

Second Report on European Political Co-operation on Foreign Policy (Copenhagen, 23 July 1973)

Part I.

The Heads of State or of Government of the Member States of the European Communities approved on 27 October 1970 the Report of the Foreign Ministers drawn up in implementation of paragraph 15 of the Communiqué of the Hague Conference of 1 and 2 December 1969. The document reflected the belief that progress towards concerted action in the field of foreign policy was likely to promote the development of the Communities and to help the Europeans to realize more fully their common responsibilities. The objectives of that co-operation are:

— to ensure, by means of regular consultations and exchanges of information, improved mutual understanding as regards the main problems of international relations;

— to strengthen solidarity between Governments by promoting the harmonization of their views and the alignment of their positions and, wherever it appears possible and desirable, joint action.

The Report also proposed that the Foreign Ministers should submit a second general report which would, *inter alia*, contain an assessment of the results obtained from such consultation. At the time when the enlargement of the European Communities became a fact, paragraph 14 of the Summit Declaration in Paris on 21 October 1972 required the Foreign Ministers to produce by 30 June 1973 a second report on methods of improving political co-operation in accordance with the Luxembourg Report.

The Heads of State or of Government, meeting in Paris, expressed their satisfaction at the results obtained since the political co-operation machinery was formally set up on the basis of the texts of 27 October 1970. In several fields, the Member States have been able to consider and decide matters jointly so as to make common political action possible. This habit has also led to the “reflex” of co-ordination among the Member States which has profoundly affected the relations of the Member States between each other and with third countries. This collegiate sense in Europe is becoming a real force in international relations.

The Ministers note that the characteristically pragmatic mechanisms set up by the Luxembourg Report have shown their flexibility and effectiveness. What is involved in fact is a new procedure in international relations and an original European contribution to the technique of arriving at concerted action. The experience acquired so far has resulted in a strengthening of the belief in the usefulness of concerted action by means of direct contact between senior officials of Foreign Ministries and of a very thorough preparation of the matters under consideration as a basis for the decisions by Ministers.

Such concerted action has also had a positive influence in so far as it has brought a more conscious collaboration between representatives of Member States of the Communities in third countries. They have been encouraged to meet and compare the information available to them. This habit of working together has enabled the procedure for concerted action to become more widespread wherever common action or common consideration seemed desirable.

In the Luxembourg Report provision was made for the Commission to be invited to make known its views when the work of the Ministers affected the activities of the European Communities. The Foreign Ministers express satisfaction that these contacts have now become a reality and that a constructive and continuing dialogue is in course both at the level of experts and of the Political Committee, and at ministerial meetings.

The colloquy with the Political Committee of the European Parliament and the communication by the President of the Council to the European Parliament have put into effect the desire of the Foreign Ministers to make a contribution to the democratic character of the construction of political union.

The final Declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or of Government held on 19–21 October 1972 expressed, inter alia, the conviction that Europe must be able to make its voice heard in world affairs and to affirm its own views in international relations.

Europe now needs to establish its position in the world as a distinct entity, especially in international negotiations which are likely to have a decisive influence on the international equilibrium and on the future of the European Community.

In the light of this it is essential that, in the spirit of the conclusions of the Paris Summit Conference, co-operation among the Nine on foreign policy should be such as to enable Europe to make an original contribution to the international equilibrium. Europe has the will to do this, in accordance with its traditionally outward-looking mission and its interest in progress, peace and co-operation. It will do so, loyal to its traditional friends and to the alliances of its Member States, in the spirit of good neighbourliness which must exist between all the countries of Europe both to the east and the west, and responding to the expectations of all the developing countries.

The results obtained by the procedure of political consultation since its inception, referred to in the preceding paragraphs, are the subject of a descriptive Annex attached to this Report.

Part II.

In implementation of the task entrusted to them by paragraph 14 of the Paris Summit Declaration, and having regard to the objective which the Heads of State or of Government set themselves, namely to transform, before the end of the present decade, the whole complex of the relations between the Member States of the European Communities into a European Union, the Foreign Ministers propose that the Heads of State or of Government approve the following measures:

1. Ministerial Meetings

Henceforth, the Foreign Ministers will meet four times a year. They may also, whenever they consider it necessary to consult each other on specific subjects between meetings, meet for that purpose when they happen to come together on other occasions.

