Presidencies: one working meal per month (normally at the meeting preceding that of the General Affairs Council).

Political Committee and K.4 Committee:

Working meals may be organized on similar terms; the General Secretariat pays for one a month at most.

Coreper (Part 1):

Working meals may be organized; the Council pays for three per six-month period at the most.

SCA, Article 113 Committee, Senior Officials (Energy), Antici Group:

Working meals may be organized; the Council pays for one meal per six-month period.

**3. Travel by the President**

The nature of the President's duties requires him to travel on a number of occasions, all of which are connected with Council business.

The occasions in question are chiefly meetings of Association Councils held in third countries and meetings of a Troika, also in third countries. Sometimes the President is sent by the Council on a "tour of the capitals".

In every case the Council pays for the President's ticket and that of one companion on the basis of the business class fare, whatever the distance covered. If the President travels first class, the Presidency pays the difference. Where a special plane is used, the Council pays part of the cost up to the limit indicated above.

When the President travels in order to take part in a large international conference, for example in the United Nations framework, and is chairing on-the-spot coordinating meetings of Member States, the Council does not contribute to the cost.

The Council never pays accommodation costs.

#### **4. Meetings outside customary places of work**

In the case of all meetings in the Council framework taking place outside Brussels/Luxembourg, such as Association or Cooperation Councils held in third countries, the bulk of the cost is borne by the host country. The proportion paid by the Council (hiring of rooms, technical equipment, entertainment costs) is charged to the budget of the General Secretariat, which helps with the practical organization of meetings.

On the other hand, the Presidency bears the cost of all meetings convened by it outside the institutional framework as such - principally those held in the country of the Presidency: informal ministerial meetings, meetings of the Permanent Representatives Committee, Political Committee, K.4 Committee, Special Committee on Agriculture and certain working parties. The Presidency may, however, call on one of the thirteen teams of interpreters placed at the Council's disposal daily. This of course means that the team in question is not available in Brussels.

The organization and cost of European Council meetings are entirely the Presidency's responsibility, although it relies on the General Secretariat for help in all organizational matters. The General Secretariat keeps a detailed, regularly updated checklist which is available for consultation by the Presidency.

## **Rules concerning Coreper's working methods**

### **1. Planning of work**

Meetings are convened by telex, at least four days beforehand if possible.

It must be ensured that the time between the preparatory meetings (working parties, committees) and the Coreper meeting is not too short.

The provisional agenda for the General Affairs Council is drawn up by Coreper three weeks before the meeting (the GAC is officially convened 14 days before the meeting). Possible agenda items are discussed beforehand by the Presidency, the General Secretariat and the Commission.

Items on the Council agenda are examined by Coreper during the two weeks prior to the meeting.

Items should preferably be placed on the Coreper agenda when the meeting is convened (to be avoided: (1) placing items on the agenda at the last minute; and (2) entering "I/A" items when there are still reservations or when not all language versions are available).

As a rule, items for the Coreper agenda are suggested by the Presidency or the General Secretariat, although the "go-ahead" will always be given by the Presidency. It is essential that there should be close liaison between, on the one hand, the Presidency and, on the other hand, the Secretary-General's Private Office and the officials in charge of the dossiers in the General Secretariat.

### **2. Briefing**

The General Secretariat prepares the necessary documentation for each agenda item, including notes to the Chairman.

To enable the Secretariat to obtain the necessary information (after the working party meetings), briefings should not be held too soon.

### **3. Antici and Mertens Groups**

These groups meet the day before the Coreper meeting so that delegations can be apprised of the Presidency's intentions and vice-versa.

Any requests by delegations (e.g. for "Other business") have to be submitted in a precise and detailed form to the Chairman of the Group. This will give the General Secretariat time to prepare a note to the Chairman.

### **4. Meeting**

Regarding "I" items:

- = for Coreper (Part 1) such items are prepared by the Mertens Group;
- = for Coreper (Part 2) each delegation on the Antici Group gives written notification of any reservations; on this basis, the General Secretariat draws up a list of reservations which is presented orally at the beginning of the Coreper meeting. [Should consideration be given to the idea of having "I" items dealt with only by the Antici Group?]

Regarding "II" items, after an item has been discussed the Chairman should endeavour to formulate clearly the conclusions reached by the Committee and any subsequent action to be taken.

Any decisions or guidelines established over lunch must then be confirmed at the plenary session.



## **Rules concerning the Council's working methods <sup>(1)</sup>**

### **1. Planning of work**

Each Presidency draws up a work programme at the beginning of its six-month term.

As a rule, the General Affairs and ECOFIN Councils do not meet in January or September.

An excessive concentration of Council meetings in June and December should be avoided (and, where possible, the expiry dates for legislative acts should not fall at the end of June or December).

The number of Council meetings may not exceed one per day per Coreper (I or II) responsible for their preparation.

### **2. Organization of work**

The Council is convened by telex 14 days before the meeting.

The Council agenda distinguishes between:

- = items submitted for a policy debate (Ministers may deliver prepared statements, but systematic "tours de table" should be avoided);
- = items for negotiation (enabling a more direct discussion to be held).

Before a Council meeting is held delegations should endeavour to inform the Presidency and the Secretariat of any major change in their positions.

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<sup>(1)</sup> On the basis of the Council conclusions of 19 December 1988 and 29 May 1995 and the Rules of Procedure of 6 December 1993.



Communications or information items do not usually give rise to discussion but to a brief oral statement, preferably with written back-up.

The presentation of Commission proposals is confined to the most important political points.

Items for discussion/decision are examined on the basis of a Coreper report identifying specific matters for the benefit of Ministers.

Any decisions or guidelines established over lunch then have to be confirmed at the plenary session.

As far as possible, matters discussed over lunch are the subject of an informal account by the Presidency and/or the General Secretariat at the next Coreper meeting.

