

EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION (EPC)  
and  
ITS CONTRIBUTION  
TO THE  
POLITICAL UNIFICATION OF EUROPE

A thesis presented by Başak Türkoğlu

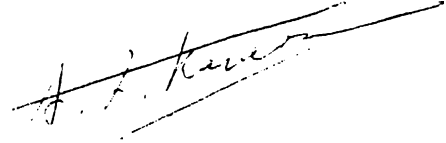
TO

THE INSTITUTES OF MANAGEMENT  
AND ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
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FOR THE DEGREE OF M. A.  
IN THE SUBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
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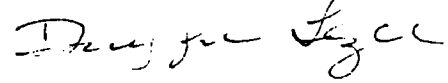
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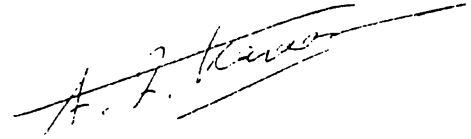
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Sir Horace Phillips

Approved by the Institute of Social and Economic Sciences



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## ABSTRACT

The report discusses European Political Cooperation (EPC) and its contributions to the political unification of Europe. The historical background is given in order to find out whether there has been progress in legal and institutional terms. The structure of EPC is examined with the aim of understanding both the internal organization of EPC and its link with the EC (European Community) policies and institutions. The contributions of EPC to the process of political unification of Europe besides its limitations, are discussed, while the fundamental philosophy behind this process is clearly drawn in the concluding chapter.

## ÖZET

1969'da La Haye zirve konferansı sırasında Devlet ya da Hükümet Başkanları, Topluluk Dışişleri Bakanlarından, dış politika konusunda işbirliği olanakları üzerine bir rapor hazırlamalarını istemişlerdir. 1970'de Lüksemburg'da toplanan Dışişleri Bakanları bu isteğe cevap veren "Davignon Raporu" nu kabul ettiler. Raporda önerilen uygulama biçimleri "Avrupa Siyasi İşbirliği" (ASİ) adı altında yürütülmektedir. 1986 yılında Avrupa Tek Senedi ile kurumsallaşan bu süreç, Avrupa Topluluğu'nun (AT) çıkarlarıyla ilgili uluslararası ilişkilerin çeşitli alanlarında, aşama aşama bilgi teatisi, danışma, görüş ve tavırların koordine edilmesi ve nihayet ortak hareket etmeyi öngörmektedir. Başkanlık, Sekreteryaya ve Coreu telex sistemi gibi esnek ve pragmatik kurumlarıyla, Avrupa'nın karşılaştığı sorunlara ortak çözüm arayışlarına ve üye ülkelerin aralarındaki işbirliğini asgari düzeye ulaştırma çabalarına hizmet etmektedir. Devletlerüstü bir siyaset organına dönüşme ihtimali, üye ülkelerin farklı kültürel ekonomik sosyal bağlar ve milli çıkarlarla AT'da temsil edilmeleri sebebiyle, oldukça uzak görünmektedir. Ancak ASİ, dış politikada ortak bir strateji geliştirerek Avrupa'daki siyasal entegrasyonun oluşumunu sağlayacak koşulların yaratılmasına olumlu yönde katkıda bulunmaktadır.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of "European Political Cooperation" (EPC) first emerged at the Hague Summit of 1969 where the aim was expressed as "to achieve progress in the matters of political unification."<sup>1</sup> A year later it evolved into a more specific target, i.e. "to cooperate in the sphere of foreign policy."<sup>2</sup> In this way, besides the "external relations" of the EEC based on the Treaties and handled by the Community institutions, foreign ministries of the member states from then on began to work "intergovernmentally" on the basis of legally non binding agreements, in the absence of formal and permanent institutions. Although the idea of EPC was initially perceived by some observers as a threat to the achievements of the EC, to others it appealed as the second "pillar" of European integration.<sup>3</sup> It has developed its own habits and methods of problem-solving. Despite changes in personnel and in external conditions as well as changes in the number of its members over time, EPC has not suffered an institutional crisis. It was finally legalized by the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986.

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1. The Hague Communique in Bulletin-EC, no.1, 1970, pp. 11-18, part 15.
  2. The Luxembourg Report in Bulletin-EC, no.11, 1970, pp. 9-14, part two, introduction paragraph.
  3. Elfriede Regelsberger, "EPC in the 1980s: Reaching Another Plateau?", in: European Political Cooperation in the 1980s: A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe?, ed: Alfred Pijpers Elfriede Regelsberger and Wolfgang Wessels. (Dordrecht: 1988) p.4

EPC has left enough room for individual national foreign policies but at the same time has been influencing national foreign policy-making in Western Europe. It has been mainly used to respond to external challenges on a collective basis on the one hand and to reduce tensions between its members through consensus-building means on the other. Yet its success has been limited to relatively minor issues, due to the lack of political and financial resources and other instruments for policy implementation and also due to the lack of consensus between its members on the means to be employed. Another shortcoming of EPC has been its failure to cooperate on matters of European security.

Despite these limitations, the multi-level and multi-dimensional foreign policy activities represented by EPC in Western Europe have become a guide for the behaviour of the Community members. It evolved into a truly advanced model of "cooperation" between the member states, which enhanced the identity and status of Western Europe in world affairs. The initial consultation mechanism turned into a process promoting European interests in the world. Today's Europe, which meets with new internal and external challenges such as the southern enlargement of the EC, the revolutionary changes in East-West relations, and German reunification, seems to need more than ever new models of cooperation among all European countries. If the revision of part III of the SEA

foreseen in 1992 becomes effective in adjusting EPC mechanisms to the rapidly changing international conjuncture, EPC will surely add much value to an active role of Europe in world politics.

However, what EPC has added to the process of political unification in Europe is still a question to be answered. As a matter of fact, the meaning of "Political Union" is ambiguous and unclear. According to the Tindemans Report, European Union (which is often called political union) is expressed as a united front to the outside world, where Europeans must tend to act in common in all the main fields of their external relations whether in foreign policy, security, economic relations or development aid. Further it is argued that the development of the Union's external relations cannot occur without a parallel development of common policies internally. European Union should be concerned not only with foreign policy in the traditional sense but also with all external economic, financial, commercial and political activities.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the coordination mechanism of EPC would not be adequate to achieve the political unification of Europe. In order to reach political union, first of all a common political will and consensus should exist among the member states.