2. The Political Committee of the Member States of the European Communities

The Political Directors of the Member States of the Community will meet in the Political Committee of the Member States of the European Communities with a view to preparing ministerial meetings and carrying out tasks entrusted to them by the Ministers. In order to attain that objective, meetings of the Committee will be held as frequently as the intensification of the work requires.

3. The Group of “Correspondants”

A group consisting of European “Correspondants” in the Foreign Ministry (called the Group of Correspondants) will be set up. That Group will be entrusted with the task of following the implementation of political co-operation and of studying problems of organization and problems of a general nature. Furthermore, for certain matters, the Group will prepare the work of the Political Committee on the basis of instructions given by that Committee.

4. Working Parties

(a) In order to ensure more thorough consultation on individual questions, working parties will be set up to bring together senior officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs responsible for the subject under consideration. These working parties will cease to meet as soon as they have completed the task entrusted to them. Exceptionally, and especially in order to ensure continuity if the work can be completed in the near future, the chairman of a working party may be required to continue in office beyond the usual period.

(b) The chairman-in-office may approach the Political Committee about the need to bring together senior officials of the major ministerial departments who have not met during the preceding six-month period with a view to keeping them in contact with each other.

5. Medium and Long-Term Studies

In accordance with paragraph 14 of the Declaration of the Paris Summit Conference, which set as an objective on political co-operation the formulation, where possible, of common medium and long-term positions, several methods of work can be envisaged. According to circumstances, this will be done either by groups of experts in addition to the current matters which they normally deal with, or by entrusting the preparations of such studies to a special analysis and research group consisting normally of officials.

The Political Committee will propose to the Foreign Ministers specific subjects for study.

6. The Rôle of the Embassies of the Nine in the Capitals of the Member Countries of the Community

The Embassies of the Nine participate closely in the implementation of political co-operation. In particular, they receive information on a Community basis issued by the Foreign Ministry of their country of residence. Furthermore, they are occasionally entrusted with consultations on specific subjects:

— at the seat of the Presidency at the request of the Political Committee, the Presidency or another Member State; or

— in another Capital at the request of the Foreign Ministry.

They will appoint one of their diplomatic staff who will specifically be entrusted with ensuring the necessary contacts with the Foreign Ministry of their country of residence, within the framework of political co-operation.

7. Rôles of the Embassies in Third Countries and of the Offices of Permanent Representatives to Major International Organizations

With the introduction of the political co-operation machinery, it proved useful to associate Embassies and Permanent Representatives' offices with the work. In the light of the experience gained, better information on the work in progress in the field of political co-operation should be provided so as to enable them, where necessary, to put forward in an appropriate form those aspects which they consider of interest for this work, including considerations on joint action.

With this in mind, the Political Committee will notify the missions concerned when it considers it necessary to obtain a contribution on a specific item of its agenda. Where appropriate, it may require a common report to be prepared by them on specific questions.

In addition to the provisions contained in the texts in force governing reciprocal information on the occasion of important visits, the Ambassador concerned, accredited in the country where the visit takes place, should first provide information to his colleagues on the spot so as to enable any appropriate exchange of views. After the visit, such information as may interest them should be given to them in the most appropriate manner.

Finally, in application of the provisions governing the rôle of missions abroad, the permanent representatives of the Member States to the major international organizations will regularly consider matters together and, on the basis of instructions received, will seek common positions in regard to important questions dealt with by those organizations.

8. The Presidency

As regards the internal organization of the work of political co-operation, the Presidency:

- sees to it that the conclusions adopted at meetings of Ministers and of the Political Committee are implemented on a collegiate basis;
- proposes, on its own initiative or on that of another State, consultation at an appropriate level;
- may also, between meetings of the Political Committee, meet the Ambassadors of the Member States in order to inform them of the progress of the work of political co-operation. The meeting may take place at the request of an Ambassador of a Member State seeking consultation on a specific subject.

Experience has also shown that the Presidency's task presents a particularly heavy administrative burden. Administrative assistance may therefore be provided by other Member States for specific tasks.

9. Improvement of Contact between the Nine

The Foreign Ministers have agreed to establish a communications system with a view to facilitating direct contact between their departments.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

Having regard to the widening scope of the European Communities and the intensification of political co-operation at all levels, four colloquies will be held each year at which the Ministers will meet with members of the Political Committee of the European Parliament. For the purpose of preparing the colloquies, the Political Committee will draw to the attention of Ministers proposals adopted by the European Parliament on foreign policy questions.