Where a delegation asks for an item to be included under "Other business", it will endeavour to circulate its arguments in writing beforehand.

No more than six persons per delegation are allowed into the Council chamber.

### **3. Informal meetings**

Informal meetings are mainly intended to provide an opportunity to consider general issues. They cannot be a substitute for Council activities.

Each Presidency may hold up to eight informal meetings.

Other rules in this connection:

- = no agenda;
- = as few participants as possible (Minister plus one or two advisers);
- = no official documents;
- = no conclusions;
- = no formal decisions.

#### 4. External relations

- (a) Association and Cooperation Council meetings should not deal with technical or detailed matters (written contribution) but only with matters of political importance, in particular the results of cooperation.
- (b) Unless otherwise decided, questions put to the Council must always be examined by Coreper.
- (c) Draft texts intended for the Council must be available at least two weeks before the Council meeting so that they can be examined by Coreper at least twice.
- (d) In the 1995 conclusions it was suggested that consideration be given to:
  - reforming the mode of operation of Association and Cooperation Councils to make them more "alive";
  - planning external commitments over the duration of a number of Presidencies;
  - considering streamlined arrangements for the future (Presidency + Troika, increasing the duties of the General Secretariat, etc.). The Legal Service was instructed to consider the matter;
  - organizing bilateral and multilateral fora more effectively.

**Scope of the co-decision procedure (Article 189b TEC)<sup>(1)</sup>**

**1. Co-decision and qualified majority**

Article 49	:	freedom of movement for workers
Article 54(2)	:	right of establishment
Article 56(2), second sentence	:	idem
Article 57(1)	:	idem
Article 57(2), third sentence	:	idem
Article 66	:	services
Article 100a	:	internal market
Article 100b	:	idem
Article 126	:	education (incentive measures)
Article 129	:	health (incentive measures)
Article 129a	:	consumers
Article 129d	:	trans-European networks (guidelines)
Article 130s(3)	:	environment: general action programmes

**2. Co-decision and unanimity**

Article 128	:	culture (excluding recommendations) <sup>(2)</sup>
Article 130i	:	research (framework programme)

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<sup>(1)</sup> The procedure referred to in Article 189b does not apply to the conclusion of international agreements (see Article 228(3), first subparagraph, TEC).

<sup>(2)</sup> Unanimity but not co-decision.

**COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES  
PROVISIONAL LIST AS AT 1 SEPTEMBER 1996**

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
<b>DG A - Personnel et administration - protocole, organisation, sécurité, infrastructures - traduction et reproduction des documents: Directeur général: M. WEINSTOCK - Secrétaire: Mme Meerganz von Medeazza, tél. 6343</b>		
<i>DGA II - Protocole, organisation, sécurité, infrastructures: Directeur général adjoint: M. VIKAS - Secrétares: Mme Kaminari, tél. 8245, Mme De Gieter, tél. 7972</i>		
AD HOC IMMEUBLE	M. Burgers, tél. 7174	Mme Kopp, tél. 7340, Mme Moens, tél. 7976, Mme Ferrari, tél. 7281
COMITE DE SELECTION DES OEUVRES D'ART	M. Burgers, tél. 7174	Mme Kopp, tél. 7340, Mme Moens, tél. 7976, Mme Ferrari, tél. 7281
<b>DG B - Agriculture - Pêche: Directeur général: M. GRIFFO - Assistants (Coord. CSA, CRP, Conseil AGRI): Mme Travella, tél. 6333 - Secrétares: Mmes Hirtz, tél. 7871, Russian, tél. 6799</b>		
AGRICULTURE - GROUPE HAUT NIVEAU	Mme Travella, tél. 6333	
COMITE SPECIAL AGRICULTURE	Mme Travella, tél. 6333	
<i>DG B I - Politique agricole (y compris aspects internationaux); organisation des marchés des produits agricoles, harmonisation des législations vétérinaires et zootechniques: Directeur: M. BOURGEOU - Secrétaire: Mme Paties, tél. 6341</i>		
AGRI-PECOS	M. Swift, tél. 7828, Mme Silveira Reis, tél. 6093	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
AGRI - STATISTIQUES	M. Swift, tél. 7828, Mme Silveira Reis, tél. 6093	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
COORDINATION FAO, OCDE ET ECE (AGRICULTURE)	M. Swift, tél. 7828, Mme Silveira Reis, tél. 6093	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
GRANDES CULTURES	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
GRANDES CULTURES - CEREALES ET RIZ	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
GRANDES CULTURES - OLÉAGINEUX	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
GRANDES CULTURES - PROTEAGINEUX	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
HORIZONTAL SIMPLIFICATION DE LA PAC	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
HOUBLON	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
PRODUITS HORS ANNEXE II (AGRICULTURE)	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
QUESTIONS HORIZONTALES (AGRICULTURE)	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
SEMENCES	M. Swift, tél. 7828, M. Reiderman, tél. 8563	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223
SUCRE	M. Swift, tél. 7828, Mme Silveira Reis, tél. 6093	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianale, tél. 6223

