

THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

**ROME
1-2 DECEMBER 1975**

Documents in the dossier include:

The European Council in Rome

Includes preparatory work, conclusions, follow up statements
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European Community Members to Issue EC Citizens a "European Passport"
European Community Background Information No. 41/1975
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Washington DC

Declaration of Rambouillet

17 November 1975
Department of State Bulletin, December 8, 1975

1. The European Council in Rome

1101. The European Council, consisting of the Heads of Government of the Nine Member States met in Rome on 1 and 2 December. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Commission were also present.

Decisions were reached, the most important of which concerned the Community's representation by one delegation at the North-South Conference, establishment of May-June 1978 as the date for election to the European Parliament, issue of a uniform European passport from 1978, the policy aspect of Community financing, and the controls to be applied in that area. The Council also took a hard look at the Community's economic and social situation (with the Rambouillet Summit¹ and the Brussels Tripartite Conference² in mind) and European Union (statement of Mr Tindemans, the Belgian Premier). All these matters were covered in a summary of conclusions issued by the Chair after the Rome meeting.

European Council Summit Meetings

1102. The meeting which has just ended is the third since the deliberations of the Heads of Government when they assembled in Paris on 9 and 10 December 1974.³ Glancing further back, the first year of this new practice highlights its specific features and originality.

Unlike the Summits at The Hague (1 and 2 December 1969), in Paris (19 and 20 October 1972) and Copenhagen (14 and 15 December 1974), and again unlike the meeting of Heads of Government in December 1974, which was new in 'style', the establishment of what was soon termed the 'European Council', was a response to clear-cut *problems*.

The Communiqué issued in Paris on 10 December spelt these out:

'Recognizing the need for an overall approach to the internal problems involved in achieving European unity and the external problems facing Europe, the Heads of Government consider it essential to ensure progress and overall consistency in the activities of the Communities and in the work on political cooperation.'

In *practical* terms, and to attain these objectives, the Paris communiqué indicated:

The Heads of Government have therefore decided to meet, accompanied by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, three times a year and, whenever necessary, in the Council of the Communities and in the context of political cooperation.

The administrative secretariat will be provided for in an appropriate manner with due regard for existing practices and procedures.

In order to ensure consistency in Community activities and continuity of work, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, meeting in the Council of the Community, will act as initiators and coordinators. They may hold political cooperation meetings at the same time.

These arrangements do not in any way effect the rules and procedures laid down in the Treaties or the provisions on political cooperation in the Luxembourg and Copenhagen Reports. At the various meetings referred to in the preceding paragraphs the Commission will exercise the powers vested in it and play the part assigned to it by the above texts.³

What was soon to be known as the 'European Council', was born. Since then it has met in accordance with the terms adopted by the Heads of Government, in Dublin (10 and 11 March), Brussels (16 and 17 July) and lately in Rome (1 and 2 December).

¹ The full text of the Rambouillet Declaration is reproduced in Part 3: Documentation.

² Points 1201 to 1205.

³ Bull. EC 12-1974, point 1104.

The Rome Meeting

1103. The European Council met in the Palazzo Barberini, which dates back to the XVIIIth century. It was chaired by Mr Aldo Moro, President of the Council, Italy, and Chairman of the European Council. The other eight Heads of Governments were all present: Mr Léo Tindemans (Belgium), Mr Anker Jørgensen (Denmark), Mr Helmut Schmidt (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr Giscard d'Estaing (France), Mr Liam Cosgrave (Ireland), Mr Gaston Thorn (Luxembourg), Mr Joop den Uyl (Netherlands), Mr Harold Wilson (United Kingdom). All were assisted by their Foreign Ministers, except for Denmark, whose Minister for External Economic Relations was in attendance, Belgium (Mr Van Elslande was absent) and Luxembourg, where Mr Thorn covered both functions. In the case of Belgium and Luxembourg, the Head of Government was accompanied by a senior official. The Commission was represented by President Ortoli and Vice-President Haferkamp.

The European Council met in restricted session; the national or Community officials were not present at their discussions. At one point the Heads of Government called in the President of the Commission.