In addition the Minister exercising the function of President will continue, as in the past, to submit to the European Parliament, once a year, a communication on progress made in the field of political co-operation.

11. Priorities to be set in respect of the Matters to be dealt with within the framework of Political Co-operation

Governments will consult each other on all important foreign policy questions and will work out priorities, observing the following criteria:

— the purpose of the consultation is to seek common policies on practical problems;

— the subject dealt with must concern European interests whether in Europe itself or elsewhere where the adoption of a common position is necessary or desirable.

On these questions each State undertakes as a general rule not to take up final positions without prior consultation with its partners within the framework of the political co-operation machinery.

The Political Committee will submit to the meetings of Foreign Ministers subjects among which the Ministers may select those to be given priority in the course of political co-operation. This is without prejudice to the examination of additional subjects either at the suggestion of a Member State or as a result of recent developments.

12. Relationship between the Work of the Political Co-operation Machinery and that carried out within the framework of the European Communities

(a) The Political Co-operation machinery, which deals on the intergovernmental level with problems of international politics, is distinct from and additional to the activities of the institutions of the Community which are based on the juridical commitments undertaken by the Member States in the Treaty of Rome. Both sets of machinery have the aim of contributing to the development of European unification. The relationship between them is discussed below.

(b) The Political Co-operation machinery, which is responsible for dealing with questions of current interest and where possible for formulating common medium and long-term positions, must do this keeping in mind, inter alia, the implications for and the effects of, in the field of international politics, Community policies under construction.

For matters which have an incidence on Community activities close contact will be maintained with the institutions of the Community.

(c) The last section of the previous paragraph is implemented in the following way:

— the Commission is invited to make known its views in accordance with current practice;

— the Council, through the President of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, is informed by the Presidency of the agreed conclusions which result from the work of the Political Co-operation machinery, to the extent that these conclusions have an interest for the work of the Community;

— the Ministers will similarly be able, if it is so desired, to instruct the Political Co-operation machinery to prepare studies on certain political aspects of problems under examination in the framework of the Community. These reports will be transmitted to the Council through the President of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

In drawing up this Report, the Ministers have demonstrated their belief that even more important than the contents of their proposals is the spirit in which these are put into effect. That spirit is the one that emerges from the decisions taken at the Paris Summit meeting.

The Ministers consider that co-operation on foreign policy must be placed in the perspective of European Union.

From now on, it is of the greatest importance to seek common positions on major international problems.

ANNEX

Results obtained from European Political Co-operation on Foreign Policy

1. Ministerial Meetings

(Luxembourg Report — Second Part, II)

As from the second half of 1970, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Member States of the European Communities have met regularly twice a year.

In pursuance of the decision taken by the Conference of Heads of State or of Government in Paris on 19–21 October 1972, the number of these meetings has, from 1973, been increased from two to four.

2. Political Committee

(Luxembourg Report — Second Part, III)

(a) The Luxembourg Report provided for at least four meetings a year. From the outset, the Political Committee met more often than had been foreseen; in fact, during the last twelve months, it has held nine meetings.

(b) The Political Committee has noted that the aims defined in the Luxembourg Report could only be achieved by adequate preparation. To this effect and without thereby discarding other possible formulas, it has established, within the framework of its activities, working parties entrusted with particular tasks:

— a Sub-Committee was set up to study problems relating to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), and an ad hoc Group, in which the Commission of the European Communities takes part, was set up to examine the economic aspects. In view of the need for such studies, it was decided that the Sub-Committee and the ad hoc Group should meet on a permanent basis in Helsinki in order to work, on the spot, for agreed positions in response to developments in the negotiations;

— three working parties were set up with a view to following and studying problems relating, respectively, to the situation in the Middle East, the Mediterranean area and Asia; senior officials in the Foreign Ministries with responsibility for those questions usually participate in this work;

— there were also meetings of experts dealing with various questions as, for example, co-operation in the event of natural disasters;

— consultations also took place between the Presidency and the Embassies of Member States on the situation in the Indian sub-continent and in the Middle East.