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
PROBA/SOMMET MONDIAL ALIMENTATION	M. Swift, tél. 7628, Mme Silveira Reis, tél. 6093	Mme Randers, tél. 7101, Mme Chianala, tél. 6223
BANANES	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
FIBRES TEXTILES	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
FLORICULTURE	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
FRUITS ET LEGUMES FRAIS	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
FRUITS ET LEGUMES TRANSFORMES	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
POMMES DE TERRE	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
TABAC	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme De Blander, tél. 7488
ALCOOL	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme Zaoui, tél. 6627
BOISSONS SPIRITUEUSES ET VINS AROMATISES	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme Zaoui, tél. 6627
HUILE D'OLIVE	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme Zaoui, tél. 6627
VINS	M. Mazzaeachi, tél. 7671, Mme Claeys, tél. 8443, M. Hellwig, tél. 6968	Mme Zaoui, tél. 6627
CONSEILLERS ATTACHES DES R.P., QUESTIONS VETERINAIRES	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
DIRECTEURS GENERAUX/CHEFS DES SERVICES VETERINAIRES	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
EXPERTS AGRICOLES ET VETERINAIRES	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
EXPERTS AGRICOLES ET VETERINAIRES, PRODUITS DE LA PECHE	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
EXPERTS AGRICOLES ET VETERINAIRES, SANTE ANIMALE	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
EXPERTS AGRICOLES ET VETERINAIRES, SANTE HUMAINE	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
PROTECTION DU BIEN ETRE DES ANIMAUX	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
VIANDE BOVINE	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
VIANDE OVINE	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
ZOOTECNIE	M. Adelbrecht, tél. 6823, M. Renaers, tél. 6263	Mme De Cooman, tél. 6631, Mme Karateri, tél. 8547
OEUFs ET VOLAILLE	M. Ten Have, tél. 6626	Mme D'Haeseleer, tél. 8134
PRODUITS LAITIERS	M. Ten Have, tél. 6626	Mme D'Haeseleer, tél. 8134
VIANDE PORCINE	M. Ten Have, tél. 6626	Mme D'Haeseleer, tél. 8134
<i>DGB II - Politique des structures agricoles; questions agronomiques et agrifinancières; forêts; harmonisation des législations agricoles;</i>		
<i>Directeur: M. MATUT - Secrétaire: Mme Perez, tél. 7331</i>		
AD HOC AGRICULTURE "NITRATES"	M. Robetti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
AD HOC APICULTURE	M. D'Aloia, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6643	Mme Kitrimi, tél. 7461
AD HOC FORETS	M. D'Aloia, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6643	Mme Kitrimi, tél. 7461
AD HOC ILES MER EGEE	M. D'Aloia, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6643	Mme Kitrimi, tél. 7461
AD HOC RESSOURCES GENETIQUES VEGETALES	M. D'Aloia, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6643	Mme Kitrimi, tél. 7461

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
AD HOC SECHERESSE	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6543	Mme Kitirimi, tél. 7461
AD-HOC SYSTEME INTEGRE DE GESTION ET DE CONTROLE	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Mier, tél. 7409	Mme Solimando, tél. 7748, Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
AD HOC UTILISATION NON-ALIMENTAIRE DES PRODUITS AGRICOLES	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446M. Siragusa, tél. 6543	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Kitirimi, tél. 7461
AGRIFIN	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Mier, tél. 7409	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
AGRIMONETAIRE	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Mier, tél. 7409	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS	M. Culley, tél. 6197	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
DIRECTEURS GEN/CHIEFS DES SERVICES DE LA PROTECTION DES VEGETAUX	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (ALIMENTS DES ANIMAUX)	M. Culley, tél. 6197	Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (COMMERCIALISATION DE JEUNES PLANTES)	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (DROIT DE L'OBTENTEUR)	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (ORGANISMES NUISIBLES)	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (PRODUCTION BIOLOGIQUE)	M. Culley, tél. 6197	Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (PRODUITS PHYTOPHARMACEUTIQUES)	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (RESIDUS DE PESTICIDES)	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
QUESTIONS AGRICOLES (SEMENCES)	M. Robotti, tél. 7312	Mme Erdini, tél. 7103
RECHERCHE AGRONOMIQUE	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6543	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Kitirimi, tél. 7461
RENFORCEMENT DES MOYENS DE CONTROLE	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Mier, tél. 7409	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Kitirimi, tél. 7461
RICA (RESEAUX DES INFORMATIONS COMPTABLES AGRICOLES)	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Mier, tél. 7409	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
STATISTIQUES AGRICOLES	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6543	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Kitirimi, tél. 7461
STRUCTURES AGRICOLES	M. D'Aloya, tél. 6446, M. Siragusa, tél. 6543	Mme Solimando, tél. 7749, Mme Kitirimi, tél. 7461
AD HOC QUALITE DES ALIMENTS	M. Culley, tél. 6197	Mme Van den Abbeele, tél. 8082
<b>DG B III - Politique de la pêche (y compris les relations externes): Directeur: M. DUCK - Assistante: Mme Castaneda, tél. 6659 - Secrétaire: Mme Clark, tél. 6372</b>		
POLITIQUE INTERIEURE DE LA PECHE - POLITIQUE EXTERIEURE DE LA PECHE	M. Heaton 6498, M. Lepere 6640, M. Zefirou, 6196 M. Kristensen 7561, M. Waldron 7184, Mme Cody 8543	Mme Marlow 6188, Mme Neuray 8562 Mme Adriaensens 8234, Mme Houlién, 7998
<b>DG C - Marché intérieur: Union douanière-Politique industrielle-rapprochement des législations-Droit d'établissement et libre prest. services-Droit des sociétés-Propriété intellectuelle: Directeur général: M.SLIBEN - Secrétaire: Mme Poulsen 6346</b>		
<b>DG C I - Politique industrielle - Propriété intellectuelle - Postes et télécommunications - Directeur: M. OLDEMAN, tél. 7119 - Secrétaire: Mme Schiedung, tél. 8060</b>		
CECA (COMMUNAUTE EUROPEENNE DU CHARBON ET DE L'ACIER) (ECSC en anglais)	M. Grootjean, tél. 7676, M. Breuls, tél. 7368, M. Millan, tél. 7162	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7361, Lavelli, tél. 6632