The Council first talked of economic and social problems: the conclusions to be drawn from the Rambouillet Summit, the Community's economic and social situation, and the Brussels Tripartite Conference. It then considered the election of Parliament, the 'European Passport', budgetary matters, and European Union. It devoted most of its second day to the Conference on International Economic Cooperation (North-South).

The Commission played an active part in the discussions, and in preparing conclusions. This was particularly so in regard to the North-South dialogue and the common energy policy commitments where the final decision for single Community representation was taken on the strength of a text proposed by President Ortoli.

The results

1104. The Ministers' decisions and discussions were covered in a 'summary of conclusions', drawn up on the authority of the Chairman. There follows the published text:

The economic and social situation

'The European Council discussed the development of the economic and social situation in the Community and again stressed the need for close co-ordination to be maintained between the economic policies of the Member States in order to consolidate the economic recovery which seems to have begun and to improve the present level of employment.

The European Council confirms the broad lines which emerged at the July meeting in Brussels and which were echoed in the declaration issued after the Rambouillet Summit, concerning the desirability of closer international co-operation and of a constructive dialogue among all the countries concerned to overcome current economic problems.

The European Council has noted with satisfaction the follow-up to the Tripartite Conference held in Brussels on 18 November and the decision to instruct the Commission of the European Communities, in contact with both sides of industry, to study the main problems discussed and to prepare a report with a view to a future meeting of that Conference.'

Community budget and financing

'The European Council carried out a thorough examination of the problems connected with the supervision of Community expenditure and the Community's budget policy.

The Council agreed on the need for more effective financial control over Community expendi-

ture and stated that it was in favour of the suggestions made by the Heads of Government of the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and Ireland, and the proposals of the Commission, being examined expeditiously.

The President of the Council and the President of the Commission were invited to make contact with the President of the European Parliament with a view to examining the role which that Institution might play in controlling Community expenditure by means of a Committee or Subcommittee.

The Heads of Government agreed to make every effort to ensure the early completion of the procedure for the ratification of the Treaty setting up a European Court of Auditors signed on 22 July last in Brussels, with a view to enabling the Court to commence activities during 1976.

The European Council noted with satisfaction the information communicated by the President of the Commission regarding the strengthening which had taken place to date in the powers of the Member of the Commission responsible for the budget, without prejudice, however, to the principle of the collective responsibility of the Commission as laid down in the Treaties.

With reference to the agreement reached at Villa Marlia and formally adopted by the Council meeting in Brussels on 5 and 6 November regarding the annual joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Ministers for Finance to carry out an overall assessment of Community budget problems, the European Council considers that discussions at such meetings should concentrate on general Community policy, ensure greater consistency as regards policies to be followed and budget decisions and allow better distribution of Community resources to be achieved by means of the gradual introduction of multiannual expenditure forecasts. The discussion relating to next year should take place, on the basis of a Commission communication, before the end of April.

The European Council noted the Commission's intention to submit to the Council proposals concerning the use of the European unit of account in the Community budget.'

Elections to the European Parliament

'The European Council is agreed that elections to the European Parliament shall take place on a single date in May or June 1978.

Any country which at that date is unable to hold direct elections shall be allowed to appoint its representatives from amongst the elected members of its national parliament.

The European Council noted Mr Wilson's statement that the United Kingdom Government required a further period for internal consultations before adopting a final position regarding the date fixed, and the conditions set by Mr Jørgensen for direct elections to the European Parliament in Denmark.

The European Council instructed the Council of Ministers to continue examination of the problems encountered and to submit a report which will enable the text of the Convention on elections to the European Parliament to be finalized at the next European Council.'

Passport Union

'The European Council is agreed on the introduction of a uniform passport which may be issued as from 1978.

To that end, the European Council asks the Council (Ministers for Foreign Affairs) to resolve all outstanding questions in this area.

The European Council also asks the Council (Ministers for Foreign Affairs) to continue work on the abolition of frontier controls and on the harmonization of conditions of entry into and abode in the Member States.'