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4. Panayiotis Ifestos, European Political Cooperation. Towards a Framework of Supranational Diplomacy ?, Aldershot: Avebury, 1987, p. 194.

The process of integration in Western Europe was initiated in the post World War II era, when the original member states were involved in a process of economic and political reconstruction. From the beginning, however, there were different views about the form of integration. A new political framework in which the component nation states would have a diminished role under a strong common authority was one option. It is generally known as the "communitarian" (supranational) approach. The second view took the Community as an instrument to enable the member states to take collective action without undermining their autonomy and individuality.<sup>5</sup> At the core of this "intergovernmental" approach the nation states and their governments play a central role.

Although the Community was becoming an important actor on the international economic stage and moving towards integration as an Economic Community, this was not the case in the foreign policy and defence fields. The functionalist theoreticians foresaw an automatic "spill-over effect" of Community action from the economic into the political sphere. Whereas the federalists, particularly Monnet, who opposed automatic evolution, believed that it was first necessary to

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5. Roy Pryce and Wolfgang Wessels, "The Search for an Ever Closer Union: A Framework for Analysis", in: The Dynamics of European Union, ed. Roy Pryce, Croom Helm, London:1987, p.4.

make economic union a fact of life and to develop concrete links, then to move the Communities forward and strengthen their institutions.<sup>6</sup>

However, after the breakdown of efforts to create a Political Community and a European Defence Community, the basic strategy was shaped as "balancing" between the communitarian body and the more co-operative (inter-governmental) one. This dialectic of national power center and communitarian problem areas plays a role in how to develop a European Union.

My main purpose in this thesis is to find out whether and in which way EPC can be regarded as a contribution to the creation of a "European Union". In order to get an idea of this, I will try to explore the overall issue of European integration. I will try to find an answer to the question of whether the Community in the field of foreign affairs has already made a "qualitative leap" into a new phase of integration.

My starting point is an examination of the reports, plans and proposals for the development of EPC, in order to find out whether there has been a linear progress with respect to the achievements of EPC as a political and administrative structure for managing foreign policy issues and with respect

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6. Pierre Gerbet, "In Search of Political Union: The Fouchet Plan Negotiations (1960-62)", in: The Dynamics of European Union, ed. Roy Pryce, Croom Helm, London: 1987, p. 107.

to the relationship between EPC and the politics and theory of integration. In this historical background I will follow a chronological order of analysis by examining the events which led to the emergence of the idea of EPC at the Hague Summit of 1969 and then, respectively, the Luxembourg Report, the Copenhagen Report and the London Report; and finally the legal and institutional changes introduced by the SEA. Other proposals and declarations which emanated from the existence and working of EPC like the Tindemans Report, the Genscher-Colombo Plan and the Solemn Declaration on European Union, will be dealt with separately.

In a second part the emphasis will be on the structure of EPC, the diplomatic machinery which has evolved in two directions: the internal organization of EPC, and the link between EPC and EC policies and its institutions. EPC's working mechanisms, particularly the secretariat, the presidency and the Coreu system, will be examined in detail on the one hand, and the relation between EPC and the Commission of the Community, the European Parliament and EC policy measures, on the other.

In a short concluding chapter I try to assess the contributions of EPC to the process of political unification of Europe. Furthermore, I will deal briefly with the relationship between the EPC process and the established body of integration "theories".

## II. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### A. Reports by the Foreign Ministers of Member States and the Single European Act.

By the late 1960s the European Community had achieved a high degree of economic cooperation, yet it did not have a common certain political aim or any institutional preparations for this purpose. However, the existence of the Community by itself was a political phenomenon. Despite this reality, foreign policy matters were handled by the governments of the member states but not within the scope of the Community. The efforts to step from the economic into the political sphere during the 1960s, like the Fouchet Plans, had failed.

In 1958, after returning to the Presidency, General de Gaulle argued that France could regain its world power status through new forms of cooperation among European sovereign states; but he remained opposed to the idea of integration and the notion of supranationality, because he believed that these two items strengthened the division of Europe and its dependence on the United States. It was for this reason that the French Government proposed a new consultative framework for political cooperation outside the Community institutions. Although the EEC Treaty foresees a "union among the peoples",<sup>7</sup> the Fouchet plan of 1961 recommended a "union of states". The plan also included common foreign and defence policies

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7. Eric Stein, "European Political Cooperation (EPC) as a component of the European Foreign Affairs System", in Zeitschrift für Ausländisches Öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht 1983, vol: 43, No:1. p. 50

besides cooperation in terms of science, culture and human rights.

The Heads of Government and Foreign Ministers would meet regularly in a "Council", and a "European Political Commission" of senior national diplomats in Paris would prepare the Council's work. The Dutch and the Belgians considered this proposal a threat to the foundations of Nato and the Community. They were also scared of any establishment of a Franco-German "directorate" which might put an end to the institutional protection for the interest of the smaller member states within the Community framework. Although de Gaulle at that time explicitly opposed possible British membership, particularly for the Dutch government political cooperation could be accepted only with Britain's participation as a factor of balance between the European countries and as a guarantor of an Atlantic Europe. In general, the partners of France were all content with the maintenance of foreign policy and defence within the framework of Nato, and under the protection of the U.S., whereas the Fouchet Plan offered them a foreign and defence policy without a credible guarantee to the smaller countries. The negotiations on the Fouchet plan ended in deadlock. We later on witness the withdrawal of France from

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8. ibid., p. 51.