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
CONVENTION DROIT INTERNAT. PRIVE/CONVENTION DE BRUXELLES 1968	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
EQUILIBRIUM	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
INDUSTRIE	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (BREVET BIOTECHNOLOGIE)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, Malesy, tél. 7610
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (DESSINS ET MODELES)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, Malesy, tél. 7610
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (DROIT D'AUTEUR)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, tél. Malesy 7610
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (BREVET)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, Malesy, tél. 7610
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (MARQUES)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, Malesy, tél. 7610
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (RADIODIFFUSION)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, Malesy, tél. 7610
PROPRIETE INTELLECTUELLE (SEMI-CONDUCTEURS)	M. Mellor, tél. 6678, M. Van Hutten, tél. 7982	Mmes Van Straalen, tél. 6435, Malesy, tél. 7610
QUESTIONS ECO. CONSTRUCTION NAVALE	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
QUESTIONS ECO. ELECTRONIQUE EUROPEENNE	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
QUESTIONS ECO. PME (PETITES ET MOYENNES ENTREPRISES)	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
QUESTIONS ECO. PROTECTION DES DONNEES	MM. Schober 6450, Verhies 6521, Mme Bliss 8509	Mmes Allen, tél. 7364, Koolstra, tél. 6687
QUESTIONS ECO. REGLES DE CONCURRENCE	M. Grosjean, tél. 7576, M. Breuls, tél. 7358, M. Millan, tél. 7182	Mmes Hubert, tél. 7381, Lavelli, tél. 6632
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	MM. Schober 6450, Verhies 8521, Mme Bliss 8509	Mmes Allen 7364, Koolstra, 6687
POSTES	MM. Schober 6450, Verhies 8521, Mme Bliss 8509	Mmes Allen 7364, Koolstra, 6687
<i>DG C II - Droit d'établissement et libre prestation de services; libre circulation des produits industriels; union douanière: Directeur: M. EKINS-DAUKES - Secrétaire: Mme MacDonald, tél. 6321</i>		
AD HOC ATTACHES LIQUIDATION DES ENTREPRISES D'ASSURANCE	M. George, tél. 7354	Mlle MacDonald, tél. 6321
AD HOC LIBRE CIRCULATION DES PERSONNES	Mme Stodmeister, tél. 6448	Mlle Lefranc, tél. 6434, Mme D'Hose, tél. 6168
AD HOC CONVENTION DE FAILLITE	Mme Lopez, tél. 8054, M. Subra, tél. 6079	Mlle Lefranc, tél. 6434, Mme D'Hose, tél. 6168
AD HOC POLLUTION VEHICULES A MOTEUR	M. Ellis, tél. 7624, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
AD HOC SOCIETE EUROPEENNE	Mme Lopez, tél. 8054, M. Subra, tél. 6079	Mlle Lefranc, tél. 6434, Mme D'Hose, tél. 6168
ATTACHES DOUANIERS	M. Ellis, tél. 7624, M. Gossens, tél. 6488	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
COMITE 113 (GROUPE TECHNIQUE RECONNAISSANCE MUTUELLE)	Mme De Pufferrat, tél. 8135, M. Ellis, tél. 7624	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
CONSEILLERS ECO. MARCHE UNIQUE	M. Ellis, tél. 7624, Mme De Pufferrat, tél. 8135, M. Papanagos, tél. 6701, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
MARCHE INTERIEUR (QUESTIONS HORIZONTALES)	M. Ellis, tél. 7624, Mme De Pufferrat, tél. 8135	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. CONTROLE DES CONCENTRATIONS	Mme Stodmeister, tél. 6448	Mmes Lefranc, tél. 6434, D'Hose, tél. 6168
QUESTIONS ECO. (ETS ET SERV.) LIBRE CIRCULATION DES MEDECINS	M. George, tél. 7354	Mlle MacDonald, tél. 6321
QUESTIONS ECO. (ETS ET SERV.) SME DIR. "DROIT DES SOCIETES"	Mme Lopez, tél. 8054, M. Subra, tél. 6079	Mlle Lefranc, tél. 6434, Mme D'Hose, tél. 6168
QUESTIONS ECO. (ETS ET SERV.) MARCHES PUBLICS	Mme Lopez, tél. 8054	Mlle Lefranc, tél. 6434, Mme D'Hose, tél. 6168

GRUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
QUESTIONS ECO. (ETS ET SERV.) SOCIETE COOPERATIVE EUROPEENNE	M. Subra, tél. 6078	Mlle Lefranc, tél. 6434, Mme D'Hose, tél. 6188
QUESTIONS ECO. ASSURANCES	M. George, tél. 7354	Mlle MacDonald, tél. 6321
QUESTIONS ECO. (ETS ET SERV.) RECONNAISSANCE FORMATIONS PROFESS.	M. George, tél. 7354	Mlle MacDonald, tél. 6321
QUESTIONS ECO. DISPOSITIFS MEDICAUX	M. Elias, tél. tél. 7624, Mme De Puifferrat, tél. 8135, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. ENTRAVES TECHNIQUES	M. Elias, tél. tél. 7624, Mme De Puifferrat, tél. 8135, M. Papanagnos, tél. 6701, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. EQUIPEMENTS SOUS PRESSION	M. Elias, tél. 7624, Mme De Puifferrat, tél. 8135, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mme Monti-Pluti, tél. 8258
QUESTIONS ECO. FONDS DE RETRAITE	M. George, tél. 7354	Mlle MacDonald, tél. 6321
QUESTIONS ECO. INSTALLATIONS A CABLE	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Papanagnos, tél. 6701	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. INTRASTAT	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Goossens, tél. 6408	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. METAUX PRECIEUX	M. Elias, tél. 7624, Mme De Puifferrat, tél. 8135, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. PRECURSEURS	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Goossens, tél. 6408	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. PRODUITS COSMETIQUES	Mme Stodtmeister, tél. 6448	Mme Monti-Pluti, tél. 8258
QUESTIONS ECO. STATISTIQUES	Mme Stodtmeister, tél. 6448	Mme Monti-Pluti, tél. 8258
QUESTIONS ECO. SUBSTANCES DANGEREUSES	Mme Stodtmeister, tél. 6448	Mme Monti-Pluti, tél. 8258
QUESTIONS ECO. T.D.C. (TARIFS DOUANIERS COMMUNS)	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Breslin, tél. 7587	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. TOURISME	M. George, tél. 7354	Mlle MacDonald, tél. 6321
QUESTIONS ECO. TRACTEURS AGRICOLES	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Papanagnos, tél. 6701	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. UNION DOUANIERE	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Goossens, tél. 6408	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. VEHICULES A MOTEUR	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Papanagnos, tél. 6701, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
QUESTIONS ECO. VEHICULES A MOTEUR A DEUX OU TROIS ROUES	M. Elias, tél. 7624, M. Papanagnos, tél. 6701, Mme Geiger, tél. 6442	Mlle Barnett, tél. 7433
<b>DG D - Recherche - Energie - Transports: Directeur général: M. NELIGAN - Secrétaire: Mme Kuehm, tél. 6337, Mme Goldsmith, tél. 8969</b>		
<b>DG D I - Politique de la Recherche et de l'Energie: Directeur: M. BETTE - Secrétaire: Mme Fieve Dieu, tél. 8322</b>		
ENERGIE	MM. Grossir, tél. 8118, Engell-Hansen, tél. 8561, Brandtner, tél. 7072	Mme Goebel, tél. 8568
AD HOC CENTRE COMMUN DE RECHERCHE	Mme Humphreys-Zwart, tél. 7215	Mme Mullen, tél. 6898
AD HOC CHARTE EUROPEENNE DE L'ENERGIE	MM.Engell-Hansen, tél. 8561, Brandtner, tél. 7072	Mme Goebel, tél. 8568
CONTAMINATION RADIOACTIVE	M. Grossir, tél. 8118	Mme Goebel, tél. 8568
COST (COOPÉR. EUROPEENNE DANS DOMAINE SCIENTIFIQUE ET TECHNIQUE)	M. Van Rij, tél. 6943, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6898
COST - COMITE DE HAUTS FONCTIONNAIRES/SENIOR OFFICIALS COMMITTEE	M. Van Rij, tél. 6943, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6898
COST - COMITE TECHNIQUE "TELECOMMUNICATIONS"	M. Van Rij, tél. 6943, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6898
COST - COMITE TECHNIQUE "TRANSPORTS"	M. Van Rij, tél. 6943, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6898



GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRÉTAIRES
COST - COMITE TECHNIQUE AD HOC.....	M. Van Rij, tél. 6843, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6896
COST - JAF (QUESTIONS JURIDIQUES ADMINISTRATIVES ET FINANCIERES)	M. Van Rij, tél. 6843, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6896
COST - NOUVELLES ACTIONS/NEW ACTIONS	M. Van Rij, tél. 6843, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6896
COST - SOUS COMITE TECHNIQUE ACTION N°...	M. Van Rij, tél. 6843, Mme Klepandy, tél. 6676	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6896
CRÉST (COMITE DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE ET TECHNIQUE)	M. Van Rij, tél. 6843	Mlle Mullen, tél. 6896
ENERGIE (SIEGEANT AU NIVEAU DES CONSEILLERS DES R.P.)	MM. Grossir, tél. 8118, Engel-Hansen, tél. 8561, Brandtner, tél. 7072	Mme Goebel, tél. 8668
ENERGIE (SIEGEANT AU NIVEAU DES HAUTS FONCTIONNAIRES)	M. Grossir, tél. 8118	Mme Goebel, tél. 8668
QUESTIONS ATOMIQUES	M. Grossir, tél. 8118	Mme Goebel, tél. 8668
RECHERCHE	Mme Humphreys-Zwart, tél. 7215, M. Xirouchakis, tél. 7192	Mlle Hindle, tél. 8827, M. Le Voci, tél. 7884
RECHERCHE/QUESTIONS ATOMIQUES (GROUPE CONJOINT)	Mme Humphreys-Zwart, tél. 7215, M. Grossir, tél. 8118	Mlle Hindle, tél. 8827, M. Le Voci, tél. 7884
SNRÉ (SOURCES D'ENERGIE NOUVELLES ET RENOUVELABLES)	M. Grossir, tél. 8118	Mme Goebel, tél. 8668
<b>DG D II - Politique des Transports: Directeur: M. MELO ANTUNES - Secrétaire: Mlle Quirin, tél. 6323, Mlle Quintas, tél. 8432</b>		
AVIATION	MM. Marinho de Bastos, tél. 6072, Stengg, tél. 7363	Mmes Havaux, tél. 7189, Centanin, tél. 8324
QUESTIONS DE TRANSPORTS TERRESTRES	M. Gonzales-Sancho, tél. 6236, Mlle Pozzani, tél. 6440, Mme Comamala, tél. 7039	Mme Kiliaridou, tél. 7813
QUESTIONS DE TRANSPORTS MARITIMES	MM. Vermote, tél. 6436, Stengg, tél. 7363, Mme Comamala, tél. 7039	Mmes Havaux, tél. 7189, Centanin, tél. 8324
QUESTIONS DE TRANSPORTS AERIENS	MM. Marinho de Bastos, tél. 6072, Stengg, tél. 7363	Mmes Havaux, tél. 7189, Centanin, tél. 8324
<b>DG E - Relations économiques extérieures - Politique étrangère et de sécurité commune (PESC): Directeur général: M. CROWE - Secrétaire: Mlle Strain, tél. 7492</b>		
<b>DG E - Relations économiques extérieures: Directeur général: M. STEKELENBURG - Secrétaires: Mme Piotrowski Plink, tél. 7523, Mme Maruocco, tél. 7688</b>		
<b>DG E I - Relations avec les Etats ACP; relations avec les PTOM et les DOM; Afrique du Sud; Afrique australe; Conseil "Développement"; aide alimentaire et aides d'urgence: Directeur: M. BJØRNEKAER JENSEN - Secrétaires: Mme Denaux, tél. 6349, Mme Glud, tél. 7513</b>		
Division 1: ACP: aspects généraux et coordination d'ensemble; coopération pour le financement du développement; problèmes généraux du commerce; protocoles commerciaux; Afrique du Sud; Afrique australe; autres aspects de la coopération commerciale; coopération douanière, coopération dans le domaine des produits de base: Chef de Division: M. BEL - Secrétaire: Mme Oloton, tél. 6535		
ACP (PAYS D'AFRIQUE, DES CARAIÈRES ET DU PACIFIQUE)	M. Clausen, tél. 7356	Mmes Oloton, tél. 6535, Deris, tél. 7872
ACP/FIN (ACP/FINANES)	M. Whitten, tél. 7313	Mmes Oloton, tél. 6535, Deris, tél. 7872

