

WHAT IS WEU TODAY?

(a) **A Treaty**, the modified Brussels Treaty.

The Brussels Treaty was signed on 17 March 1948 by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The Brussels Treaty Organisation – as it was then called – provided for collective self-defence and economic, social and cultural collaboration between its signatories. On 23 October 1954, the Brussels Treaty was modified to include the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, thus creating Western European Union. The aims stated in the preamble were:

- *"to afford assistance to each other in resisting any policy of aggression"*
- *"to promote unity and to encourage the progressive integration of Europe".*

Its two most important provisions are contained in Articles V and VIII.3:

"If any of the High Contracting Parties should be the object of an armed attack in Europe, the other High Contracting Parties will, in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, afford the Party so attacked all military and other aid and assistance in their power." (Article V)

"At the request of any of the High Contracting Parties, the Council shall be immediately convened in order to permit them to consult with regard to any situation which may constitute a threat to peace, in whatever area this threat should arise, or a danger to economic stability." (Article VIII.3)

In November 1988, a Protocol of Accession was signed by the WEU Member States with Portugal and Spain. The ratification process was completed in March 1990.

Greece followed a similar process in 1992 and 1995 thus bringing the total WEU membership to 10.

(b) **A Council** which can still meet if and as necessary.

Since July 2001 decisions have been taken by written procedure (for example the creation of a Secretariat-General Administrative Service in Paris and approval of the budgets).

- No ministerial Councils have been convened since Marseille (November 2000).
- Theoretically, Council can still meet.
 - at 21, including Associate Members plus Observers;
 - at 28, i.e. with Associate Partners.

The transfer of the crisis management functions to the European Union has had no impact on **WEU membership**.

Following a decision taken on 14 June 2001, the Secretary-General stated during the 1352nd meeting of the Council of Western European Union on 28 June 2001 that, with regard to the period from 1 January 2002, the Member States deemed it unnecessary, in present and foreseeable circumstances, to make any formal change to the statuses of non-full members. Therefore:

- Associate Members, Observers and Associate Partners continue to nominate representatives to the WEU Council;
- the possibility of Council or working group meetings and/or circulation of documents at 21 or 28 remains for business related to the WEU Assembly, which may require specific input from non-full members owing to the participation of their parliamentarians in the WEU Assembly;
- the security agreements between WEU and non-full member countries are maintained;
- from 2002, no further financial contributions to WEU budgets are requested from the non-full members.

The minutes of that 1352nd Council meeting including the statement by the Secretary-General were formally approved on 29 August 2001.

- Council may meet at 10 (Member States), mainly for management purposes.

If necessary, the Council Working Group may be reactivated to prepare a Council meeting.

- The Permanent Council last met at the level of Heads of Delegation on 28 May 2002.

Two Council working groups remain active and have held meetings since July 2001:

- The Budget and Organisation Committee
- An ad hoc group for more specific managerial and administrative matters.

(c) A Secretariat-General with residual functions, i.e. other than related to crisis management which is now the remit of the European Union.

The Acting Secretary-General is Mr Arnaud Jacomet, formerly Head of the WEU Secretariat-General.

The residual functions of the restructured WEU mainly relate to:

- the modified Brussels Treaty: Article V
Article IX: institutional dialogue with the Assembly;
- the daily management of the WEU Paris building, which houses the office of the Clerk to the WEU Parliamentary Assembly and an EU agency, the Institute for Security Studies (task entrusted to the Paris Administrative Service of the Secretariat-General);
- the reorganisation and future opening to the public of the Archives;
- the management of pensions.

TO CONTACT WEU

WEU Secretariat-General
15 Rue de l'Association
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Tel: (+32) 2 500 44 12
Fax: (+32) 2 500 44 70
secretariatgeneral@weu.int
www.weu.int