9. Gerbet, pp. 111-112.



Nato's military structures, since De Gaulle had already decided to set up a French nuclear force and had refused to stock American nuclear arms in France.<sup>10</sup>

In 1969 the French government under Pompidou withdrew its opposition to the British membership of the Community. It was in this context that a summit meeting at The Hague was convened. Moving towards agreement on completion of the Common Market and the creation of the Economic and Monetary Union in the late 1960s created a suitable atmosphere for the Heads of State and Government to believe that such progress in the economic field had to be accompanied by steps which would lead to political unification.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the growth of the European regional commercial and economic system due to the forthcoming start of enlargement negotiations with other European states would have external political consequences.<sup>12</sup>

Other factors that favoured the creation of EPC can be cited as following: Pompidou's personal wish for a working European unification process, Willy Brandt's desire to "balance" his Ostpolitik with a concerted West European Policy, the growing desire of the Europeans to distinguish themselves from the United States, the awareness of the non-existence of Europe on the international scene and particularly after the crisis of 1973, the desire to be able

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10. ibid., p. 109

11. Regelsberger, p.5

12. Ifestos, p. 148.

to react collectively to events that might pose a danger to Western Europe, by pooling resources and increasing its members capabilities in their dealings with the outside world.<sup>13</sup> We can add to these the trend in Third World regions to create blocs demanding either political or economic concessions which compelled the Community to search for ways of coordinating their foreign policies.<sup>14</sup>

Another argument in order to explain the creation of EPC, developed by Weiler, is that the main purpose of the process was "reflexive", i.e. one had to compensate for the failures of supranational (economic) integration with a new form of integration which would be intergovernmental. He argues that consultation on foreign policy and the formulation of joint positions were a substitute for a true supranational integration.<sup>15</sup>

#### 1- The Hague Summit and the Luxembourg Report

Therefore in an international environment as described above, with the Community having completed the transitional period foreseen in the Treaty of Rome, the French President proposed an EEC summit which took place in The Hague on 1-2

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13. Ilan Greilsammer, "European Political Cooperation: A European Foreign Policy ?" in: The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations, Baltimore, Dec. 1989 Vol 11 No.4, p.53

14. Ifestos, p. 148.

15. J.H. Weiler, "The Evolution of a European Foreign Policy: Mechanisms and Institutions", I.Greilsammer and J. Weiler, Europe and Israel: Troubled Neighbours (1988) quoted by I. Greilsammer, p. 53.

December 1969. The Hague Summit was a landmark in European integration in political terms. The European leaders were all ready to present their political will and to take steps toward "strengthening" and "deepening" European integration.<sup>16</sup> It was a significant attempt towards political unity in Europe.

The programme provided for policies which would have completed and strengthened the existing structures and policies and enlarged the EC by including new member states, on condition that the applicant states accepted the treaties and their political finality and the decisions taken since the entry into force of the treaties, i.e. what in Community jargon is called the "acquis communautaire".<sup>17</sup>

The Heads of State or Government agreed: "to instruct the ministers for foreign affairs to study the best way of achieving progress in the matter of political unification, within the context of enlargement. The ministers would be expected to report before the end of July 1970"<sup>18</sup>, thus "paving the way for a United Europe capable of assuming its responsibilities in the world of tomorrow and of making a contribution commensurate with its traditions and its missions".<sup>19</sup>

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16. Ifestos, p. 151  
17. The Hague Communique, in Bulletin-EC, no.1,1970, pp.11-18  
18. The Hague Communique, para. 15  
19. The Hague Communique, para. 3.

For that purpose a committee composed of the political directors of the member states foreign ministries under the chairmanship of the Belgian political director Etienne Davignon prepared a report.<sup>20</sup> The report was approved by the Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Luxembourg on 27 October 1970. In the Luxembourg Report the Ministers proposed that "to achieve progress towards political unification, the Governments should decide to cooperate in the field of foreign policy."<sup>21</sup> The report emphasized that this cooperation has two objectives:<sup>22</sup>

(a) To ensure greater mutual understanding with respect to the major issues of international politics, by exchanging information and consulting regularly;

(b) To increase their solidarity by working for harmonization of views, concerting of attitudes, and joint action when it appears feasible and desirable.

According to the report, foreign ministers were to meet "at least every six months".<sup>23</sup> In the event of a serious crisis or special urgency, an extraordinary consultation was to be arranged between the governments of member states.<sup>24</sup> The President-in-office was given charge of it. Yet it was not until the London Report (1981) that a special formula and

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20. Hence, the report is often called the "Davignon Report".  
21. The Luxembourg Report, in Bulletin-EC, no:11, 1970, pp.9-14 part two.  
22. The Luxembourg Report, Part Two, para 1.  
23. ibid., Part two, II-1 (a)  
24. ibid., Part two, II-1 (c)

a specific procedure for emergency meetings was to be established.

The main institution proposed was a Political Committee composed of the heads of the political departments of the national foreign ministries. They were to meet "at least four times a year" to prepare the ministerial meetings and carry out any tasks delegated to them by the ministers.<sup>25</sup> The committee was also authorized to set up "working parties" and "panel of experts" or to institute "any other form of consultation"<sup>26</sup> necessary for special tasks.

The Governments were entitled to consult each other on all major questions of foreign policy,<sup>27</sup> yet there was no commitment to agree. If the task undertaken by the ministers affected the activities of the EC, then the Commission would be consulted.<sup>28</sup> It was also agreed to hold an informal meeting every six months with the Political Committee of the European Parliament.<sup>29</sup> Secretarial and organizational arrangements were to be responsibility of the country holding the presidency of the Council of Ministers of the EC.<sup>30</sup> Meetings would also take place in that country's capital. In part three of the report (paragraph 3) the Political Committee was asked to report back to the Ministers on the

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25. ibid., Part two, III-1

26. ibid., Part two, III-3

27. ibid., Part two, IV

28. ibid., Part two, V

29. ibid., Part two, VI

30. ibid., Part two, VII

given tasks at each of their half-yearly meetings. Moreover, in paragraph 4, the President-in-office of the Council was supposed to provide the European Parliament with a progress report on the work in question. The Luxembourg Report had also stipulated that the applicant countries would "have to accept the goals and procedures of political cooperation" as they became community members.<sup>31</sup>

As can be deduced from the report, although it was thought appropriate to distinguish EPC from the other Community institutions, the correlation between the new framework and the objective of European political integration is obvious.<sup>32</sup> The European Communities were considered to be the original nucleus of European unity and furthermore, a United Europe was declared to be the fundamental aim. Yet in EPC there was no obligation or commitment to take decisions or to comply with certain decisions. Its existence was not based on any treaty. It was a procedure rather than an institutional structure.

## 2. The Copenhagen Report

During the Paris Summit of October 1972 it was evident that the political will which existed in the late 1960s and early 1970s began to weaken. Especially, the trend of linking progress in political cooperation with the aim of political

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31. *ibid.*, part four.