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
AFRIQUE AUSTRALE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Clausen, tél. 7366 M. Purcell O'Byrne, tél. 7385, M. Weidinger, tél. 8042, cf. DGE PESC Dir. I	Mmes Oloton, tél. 6636, Daris, tél. 7872
Division 2: coopération industrielle et agricole; coopération au développement; aide alimentaire et aides d'urgence: Chef de Division M. MARIQUESA - Secrétaire: Mme Willigens, tél. 7252		
AIDE ALIMENTAIRE	M. Murdock, tél. 7785, M. Berger, tél. 7305	Mme Willigens, tél. 7252
COOPERATION AU DEVELOPPEMENT	M. Murdock, tél. 7785, M. Berger, tél. 7305	Mme Willigens, tél. 7252
DG E II: <i>EEE, AELE; Méditerranée et Moyen-Orient; Golfe, Amérique Latine; Asie; Chine; Corée; Australie; Nations unies et conférences Nord-Sud: Directeur: M. Kuosmanen - Secrétaire: Mme ..., tél. 6947</i>		
Division 1: EEE; AELE; Méditerranée et Moyen Orient; Golfe; dialogue euro-arabe: Chef de Division: M. STEIN - Secrétaire: Mme Costa, tél. 8723		
AELE (ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE DE LIBRE ECHANGE (EFTA en anglais))	M. Monteiro, tél. 8533	Mme Maruocco, tél. 7688
MOYEN ORIENT - GOLFE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Innocenti, tél. 6579, M. Milton, tél. 8519 M. Carter, tél. 8504, M. Sancho Velazquez, tél. 8307, cf. DGE PESC Dir. II	M. Mura, tél. 8338
EUROPE SUD-EST (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	Mme Sarat, tél. 8560 Mme Aalto, tél. 8626, cf. DGE PESC Dir. II	Mme Costa, tél. 8723
MACHREK/MAGHREB (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. San Jose, tél. 8286, M. Milton, tél. 8519 M. Carter, tél. 8504, M. Sancho Velazques, tél. 8307, cf. DGE PESC Dir. II	M. Mura, tél. 8338
AD HOC PROCESSUS DE PAIX AU MOYEN ORIENT (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Milton, tél. 8519 M. Carter, tél. 8504, M. Sancho Velazques, tél. 8307, cf. DGE PESC Dir. II	M. Mura, tél. 8338
Division 2: Amérique latine; Asie; Chine; Corée; Australie; système de préférences généralisées, Nations unies; conférences Nord-Sud; produits de base; groupe RELEX: Chef de Division: M. MILIS - Secrétaire: Mme Tapias, tél. 6555		
AMERIQUE LATINE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Milia, tél. 6558, M. Ruck, tél. 7674 M. Montesino-Espartaco, tél. 8502, M. Purcell O'Byrne, tél. 7385, cf. DGE PESC Dir. I	Mme Tapias, tél. 6555
ASIE/OCEANIE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Milia, tél. 6558, M. Banerham, tél. 7239 M. Dofing, tél. 8038, M. Purcell O'Byrne, tél. 7385, cf. DG E PESC, Dir. I	Mme Tapias, tél. 6555

GRUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
DIALOGUE NORD-SUD	M. Bärwinkel, tél. 8241	Mme Kuipers McGee, tél. 6080
PRODUITS DE BASE	M. Bärwinkel, tél. 8241	Mme Urban Penon, tél. 8550
RELEX (RELATIONS EXTERIEURES)	M. Bärwinkel, tél. 8241	Mme Urban Penon, tél. 8550
SPG (SYSTEME DE PREFERENCES GENERALISEES)	M. Mijs, tél. 6658, M. San Jose, tél. 8266	Mme Kuipers McGee, tél. 6080
DROIT DE LA MER	M. Bärwinkel, tél. 8241	Mme Urban Penon, tél. 8550
<b>DG E III: Europe centrale et orientale; ex-URSS; OCSE; ex-Yougoslavie; représentation diplomatique de la présidence dans les pays tiers:</b> Directeur: M. TESTA - Secrétaire: Mme Zoellig, tél. 6533		
<b>Division 1: ex-URSS; ex-Yougoslavie: Chef de Division: M. LESKELÄ - Secrétaire: Mme Bidaut, tél. 8494</b>		
CONSEILLERS DES AMBASSADEURS (GRUPE RESTREINT)	M. Leskelä, tél. 8528	Mme Bidaut, tél. 8494
EUROPE ORIENTALE ET ASIE CENTRALE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Leskelä, tél. 8528, Mme Dubrigny, tél. 8851 M. Korser, tél. 8838, M. Ganslandt, tél. 8038, cf. DG E PESC Dir. I	Mme Bidaut, tél. 8494
AD HOC EX-YOUGOSLAVIE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Leskelä, tél. 8528, M. Strub, tél. 8321 M. Mattioli, tél. 8034, Mme Aalto, tél. 8628, cf. DG E PESC Dir. II	Mme Bidaut, tél. 8494
<b>Division 2: Europe centrale et orientale (Bulgarie, Hongrie, Pologne, Roumanie, Rép. Slovaque, Rép. Tchèque, Estonie, Lettonie, Lituanie, Slovaquie): Chef d'Unité: M. KATHARIOS - Secrétaire: Mme Gaspard, tél. 7577</b>		
EUROPE CENTRALE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Katharios, tél. 7567, M. Scaramucci, tél. 6447 M. Haskov, tél. 8566, cf. DG E PESC Dir. II	Mme Gaspard, tél. 7577
OCSE (Groupe fusionné): ECON: PESC:	M. Katharios, tél. 7567, M. Strub, tél. 8321 M. van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerlaroux, tél. 8239, cf. DG E PESC Dir. Aff. multilatérales	Mme Gaspard, tél. 7577
<b>DG E IV: Politique commerciale; OMC; GATT; OCDE; relations avec les pays industrialisés non européens; rapports des conseillers commerciaux; foires et expositions; accords de coopération: Chef de division: M. DONNADOU - Secrétaire: Mme Postiglione, tél. 7360</b>		
COMITE SPECIAL ART. 113 - CECA (E.C.S.C. EN ANGLAIS)	M. van Hóvell, tél. 7288, M. Karamountzos, tél. 8548	Mme Kidney, tél. 8326, Mme Postiglione, tél. 7360
COMITE SPECIAL ART. 113 TEXTILES	M. van Hóvell, tél. 7288, M. Karamountzos, tél. 8548	Mme Kidney, tél. 8326, Mme Postiglione, tél. 7360
COMITE SPECIAL ART. 113 MEMBRES SUPPLEANTS	M. van Hóvell, tél. 7288, M. Johns, tél. 8800	Mme Postiglione, 7360, Mme Kidney, tél. 8326
COMITE SPECIAL ART. 113 MEMBRES TITULAIRES	M. Donnadou, tél. 7429	Mme Kidney, tél. 8326, Mme Postiglione, tél. 7360
CONSTRUCTION NAVALE (VOLET EXTERNE)	M. Oliveira, tél. 8618	Mme Kidney, tél. 8326, Mme Postiglione, tél. 7360

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
FOIRES ET EXPOSITIONS	M. Donnadou, tél. 7428	Mme Postiglione, 7360
QUESTIONS COMMERCIALES	M. Oliveira, tél. 6619	Mme Kidney, 8326
GROUPE AD HOC "OCDE INVESTISSEMENTS"	M. Donnadou, tél. 7428, M. Oliveira, tél. 6619	Mme Kidney, 8326
DG E (PESC) Politique étrangère et de sécurité commune: Directeur général adjoint: M. EVANGELIDIS, tél: 8030 - Secrétaire: Mlle Vilain, tél. 8031		
<i>Direction "Affaires générales": Directeur: M. GONZALEZ SANCHEZ, tél. 6546 - Secrétaire: Mme Mostade, tél. 7170</i>		
AFFAIRES ADMINISTRATIVES PESC (AD HOC FORMATION) (AD HOC EXPERTS IMMOBILIERS) (AD HOC EXPERTS MEDICAUX)	M. Zinzius, tél. 8331, M. Huybrechts, tél. 6712	Mme Lycett, tél. 8434, Mme Soulard, tél. 8068
AFFAIRES CONSULAIRES	M. Huybrechts, tél. 6712, M. Zinzius, tél. 8331	Mme Lycett, tél. 8434, Mme Soulard, tél. 8068
COMITE POLITIQUE	Mme D'Aniello, tél. 8253	Mme Mostade, tél. 7170, Mme Cretien, tél. 8564
COMMUNICATIONS PESC	M. Huybrechts, tél. 6712, M. Zinzius, tél. 8331	Mme Lycett, tél. 8434
CONSEILLERS PESC	Mme D'Aniello, tél. 8253, M. Zinzius, tél. 8331, M. Huybrechts, tél. 6712	Mme Mostade, tél. 7170, Mme Cretien, tél. 8564
PROTOCOLE	M. Zinzius, tél. 8331, M. Huybrechts, tél. 6712	Mme Lycett, tél. 8434, Mme Soulard, tél. 8068
<i>Direction "Affaires géographiques" I: Directeur: M. NEVES, tél. 8556 - Secrétaire: Mme Barros, tél. 6336</i>		
AFRIQUE (*)	M. Lillehook, tél. 8986, M. Purcell O'Byrne, tél. 7385	Mme Clune, tél. 7087
AMERIQUE LATINE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Alvarez Gortari, tél. 8502, M. Purcell O'Byrne, tél. 7385 M. Mills, tél. 6668, M. Buck, tél. 7674, cf. DGE ECON. DIR. II	Mme Riesner-Uebel, tél. 8032
ASIE/OCEANIE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Dohng, tél. 8036, M. Purcell O'Byrne, tél. 7385 M. Mills, tél. 6668, M. Baneham, tél. 7239, cf. DGE ECON. DIR. II	Mme Riesner-Uebel, tél. 8032
EUROPE ORIENTALE ET ASIE CENTRALE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Korter, tél. 8836, Mme Ganalandt, tél. 8038 M. Leskeä, tél. 8828, M. Drubigny, tél. 6661, cf. DGE ECON., SERV. III	Mme Antunes, tél. 8268
<i>Direction "Affaires géographiques" II: Directeur: M. RADAUER, tél. 8915 - Secrétaire: Mme Bourseau, tél. 6330</i>		
AD HOC EX YUGOSLAVIE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Mattiolo, tél. 8034, M. Weidinger, tél. 8042 M. Leskeä, tél. 8828, M. Strub, tél. 8321	Mme Van Craenenbroeck, tél. 6702

