



**Assembly of Western European Union  
The Interparliamentary European Security and Defence Assembly**

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First part of the fiftieth annual report  
of the Council to the Assembly on the activities of the Council  
(for the period 1 January to 30 June 2004)

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## I. ACTIVITIES OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL (AND THE COUNCIL WORKING GROUP)

No meetings of the Permanent Council or of the Council Working Group were held during the period 1 January to 30 June 2004.

The customary informal meeting between Members of the Council and the Committees of the Assembly was, however, held on 21 January 2004 in Brussels. The WEU Spanish Presidency was represented by Ambassador Carles Maria Casajuana, Permanent Representative to WEU and Spanish Representative to the EU's Political and Security Committee. The Irish ambassador, H.E. Declan Kelleher, representing the EU Presidency, also took part in the meeting.

The Council continued to be informed of WEAG and WEAO matters. On 16 April 2004 the Council took note of the report of the WEAG Staff Group on the 22nd meeting of WEAG National Armaments Directors held in Dublin (Ireland) on 26 February 2004.

Discharge was granted by the Council for the 2002 Assembly accounts and for the 2000 ISS accounts; the WEU 2004 budgets were approved. The new rules governing the functioning of the Coordination System presented in the 154<sup>th</sup> report of the Coordinating Committee on Remuneration were also adopted. The go-ahead was given to lodge an appeal (*pourvoi en cassation*) against a judgement by the Brussels employment appeal court calling into question WEU's immunity from legal process and execution.

## II. ACTIVITIES OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS GROUP

The National Armaments Directors (NADs) of the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG) met in Dublin (Ireland) on 26 February 2004 under the Netherlands Chairmanship of WEAG. NADs' discussions mainly focused on the 'roadmap' of WEAG/WEAO for 2004, and the activities of the WEAG Panels.

Concerning the '**roadmap**' of WEAG/WEAO for 2004, NADs welcomed the "Food for Thought" paper, presented by their Chairman, concerning the necessary transformation of WEAG/WEAO in order to:

- facilitate a positive and productive relationship between the existing WEAG/WEAO armaments community and the European Agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments, hereafter called the Agency, and
- prepare a smooth transition period before the possible integration, at a time yet to be determined, of relevant WEAG/WEAO activities into the Agency.

NADs supported the proposals made in this paper and more particularly agreed:

- that the WEAG/WEAO assets mentioned in the document transmitted by the Chair to the EU presidency on 13 November 2003 should be maintained as appropriate, and further developed if need be, pending an EU decision on their possible future use in the Agency,
- that the Panel I and III assets should be prepared for their possible transmittal to the Agency, once it has reached its operational stage, and indicated a readiness to accept such assets,
- that, in order to facilitate the setting up of an efficient working relationship with the Agency and subsequent possible future use by, or incorporation into the Agency, the Panel II assets might, by the end of 2004, be concentrated within the framework of the WEAO, whilst recognising that there were varying views concerning the appropriate home for R&T policy,

- that the necessary documents should be prepared prior to the next NADs meeting, in order to be signed and/or approved by Ministers by the end of the year if the decision to concentrate Panel II's assets in the WEAO is taken at that time.

Within the framework of the above agreed proposals, NADs invited the Chair and relevant experts within WEAG/WEAO, as suitable, to coordinate the actions necessary to maintain current WEAG/WEAO assets until their assimilation or incorporation, as appropriate, in the Agency; to review and prepare the necessary changes to all legal and administrative documents needed for the efficient continuation of the work of WEAG Panel II and of the WEAO, including the Research Cell, in the new setting as abovementioned; to investigate, in consultation with the Agency Establishment Team (including legal advisers as appropriate), as necessary, the modalities of assimilation in due course of the WEAO Research Cell (including the contracting process and any running contracts) in the Agency; and to analyse the administrative, personnel and financial consequences of any decision to close WEAG and to make timely proposals for dealing with them;

They invited the WEAG Chair to propose, at the Autumn 2004 NADs Meeting, a coherent and comprehensive set of decisions, together with MOU amendments as necessary, for subsequent approval by Ministers.

With regard to **Panel I** (Harmonisation of Requirements and Programmes) work, NADs noted the continuing process of harmonisation of the taxonomy with that of the LOI; the introduction of this taxonomy into the ERS (Equipment Review Schedule) Database reflecting capability; and the provisions made to maintain the ERS database as up-to-date as possible. For the time being, Panel I has identified five sub-groups which could be offered to the Agency: the Top-down Sub-Group on Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence (NBCD TSG) and the Sub-Groups on the Future Combat Aircraft (FCA SG), the Direct Firing Platform (DFP SG), Counter-Mine Equipment (CME SG) and Naval Mine Warfare (NMW SG). Other sub-groups need further consideration. Finally, Panel I would produce a study, "Lessons Learned by Panel I", as suggested by the WEAG NADs Chairman.

Concerning **Panel II** (Research and Technology), NADs noted Panel II's interim proposals for improving the Technology Taxonomy, and the encouraging developments in the EUROPA Transparency Database. They approved the streamlining and restructuring measures proposed by Panel II to improve its functions in advance of further discussions about its role *vis-à-vis* the Agency, and noted the new strategic thinking of the Sub-Group on Test Facilities (SGTF) regarding the development of a Defence Test and Evaluation Base (DTEB), as well as the success in establishing the Test Facilities Database. Finally, NADs noted the continuing success of the EUROFINDER process and the intention to hold a major European Defence R&T conference, in Paris on 9 and 10 September 2004.

Finally, NADs agreed that the Autumn 2004 NADs Meeting would take place in Noordwijk on 21-22 October 2004. They also noted the Chair's intention to call a WEAG Ministerial meeting in Brussels on 22 November 2004.

### **III. ACTIVITIES OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS ORGANISATION RESEARCH CELL**

During the first 6 months of 2004, the Western European Armaments Organisation Research Cell issued contracts for **9** cooperative Research and Technology projects. These projects have a total value of **28** MEUR divided between a Government contribution of **17** MEUR and an industry contribution of **11** MEUR.

The WEAO is among the organisations which may be transferred to the EU at some time in the future as part of the proposed new intergovernmental Agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments. Full details of the scope and activities of this Agency, and the possible role of the WEAO within it, remain to be determined. The WEAO is nevertheless maintaining its current level of service to cooperative defence R&T among the WEAG members.