32. Ifestos, p. 153.

union was almost left side. So the results of the summit as regards political cooperation and political union were not impressive. What is worth mentioning here is that the Heads of State during the summit instructed the Foreign Ministers to prepare a second report on European Political Cooperation.<sup>33</sup> Since the enlargement of the European Communities was to become effective on 1 January 1973, this second report dealt basically with methods and procedures for improving political cooperation. The Middle East war and subsequent energy crisis, political changes in the Iberian peninsula, the Greek-Turkish dispute over Cyprus, and finally the detente between the two superpowers played an important role in reinforcing a decision by the ministers to agree on a detailed structure of consultations in order to assume joint positions in different areas.

The Copenhagen Report of 1973 noted that the habit of working together had become a "reflex" of coordination, which had affected the relations of the member states between each other and with third countries. This collegiate sense in Europe was becoming a real force in international relations.<sup>34</sup>

The Copenhagen Report was an initiative to draw a framework for the future development of EPC. In a way the

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33. Because, the report was submitted to the Heads of State in the 1973 Copenhagen Summit, it is called "Copenhagen Report".

34. The Copenhagen Report, in Bulletin-EC. No:9, 1973 pp.14-21, Part I, para 5.

report gave EPC its final character, it established its 'working rules' throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and it formed an integral part of the accumulation of reports and practices which make up EPC.<sup>35</sup> The report attributes a specific role to EPC in international politics:

"In the light of this it is essential that, in the spirit of the conclusions of the Paris Summit Conference, cooperation 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 interest in progress, peace and cooperation. 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."<sup>36</sup>

By referring to the 'traditional friends' and the 'alliances of the member states' the report addressed the U.S., Europe's security guarantor. As we see, within today's circumstances, the role assumed by EPC in the eyes of the

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35. Ifestos, p. 167.

36. the Copenhagen Report, Part I, para 12.



Member States gains significance with respect to the changing international conjuncture and East-West relations.

Compared to the Luxembourg Report, the Copenhagen Report introduced new principles to the working mechanism of EPC. First of all, the Foreign Ministers were supposed to meet four times a year instead of twice a year. They were permitted to consult each other on specific subjects between meetings, if it was necessary.<sup>37</sup>

The responsibilities undertaken by the Political Directors of the Member States, i.e. the Political Committee, remained more or less the same yet, instead of meeting four times a year, they were thought to meet "as frequently as the intensification of the work requires".<sup>38</sup>

An important innovation was the establishment of "a group consisting of European Correspondents in the foreign ministry"<sup>39</sup> responsible for the management of a special communication network called the COREU system of telegrams. The aim of this new institution was both to contribute to confidence-building inside the "club" and to the stabilization of the system. The COREU (Correspondance Europeenne) offered continuous communication on any international topic diplomats wished to raise. In this way the "coordination reflex" and a certain esprit de corps became major characteristics of foreign policy-making at the

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37. ibid., Part II, para 1.

38. ibid., Part II, para 2

39. ibid., Part II, para 3

European level.

The report also provided for regular contacts, consultations and meetings among the staffs of the members' diplomatic representations in each others' capitals, in third countries, and in international organizations.<sup>41</sup>

Administrative assistance was foreseen by other member states to the presidency for specific tasks since the presidency was considered to present a particularly heavy administrative burden for the respective government in charge of this task.<sup>42</sup>

The report moreover provided for four colloquies each year with the European Parliament's Political Committee, and the Political Committee of EPC was given the task of drawing to the attention of the foreign ministers proposals adopted by the European Parliament on foreign policy questions. The foreign ministers' willingness to inform the Political Committee of the European Parliament was regarded as a step towards greater democratic control over the intergovernmental machinery of EPC.

Yet the effective control of the Parliament over EPC was not realized. The national parliaments exercise influence over EPC only to the extent that they can influence their respective foreign ministers. However, at the European level, the European Parliament is the only institution which

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40. Regelsberger, p. 11

41. The Copenhagen Report, Part II, para 6-7.

42. ibid., Part II, para.8

provides a forum for democratic control of the operation and activities of EPC but this control was still exercised indirectly through the national parliaments. The European Parliament's control over EPC remained consultative. It could exert moral influence on Ministers for Foreign Affairs or even on public opinion, but it had no legal jurisdiction over EPC activities. Thus the Copenhagen Report could not provide any solution to the question of democratic control and effective jurisdiction of foreign policy issues handled by EPC.<sup>43</sup> The report only foresaw four colloquies each year at which the Foreign Ministers would meet with members of the Political Committee of the EP, in addition to a communication on progress made in the field of political cooperation submitted by the President to the EP once a year.<sup>44</sup>

The report, furthermore, made a distinction between the work of the political cooperation machinery and that carried out within the framework of the European Communities. Although both sets of machinery were considered to have the same aim, i.e. contribution to the development of European unification, a sort of official differentiation was made for the first time.<sup>45</sup>

As well as this it was accepted that if the Community activities overlapped with those of the EPC, close contact

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43. Ifestos, pp. 169-170

44. The Copenhagen Report, Part II, para. 10

45. ibid., Part II, para. 12 (a)

would be maintained with the institutions of the Community. For example, the Commission would be invited to make known its views in accordance with current practices. In addition to that, the Presidency would keep the EC Council informed accordingly.<sup>46</sup>

The Copenhagen Report can be regarded as one of the cornerstones of the EPC establishment. It shows the limits that institutional arrangements can reach in terms of foreign policy cooperation on the one hand, and the fundamental objective of the EPC machinery on the other. The report reflected the view that EPC should be kept distinct from the EC and in the hands of national officials. Setting up a group of correspondents and putting emphasis on the role of the presidency instead of establishing a common secretariat were good examples to that point. However, although the report mentioned "the development of European Unification" it indicated "coordination" rather than increased cooperation or common foreign policy. Furthermore, the changes brought about by the Copenhagen Report were mainly a formalization of the intergovernmental practices that had been developed by EPC since the Luxembourg Report. Its principal characteristics remained the same: a mechanism for common analysis, reciprocal exchange of information and common public statements when views did not fundamentally diverge.<sup>47</sup>

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46. ibid., Part II, para. 12 (c)

47. Ifestos, pp. 172-173.

### 3. The London Report

In 1980 the Foreign Ministers of the ten member states of the European Community sought ways and means to improve the development of European Political Cooperation. In doing so they were motivated by the crises of the 1970s such as the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, the hostage-taking in Teheran, the Iran-Iraq war, the deterioration of East-West relations, and by Europe's inability to influence these events.<sup>48</sup> Thus a third report on European Political Cooperation was approved by the European Council in London on 13 October 1981.

