

Recommendation 105 (1956)¹

Policy of the Council of Europe in the light of recent developments in the international situation and, in particular, a common European policy towards the East

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

At the conclusion of the debates held, in accordance with the practice instituted in 1953, at its April and October sessions, on the policy of the Council of Europe in the light of recent developments in the international situation and, in particular, a common European policy towards the East ;

In reply to Resolution (55) 35 in which the Committee of Ministers requested it "to pursue its efforts to ensure that East-West problems are considered and discussed from a common European point of view" ;

Convinced that the international situation makes it increasingly necessary for Member States to achieve a unity of action, without which the vital interests of Europe cannot be safeguarded ;

Considering that the Assembly's discussions on general policy cannot be really effective unless the Committee of Ministers ensures the application of the guiding principles that emerge from these debates,

Recommends to the Committee of Ministers :

1. that it should, first by more sustained action and by use of more adequate machinery, co-ordinate national foreign policies and, in the second place, formulate and carry out a common policy on questions of vital importance to Europe ;
2. that it should have in mind the following principles on which this common European policy should be based in the present circumstances.

A. *East-West Relations*

1. The Assembly regrets to note that no progress has been made since the 1955 Geneva Conferences towards the settlement of outstanding European problems, in particular that of the reunification of Germany. It recalls the quadripartite decision adopted in July 1955 to the effect that "the reunification of Germany by means of free elections shall be carried out in conformity with the national interests of the German people and the interests of European security". It asks the Governments of Member States to take all the necessary steps to reach an agreement with the U.S.S.R. on this basis and on terms which, while enabling Germany to contribute to collective security, would not affect the balance of power in Europe. The Soviet Government should realise that all the peoples of Western Europe regard German unity as a fundamental condition for normal relations between East and West.

2. The Assembly welcomes the brave demonstrations of the unmistakeable popular desire for independence and freedom in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and expresses its deep sympathy with the victims of oppression. The economic and social structure of these countries is a matter for their own choice ; but the Western Powers have the right to ask that freedom of decision by the people, guaranteed by

1. (see [Doc. 577](#), draft Recommendation presented by the Committee on General Affairs). This Recommendation was adopted by the Assembly at its 29th Sitting, on 26th October 1956



free elections, should be restored there. Any other policy will inevitably lead to further insurrections which Soviet Russia will not always be able to drown in a bloodbath. The Assembly is of the opinion that full self-determination for these people can alone ensure a lasting peace in Central and Eastern Europe, and it is therefore desirable for the Governments of Member States to uphold firmly this principle and to raise it at the meetings of the United Nations. In particular, it is important that in the event of serious disturbances likely to endanger peace, such as those which have just occurred, European Governments should examine as a matter of urgency the desirability of bringing the question before the Security Council. The Assembly asks the peoples of Europe to declare their wish to develop their traditional relations in all fields with the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe. The Assembly recalls [Resolution 27](#) of 1954 in which the Committee of Ministers associated itself with the Assembly in reaffirming its faith in the unity of the whole of Europe.

3. The Assembly considers that, although certain unilateral reductions of armed forces and armaments can contribute towards the lessening of tension, they cannot be a substitute for an international agreement, which alone can guarantee mutual trust. It emphasises the need to reach such an agreement, which should cover both nuclear and conventional weapons, establish an effective system of control and be linked up with the elimination of the causes of political tension. The Assembly invites Member Governments to seek an immediate agreement on the control, limitation and, finally, the prohibition of experimental thermo-nuclear explosions, the effects of which are causing anxiety to the whole of humanity. This might make it easier to reach a final agreement on disarmament.

B. Relations with "non-committed" countries

The Assembly considers that certain countries which have decided to keep out of alliances should, nevertheless, recognise that they share a common interest with the West in preserving their freedom and in upholding in international life the principle of the inviolability of treaties.

C. Assistance to the under-developed areas

The Western countries should declare their readiness, whether funds can be released by disarmament or not, to contribute to a largescale programme of financial and technical assistance for the development of the underdeveloped countries. This assistance, a token of devotion to the cause of mankind, must be given, without regard to economic and political rivalry or interest, in such a way as to cause no interference with the internal and external freedom of the beneficiaries. The latter in turn should assume such elementary responsibilities as honouring signed agreements and putting such funds to proper use. Assistance is required in three fields : under-developed areas within Europe, overseas countries in which European States have special responsibilities, and independent countries.

The Assembly believes, moreover, that a special study should be made of the problem as a whole.