GROUPE	REDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
MOYEN ORIENT - GOLFE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Halskov, tél. 8556, M. Sancho Valazquez, tél. 8307 M. Innocenti, tél. 8578, M. Milton, tél. 8519, cf. DGE ECON. DIR. II	Mme Vanescota, tél. 8071
MACHREK/MAGHREB (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Halskov, tél. 8556, M. Sancho Valazquez, tél. 8307 M. San Jose, tél. 8286, M. Milton, tél. 8519, cf. DGE ECON. DIR. II	Mme Vanescota, tél. 8071
AD HOC PROCESSUS DE PAIX AU MOYEN-ORIENT (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Halskov, tél. 8556, M. Sancho Valazquez, tél. 8307 M. Milton, tél. 8519, cf. DGE ECON. DIR. II	Mme Vanescota, tél. 8071
EUROPE SUD-EST (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	Mme Aalto, tél. 8628 Mme Sarat, tél. 6580, cf. DGE ECON. DIR. II	Mme Van Craenenbroeck, tél. 6702
EUROPE CENTRALE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	Mme Aalto, tél. 8628 M. Katharloe, tél. 7587, M. Scaramucci, tél. 6447, cf. DGE ECON. SERV. III	Mme Van Craenenbroeck, tél. 6702
<i>Direction "Affaires multilatérales et thématiques": Directeur: M. CARRÉ, tél. 8557 - Secrétaire: Mme Specht, tél. 6057</i>		
SECURITE	Mme Giannella, tél. 8044, Mme Delaney, tél. 8333	Mme Patel, tél. 8046, Mme Baticat, tél. 8133
NON-PROLIFERATION	Mme Giannella, tél. 8044, Mme Delaney, tél. 8333	Mme Patel, tél. 8046, Mme Baticat, tél. 8133
EXPORTATION D'ARMES	Mme Giannella, tél. 8044, Mme Delaney, tél. 8333	Mme Patel, tél. 8046, Mme Baticat, tél. 8133
DESARMEMENT	Mme Giannella, tél. 8044, Mme Delaney, tél. 8333	Mme Patel, tél. 8046, Mme Baticat, tél. 8133
POLITIQUE D'ARMEMENT	Mme Giannella, tél. 8044, Mme Delaney, tél. 8333	Mme Patel, tél. 8046, Mme Baticat, tél. 8133
BIENS A DOUBLE USAGE	Mme Giannella, tél. 8044, Mme Delaney, tél. 8333	Mme Patel, tél. 8046, Mme Baticat, tél. 8133
OSCE (Groupe fusionné): PESC: ECON:	M. Van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerleroux, tél. 8239, M. Parnisari, tél. 8316 M. Katharloe, tél. 7667, M. Strub, tél. 8321, cf. DGE ECON. SERV. III	Mme Glavind-König, tél. 6016
DROITS DE L'HOMME	M. van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerleroux, tél. 8239, M. Parnisari, tél. 8316	Mme Glavind-König, tél. 6016, Mme Hundebol, tél. 8628
TERRORISME	M. van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerleroux, tél. 8239, M. Parnisari, tél. 8316	Mme Glavind-König, tél. 6016, Mme Hundebol, tél. 8628
NATIONS UNIES	M. van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerleroux, tél. 8239, M. Parnisari, tél. 8316	Mme Glavind-König, tél. 6016, Mme Hundebol, tél. 8628
DROIT INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC	M. van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerleroux, tél. 8239, M. Parnisari, tél. 8316	Mme Glavind-König, tél. 6016, Mme Hundebol, tél. 8628
DROGUE	M. van der Zwan, tél. 8503, M. Kerleroux, tél. 8239, M. Parnisari, tél. 8316	Mme Glavind-König, tél. 6016, Mme Hundebol, tél. 8628
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QUESTIONS FINANCIERES	MM. Brautigam, tél. 7234, Ploch, tél. 7771, Tsoutsoplides tél. 6358	Mme Fourny, tél. 6353, Mme Dhondt, tél. 9068
QUESTIONS FINANCIERES (STATISTIQUES)	MM. Brautigam, tél. 7234, Tsoutsoplides tél. 6358	Mme Fourny, tél. 6353, Mme Dhondt, tél. 9068
U.E.M.	MM. Brautigam, tél. 7234, Ploch, tél. 7771	Mme Fourny, tél. 6353, Mme Dhondt, tél. 9068
CONSEILLERS FINANCIERS	MM. Brautigam, tél. 7234, Tsoutsoplides tél. 6358	Mme Fourny, tél. 6353, Mme Dhondt, tél. 9068
CONSEILLERS FINANCIERS (Ressources propres)	MM. Brautigam, tél. 7234, Ploch, tél. 7771, Tsoutsoplides tél. 6358	Mme Fourny, tél. 6353, Mme Dhondt, tél. 9068
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QUESTIONS FINANCIERES (TVA/Accises/Taxe/CO2/Energie/Fiscalité directe)	MM. Graf, tél. 6617, Troncoso, tél. 8217	Mme De Norre, tél. 8407
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DENREES ALIMENTAIRES	M. Froik, tél. 6381	Maretto, tél. 8212



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GROUPE	RÉDACTEURS	SECRETAIRES
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CONSEILLERS JURIDIQUES	Mme Arpio, tél. 6183	Mme Malamatou, tél. 8475
INFORMATIQUE JURIDIQUE	M. Losson, tél. 6468	Mme Attia, tél. 6467, Mme Mavridou, tél. 8480
JURISTES-LINGUISTES	M. Schokkenbroek, tél. 6460, M. Gallas, tél. 7474	M. De Rudder, tél. 8148
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ANTICI	M. ZBYSZEWSKI, tél. 7669	Mme Janssen, tél. 6316
MERTENS	M. FRILINGOS, tél. 7191	Mme Mauri, tél. 8422

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Chef de la "Task force": M. Keller-Noëllet, tél. 7417; Secrétaire: Mme Mauri, tél. 8422

Council of the European Union

**Council Guide — I. Presidency Handbook**

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

1997 — VIII, 105 pp. — 14.8 x 25 cm

ISBN 92-824-1295-4