The member states seemed to attach greater importance to the idea of presenting themselves as a unitary actor in world politics:<sup>49</sup>

"The Foreign Ministers believe that in a period of increased world tension and uncertainty the need for a coherent and united approach to international affairs by the members of the European Community is greater than ever... it is their conviction that the Ten should seek increasingly to shape events and not merely to react to them."<sup>50</sup>

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48. Greilsammer, p. 54

49. Regelsberger, p. 2

50. The London Report, Bulletin-EC, No:3, 1981, pp. 14-17  
para. 5

With his election as French president in 1981 François Mitterand and a former Commissioner, Claude Cheysson, as Foreign Minister, elevated the "European Policy" to a higher place in the French government's priorities. Besides, the hard-line stance of the new American administration of President Ronald Reagan regarding East-West relations also forced the Europeans, who were very much attached to detente, to formulate an independent common foreign policy.<sup>51</sup> Without changing the fundamental intergovernmental character of the EPC structure, pragmatic improvements of the political cooperation machinery were sought. The London Report is significant in terms of EPC process since it introduced substantial developments compared to the Luxembourg and Copenhagen Reports. Much of these had, however, been established in EPC practice after 1973.

One of the new features of the London Report was the establishment of a "crisis procedure". This offered the possibility of meetings at ministerial level and directorial level and of ambassadors of the Ten in third countries within forty-eight hours at the request of three member states. Working groups were instructed to identify possible international crises at an early stage and to prepare adequate strategies to act.<sup>52</sup>

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51. Greilsammer, p. 54  
52. Regelsberger, p. 21

Another point differentiating the London Report from the two previous ones was the security issue. The report says that:

"As regards the scope of European Political Cooperation and having regard to the different situations of the Member States, the Foreign Ministers agree to maintain the flexible and pragmatic approach which has made it possible to discuss in political cooperation certain important foreign policy questions bearing on the political aspects of security."<sup>53</sup>

As we can understand from the quotation above, there was no commitment to deal with the political aspects of security. It was up to the political will of the Member States. The military aspects of security but also important political security issues had been avoided since the failure of the EDC<sup>54</sup> (European Defence Community) scheme in 1954. Furthermore, the defence of Western Europe was the responsibility of Nato. However, Ireland was not a member of Nato on the one hand and some other Nato members such as Norway and Turkey were not EEC members on the other. Therefore many members did not want the Community to become involved in security matters.<sup>55</sup> Other factors which kept the defence and military

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53. The London Report, para.66

54. Ifestos, p. 295.

55. The Economist, "Europe's Fledgling Foreign Policy", 4 Dec. 1982, p. 59.

aspects of security out of subject were the continued resilience of Nato, inhibitions about reviving an independent German military machine and the sheer cost of preferring self-reliance to American leadership.<sup>56</sup> In fact it is really difficult to draw a line between those matters which are for EPC discussion and those which are to be kept for Nato. For instance, the Helsinki Final Act, the consequences of the invasion of Poland, and military aid to Afghanistan, have all been on the agenda of the Foreign Ministers.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, "political" rather than "defence" aspects of security was referred to in order not to undermine Nato consultations. As a result, we can say that the European Community certainly did not achieve a defence or military dimension in the London Report.

In institutional terms although the report did not change the fundamental characteristics of EPC, it introduced pragmatic and effective arrangements. It provided assistance to the President-in-office by his colleagues from the preceding and succeeding presidencies the Troika,<sup>58</sup> since his role as spokesman in the European Parliament and in contacts with third countries had increased. The ten member states also agreed to "attach importance to the Commission of the European Communities being fully

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56. Cristopher Hill, "Changing Gear in Political Cooperation", in The Political Quarterly, London, Jan.-March 1982, Vol: 53, No:1, p. 56.

57. ibid., p. 56

58. The London Report, part II, para. 10



associated with Political Cooperation, at all levels"<sup>59</sup> which means that the Commission achieved the right of participating in every deliberative meeting of EPC. Yet the legal and procedural distinction between economic matters under the authority of the EEC and political matters under the EPC machinery still continued to exist. On the other hand, the Member States accepted "to provide for Political Cooperation meetings on the occasion of Foreign Affairs Council",<sup>60</sup> which was a real step forward.

As the London Report mentions, EPC had become "a central element in the foreign policies of all member states". Yet it was still a political commitment and not a legal one based on treaty obligations. However, compared to the previous reports, we can argue that there was a quite stronger political commitment in this report, despite its vague wording. To make this clear, we can compare some of the general points of the three reports. For instance, in the Luxembourg Report a necessity for the member states to step up their political cooperation and to provide themselves with ways and means of harmonizing their views in the field of international politics was recognized. The Foreign Ministers were eager to show to the outside world that Europe has a political vocation and to give Europeans a keener awareness<sup>61</sup> of their common responsibility. Therefore they proposed that the governments should decide to cooperate in the field

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59. ibid., Part II, para. 12

60. ibid., Part II, para. 12

61. The Luxembourg Report, Part I, para. 10

of foreign policy, being concerned to achieve progress towards political unification. The objectives of this cooperation were:

- to exchange information and consult regularly and thus ensure better mutual understanding on international affairs.
- to harmonize views and positions and when it appears feasible and desirable, joint action.<sup>62</sup>

In the Copenhagen Report, however, a sort of evolution can be observed. First of all, each state agreed to undertake as a general rule not to take up final positions without prior consultation with its partners within the framework of the political cooperation machinery. Therefore governments would consult each other on all important foreign policy questions. The purpose of the consultation was to seek common policies on practical problems. Furthermore, they agreed that the subjects dealt with should concern European interests whether in Europe itself or elsewhere where the adoption of a common position is necessary or desirable.<sup>63</sup>

In the London Report, in addition to their commitment to consult partners before adopting final positions or launching national initiatives, the ten Foreign Ministers undertook that in these consultations each of them would take full account of the position of other partners and would give due weight to the desirability of achieving a common position.