(c) Furthermore, it was decided to place within the framework of political co-operation the consultations which used to take place within the WEU before sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, of the Economic and Social Council and of the FAO. For this purpose, alongside the co-ordination meetings of the Permanent Representatives, senior officials responsible for the different sectors within each of the national Administrations get together to discuss certain items placed on the Agendas of these sessions; they report to the Political Committee.

3. Group of “Correspondants”

(Luxembourg Report — Second Part, VII-3)

In order to facilitate the internal organization of political co-operation, the Luxembourg Report provided that each State should appoint from within its Ministry of Foreign Affairs an official who should act as the “correspondant” of his opposite numbers in other States. These officials were established as a “Group of Correspondants”; this Group, in addition to the task of drafting summaries of the conclusions reached at ministerial meetings and meetings of the Political Committee, was entrusted with the duty of closely following the implementation of political co-operation and of studying the problems of organization and those of a general nature, as well as particular problems the Political Committee gave it to examine, in particular for the purpose of preparing their meetings.

4. Activities of Embassies of the Nine in the Capitals of Member States of the Communities

The rôle of Ambassadors of the Nine in the capitals of Member States has proved important for the implementation of political co-operation in particular with respect to the exchange of information. In order to facilitate contacts with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the

countries of their residence with respect to matters of political co-operation, each of these Embassies has appointed a diplomat on its staff whose special duty is to ensure contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its country of residence on matters of political co-operation.

Since the Ambassadors receive information concerning the Community from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of their country of residence and, in particular, since they are expected by the Political Committee to engage in discussions from time to time, in the capital of the Presidency, it is important that they should be fully informed of the progress of political co-operation with the implementation of which their missions are associated.

5. Association of Ambassadors in Third Countries and of Permanent Representatives to International Organizations with the Political Co-operation

It has been judged necessary and in line with the Luxembourg Report to associate Heads of the diplomatic missions of the Nine with political co-operation. For that purpose, it has been arranged that the Political Committee can ask Ambassadors accredited to a particular country to provide it with reports and thus to encourage co-operation among the diplomatic representatives of Member States.

It had also been arranged that regular discussions can take place between Ambassadors accredited to countries other than those of the Community, on problems of common interest concerning the country to which they are accredited, in accordance with such procedures as the Ambassadors themselves would find appropriate.

These provisions were put into operation and developed during the first two years of political co-operation.

Heads of diplomatic missions in many posts, or their representatives, while taking account of local conditions, take part increasingly in political co-operation, especially through exchanges of view and in certain cases by means of joint reports.

6. Commission of the European Communities

(Luxembourg Report — Second Part, V)

The Luxembourg Report provides that:

“should the work of the Ministers affect the activities of the European Communities, the Commission will be invited to make known its views.”

In accordance with this the Commission of the Communities has been invited to participate in ministerial discussions and in sessions of the Political Committee and of groups of experts when the agenda of the meeting provides for the examination of questions affecting the activities of the Communities: for example, the examination of problems relating to the economic aspects of the CSCE and to the future rôle of the Council of Europe.

7. European Parliament

(Luxembourg Report— Second Part, VI, and Third Part, 4)

In accordance with the Luxembourg Report which provided for two methods of associating public opinion and its representatives with the development of political co-operation, Ministers for Foreign Affairs and members of the Political Committee of the European Parliament held a colloquy every six months and the President-in-office of the Council reported every year to the Parliament on the progress of work concerning the best means of advancing towards political union.

At the last two colloquies, a new procedure, consisting essentially of the notification in advance to the Political Committee of the European Parliament of the main subjects for discussion, was adopted in order to make the exchange of views more fruitful.

8. Participation of New Members

Political co-operation was started when the European Communities consisted of only six members — the applicant States being associated with their activities in accordance with the procedure specified in the fourth part of the Luxembourg Report. The procedure provided that the Ministers of the Six would meet their colleagues from acceding States at a time as near as possible to their meetings in order to ensure necessary consultation for keeping those States informed of the progress of the work of the Six.

Similarly, it was arranged for the President-in-office of the Political Committee to communicate to applicant States information likely to interest them and for him to obtain any reactions they had. This rule was adopted to take account of the essential connection between membership of the European Communities and participation in activities enabling further progress to be made towards political union.

After signature of the Act of Accession on 22 January, 1972, these States have fully participated in meetings at every level.