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62. ibid., part II, para. 1

63. The Copenhagen Report, Part II, para. 11

They also noted that it became increasingly possible for the Ten to speak with one voice in international affairs. They emphasized that not merely a common attitude, but joint action, which has always been an objective of European Political Cooperation, should be increasingly within the capacity of the Ten.<sup>64</sup>

As we can see, the political commitment in terms of political cooperation gets stronger in succeeding reports; or, as a close observer of the EPC development has put it:

"The common enterprise has to begin with a loose non-binding and modest formula, through which a process of developing trust can be initiated... Gradual development does justice to the individual interests of the participants and is flexible enough to avoid deviation and special requests without any irreparable breaks. If the process is thus flexibly organized the actors can accumulate an increasing body of common positions if they are confronted with the "right" challenges which ultimately create the preconditions for qualitative changes of cooperation."<sup>65</sup>

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64. The London Report, Part I, para. 7 and 8.

65. W. Wessels, "EPC: A New Approach to Foreign Policy", in: European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe, ed. D. Allen, R. Rummel and W. Wessels, Institute für Europäische Politik, Bonn: 1982, p. 17

#### 4. The Single European Act (SEA)

In the early 1980s there was a need to affirm Europe's political identity in the world. There was a stalemate over the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and an ongoing crisis over the Community budget.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, national elections and the prospect of further enlargement of the EC to the South could have some negative effects on the system as a whole.<sup>67</sup>

In these circumstances the European Parliament took the initiative and voted for the "Draft Treaty establishing the European Union"<sup>68</sup> on 14 February 1984 which was "a commitment to pluralistic democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the promotion of international peace and liberty, and the construction of an ever closer union in Europe". The Draft Treaty proposed to bring political cooperation under the auspices of the Union. Political cooperation matters were treated in articles 63 to 69. Yet it seems that the Draft Treaty attempted to preserve the EPC system at its present stage of evolution, with respect to its competences and definition of roles, while introducing it into the framework of the Treaty.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand,

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66. Ifestos, p. 329.

67. Regelsberger, p. 28

68. The Draft Treaty was prepared by a Committee under the leadership Altiero Spinelli.

69. Peter Brückner, "Foreign Affairs Powers and Policy in the Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union", in: An Ever Closer Union, eds. Bieber, Jacque and Weiler, European Perspectives, Commission of the EC, Brussels: 1985, p. 132.

the Treaty attempted to introduce some pragmatism such as art. 68 which flexibly distinguishes between cooperation and common action in international relations and puts the conduct of these two processes under the decision of the European Council.<sup>70</sup> Articles 65, 67 and 69 refer to the delegation of powers and roles to the Commission and the European Parliament which it was difficult for the member states to accept.

The purpose of the SEA, however, was less ambitious. It aimed at transforming what already existed of EPC procedures and practices into a legal text. So, by the SEA, EPC was given a legal form. Yet both the preamble and article 1 of the SEA linked the European Communities and EPC while making clear that they were legally separate. Art 1 says that: "The European Communities and European Political Cooperation shall have as their objective to contribute together to making concrete progress towards European Unity". The Act furthermore explained the fact that the European Communities were founded on the Treaties of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and the subsequent Treaties and Acts, whereas EPC would be governed by Title III of the SEA.<sup>71</sup> In other words, though EPC was codified in a legal text, the member states did not decide to integrate it

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70. *ibid.*, p. 138

71. The Single European Act, Bulletin-EC, Supplement 2/1986, Title I, art. 1

fully into the Community system in legal terms.

As a matter of fact the SEA was not an "innovation" but was rather a repetition of already existing reports. It only introduced some subtle new features. Article 30 confirmed the undertaking of the members of the European Communities:

a. to formulate and implement jointly a European foreign  
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policy.

b. to inform and consult each other on any foreign policy  
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matters of general interest before they decide on their  
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final position.

c. to take into consideration the position of the other  
partners while adopting their own position and their own  
national interests.<sup>76</sup>

The Act still lacks a binding decision-making framework, since the EPC Treaty had no legal instruments of enforcement. Moreover, due to its vague terminology, the degree of commitment was hard to define.

The Commission was said to be "fully associated with the  
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proceedings of Political Cooperation". It was moreover entitled to ensure, together with the Presidency, that there is consistency between the policies of the EC and those of

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72. Ifestos, p. 353

73. The Single European Act, Title III, art 30, para. 1

74. ibid., art 30, para 2 (a)

75. ibid., art 30, para 2 (b)

76. ibid., art 30, para 2 (c)

77. ibid., art 30, para 3 (b)

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EPC. So in a way the Commission would act as a coordinating organ between the EC and EPC, but was not given any power or jurisdiction as a participant in EPC. The Presidency was charged to inform the European Parliament regularly of the foreign policy issues being examined within the framework of EPC, and also the views of the European Parliament would be duly taken into consideration.<sup>79</sup> So the role of the EP remained modestly consultative.

Apart from backing the EPC procedure by a legal text and putting an end to its ad hoc character the only innovation was the establishment of a secretariat based in Brussels to assist the Presidency in preparing and implementing the activities of EPC and in administrative matters.<sup>80</sup> Yet it was not given any competence for initiatives since it would carry out its duties under the authority of the Presidency.

The Member States in paragraph 6 of Article 30 agreed to cooperate on questions of European security and to coordinate their positions more closely on the political and "economic" aspects of security. Though the political aspects of security was already mentioned in the London Report of 1981, the economic aspects were newly added. The main point is that the Member States expressed their determination and willingness in a legal document to cooperate on security for

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78. ibid., art 30, para 5

79. ibid., art 30, para. 4

80. ibid., art 30, para. 10 (g)

the first time, by putting emphasis on maintaining the technological and industrial conditions necessary for their security. It was also stressed that the EPC Treaty would not pose any obstacle to closer cooperation in the field of security between certain of the member states within the framework of the Western European Union (WEU) or the Atlantic

Alliance. The distinction between the political and military aspects of security was again maintained, as it was in the London Report.

In a nutshell, the Single European Act did not bring any fundamental change to the EPC machinery. Its working methods, its legal and institutional differentiation from the EEC institutions, and its role and contributions to European integration, almost remained unchanged. Nevertheless, the SEA gave it a legal form but not a new content or new commitments and obligations in general.

If we take a brief look at the development of EPC from the Luxembourg Report to the SEA, with respect to its contributions to political unification, we can argue that EPC is formally acknowledged as an important approach towards European Union. EPC, in its initial phase, was involved extensively in institutional questions and procedural details. For instance, the Luxembourg Report contained mainly the procedural arrangements of EPC. After the Copenhagen

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81. Ifestos, p. 356

82. The Single European Act, art 30, para. 6 (c)



Report EPC developed into a sui generis network by which the member states could exchange views, harmonize their national policies on certain international issues, and act in common in some specific cases. The London Report was an attempt to refine EPC as the focus of Western European collective diplomacy. The member countries seemed to attach greater importance to the idea of presenting themselves as a unitary actor in world politics. By the SEA of 1986, for the first time in its history political cooperation was given a legal basis. The political commitment to cooperate on foreign policy matters was transformed into a legal obligation. The SEA in a way confirmed the role of EPC in furthering the integration process.

EPC has become a major procedure for foreign policy-making both at the national and the collective European level. It is not a minor affair in the process of European integration either. Politicians and diplomats became familiar with the European dimension of their national foreign policy more and more through EPC institutions and working methods. All the procedural improvements, from the Luxembourg Report to the SEA, are based on the assumption that EPC is a cooperation among sovereign states, each of which has strong individual traditions and national interests in terms of foreign policy. In these circumstances it would not be wise to expect a transfer of loyalties from the national level to the new

centre of collective decision-making as it has been suggested by the neo-functional theory of integration processes.

## **B. Other Proposals and Declarations Which Take up the Issue of Foreign Policy Cooperation**

Although they are not directly related to EPC in the way the three Reports and the SEA are, the Tindemans Report and the Genscher-Colombo Plan and, as a consequence, the Solemn Declaration need to be mentioned. These were attempts to meet the challenges of European Union which occurred either in the international environment or within the Community, by drawing attention to less controversial areas, opening new avenues like political cooperation or by creating a positive climate for available solutions. Despite their shortcomings and failures, the lessons derived from these initiatives for political integration are still valid. Particularly in the Tindemans Report there are some long-range positive elements. Before the Tindemans Report, in the 1972 Paris Summit meeting, a form of "European Union" was foreseen, but the term "European Union" was rhetoric then. The Report however gave a more or less definite meaning to this word.

### **1. The Tindemans Report**

During the Paris Summit of December 1974, Leo Tindemans, Prime Minister of Belgium, was nominated to draw up a

comprehensive report to the heads of government after consulting the European institutions, the governments, and economic and social groups within the Community.<sup>83</sup> The report would define the concept and content of "European Union". His report consisted of a set of general guidelines from which legally binding texts could be derived. In the letter accompanying his submission of the report he mentioned that Europe would only fulfil its destiny if it espoused federalism.<sup>84</sup>

According to Tindemans the European idea lost its momentum due to the lack of common political will and consensus, without which the move from economic integration to political became difficult. This problem furthermore prevented Europe from acquiring its own personality in defence and security matters and a unified approach in world affairs.<sup>85</sup> Tindemans also argued in his report that "the European Union should not only be concerned with foreign policy in the traditional sense but also with all external economic relations; that is, the Union's foreign policy must include all economic, financial, commercial and political activities".<sup>86</sup>

Tindemans, on the other hand, suggested a single

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83. Jacques Vandamme, "The Tindemans Report (1975-76)" in: The Dynamics of European Union, ed. Roy Pryce, Croom Helm, London: 1987, p. 150.

84. ibid., p. 159.

85. Ifestos, p. 194

86. ibid., p. 194

decision-making centre by putting an end to the distinction between Community affairs and Political Cooperation, in other words, the distinction between EPC and meetings of Foreign Ministers. He recommended the "Council of Ministers" as the central authority.

He proposed to transform the political undertaking of the Member States into a legal obligation with the help of a protocol reformulating paragraph 11 of the 1973 Copenhagen Report<sup>87</sup> which anticipated consultation on all important foreign policy questions among the Governments.

Tindemans was aware of the fact that steps toward European Union should be gradual and based on realities. He named it a "qualitative progress".<sup>88</sup> For this reason he adopted a firm "communautaire" line in his report, calling for the absorption of the political cooperation machinery into the legal framework of the Treaties of Rome, but this evoked little positive response.<sup>89</sup> The report proposed four areas where obligatory consultation was considered as a commitment before establishing a common or majority position. They were: the new world economic order; relations between Europe and the United States; security; and crises occurring within

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87. Vandamme, p. 160

88. ibid., p. 159

89. David Allen and William Wallace, "European Political Cooperation: the Historical and Contemporary Background", in: European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe; ed. D Allen, R. Rummel and W. Wessels, Institut für Europäische Politik, Bonn: 1982, p. 31.

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Europe's immediate geographical surroundings. However, efforts to reach an agreement on the programme proposed by Tindemans failed, mainly because the political and economic climate in Europe was not favourable to grand political projects at the moment when the Report came under  
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discussion.

## 2. The Genscher-Colombo Plan and the Solemn Declaration on European Union.

The Genscher-Colombo initiative, unlike the Tindemans  
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Report, was taken outside any institutional framework. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German Foreign Minister, speaking in Stuttgart on 6 January 1981, called for a new treaty to establish a common European foreign policy. He expressed his own views on European Union, putting the emphasis on Europe's political rather than economic needs.

At that time the Community's forthcoming enlargement by Greece, and the prospect of Spanish and Portuguese membership, necessitated a deepening of its policies and decision-making mechanisms. The worsening of European-American relations on issues of detente and the Middle East problems like the invasion of Afghanistan were other factors  
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which contributed to this new approach.

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90. ibid., p. 166

91. Vandamme, pp. 160-161

92. Gianni Bonvicini, "The Genscher-Colombo Plan and the Solemn Declaration on European Union", in: The Dynamics of European Union, ed. Roy Pryce, London, Croom Helm, 1987, p. 174.

93. ibid., p. 175.

In these circumstances Genscher declared the main objectives of European Union as: development of a common European foreign policy; extension of the scope of economic cooperation, agreement on security policy; closer<sup>94</sup> cooperation in the cultural sector and legal harmonization. Yet, as with the Tindemans Report, the initiative was not intended to result in an immediate European Union, but as a step forward in this process.

The Italian Foreign Minister, Emilio Colombo, in a speech in Florence on 28 January 1981 in support of his German colleague, expressed similar views on this attempt toward European Union. However, his concern was much more about the development of the Community's economic policy. These differences in terms of motivations and perceptions between Colombo and Genscher could be observed particularly in the letters that they sent with a copy of the joint plan to their colleagues and to the presidents of the Commission<sup>95</sup> and the European Parliament.

The two major objectives of the Bonn-Rome initiative were, first, to formalise EPC and draw it functionally closer to the EEC, and second, to introduce security into the scope<sup>96</sup> of Community's deliberations. However, due to the dilemmas within the Community itself, Genscher at the end agreed that, instead of a new treaty, a declaration to reform

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94. ibid., p. 176.

95. ibid., p. 178.

96. The Financial Times, 8 May 1981, p. 2.

institutions and to define the main objectives of European Union would be sufficient.<sup>97</sup> The examination of the Genscher-Colombo Plan by the member states lasted for two years. The long diplomatic and political negotiations finally resulted in the "Solemn Declaration on European Union" of the European Council on 19 June 1983, in Stuttgart.

The Genscher-Colombo Plan originally had proposed:

(a) to give the European Council a strategic role in the common decision-making structure in a permanent and definitive way;

(b) to establish a single Council of Ministers responsible both for EC and EPC matters;

(c) to create new specialised ministerial councils, including culture and defence;

(d) a return to majority voting in the Council and adoption of a new procedure designed to reduce the use of the veto;

(e) to extend the role of the European Parliament in terms of its authority and power of intervention;

(f) to strengthen the role of the Presidency and to create a small secretariat for EPC.<sup>98</sup>

Yet in the Stuttgart Declaration the innovations about the European Council, the idea of a single Council of Ministers and new specialised ministerial councils, were not

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97. The Financial Times, 16 Nov. 1981, pp. 1-2.

98. Bonvicini, 1987, p. 183.

even taken into account. There was only rhetorical emphasis on the importance of the European Parliament but nothing more.<sup>99</sup> On the question of voting, the relevant paragraph read as follows:

"Within the Council, every possible means of facilitating the decision-making process will be used, including, in cases where unanimity is required, the possibility of abstaining from voting."<sup>100</sup>

Moreover, the original Italo-German plan had proposed "linking preliminary consultations of the Ten more closely to later common action; making reactions more timely; making the so-called "acquis politique" more binding; improving links with the European Parliament; strengthening the presidency; creating a permanent small secretariat; modifying the rules of consensus; and extending the scope of cooperation to security and culture; thereby coordinating respective national policies and creating an ad hoc body to deal with them."<sup>101</sup>

The Declaration on the other hand lacked all these credible means of progress towards European Union. Therefore Germany's and Italy's effort was downgraded to a declaration which simply described existing practices rather than envisaging any innovations. The declaration was far from realizing the expected institutional and political changes.

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99. *ibid.*, p. 184.

100. Ifestos, p. 303.

101. Bonvicini, 1987, p. 185.



The distinction between EC and EPC, the lack of binding obligations, exclusion of security matters to a certain degree and its institutional setting in short, the basic characteristics of EPC remained almost the same. However, one should also keep in mind that a declaration by its nature is simply a means of expressing common political intentions and views of the EC members. It may, at best, have some politically binding character, but nothing more.

### III. THE STRUCTURE OF EPC

#### A. Working Mechanisms

EPC was established to deal with foreign policy problems which the member states of the EC met in the international arena. The aim was to be able to speak with one voice on international questions, and in order to speak with one voice the member-states had to coordinate their views and positions and to reach a common line through reciprocal consultation and exchange of information. Yet common institutions are not in a position to make and carry out all outstanding foreign policy decisions in the name of the Community. The parties to EPC are all sovereign states and they all preserve their own "national" foreign policies. The participants in EPC can interpret or realize common declarations differently, in accordance with their own day-to-day politics.

Although in all EPC reports and declarations, it is clearly stated that European cooperation in the field of foreign policy is aimed at contributing to the creation of a so-called "European Union", this final goal, i.e. European Union, lacks a clear definition in terms of both content and structure and procedures.<sup>102</sup> Intergovernmentalism is another concept that can be referred to in the field of foreign policy cooperation in Europe. In order to understand whether EPC is a mere elaboration of the intergovernmental approach or an advanced level of common foreign policy, I am going to examine the decision-making mechanisms and procedures of EPC, besides the role it assumes.

### 1. The Presidency

During the first two or three years of operation, the president's role did not extend far beyond convening meetings of Ministers and of the Political Committee; attempting to promote compromise among divergent viewpoints, carrying out contact with states that have applied for accession and meeting the press on behalf of his colleagues at the

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102. Gianni Bonvicini, "Mechanisms and Procedures of EPC: More than Traditional Diplomacy?" in: European Political Cooperation in the 1980s. A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe? ed. A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger and W. Wessels. Dordrech: 1988, p. 50.

conclusion of each ministerial conference.<sup>103</sup> As political cooperation expanded due to the growing complexity of the EPC machinery, the Presidency played a larger role. The intergovernmental character of EPC was another factor which<sup>104</sup> caused the Presidency to take a central role. The efficiency of political cooperation depended to a large extent on that of the Presidency since the decision-making structure was deprived of a well-established bureaucratic base and also a common budget for EPC. As a result, each member state, according to its financial capability,<sup>105</sup> decided how to utilize its period in office.

The Copenhagen Report of 1973 recognized the fact that "the Presidency's task presents a particularly heavy administrative burden".<sup>106</sup> As a result, the Report introduced for the first time the possibility of administrative assistance to the Presidency, provided by other member states,<sup>107</sup> i.e. European Correspondents.

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103. William Wallece, "National Inputs into European Political Cooperation", in: European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe., ed. D. Allen, R. Rummel and W. Wessels, Institut für Europäische Politik, Bonn: 1982, p. 49.
104. Bonvicini, 1988, p. 59.
105. ibid., p. 59.
106. Wallace, p. 49.
107. Philippe de Schoutete, "The Presidency and the Management of Political Cooperation" in: European Political Cooperation in the 1980s A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe, ed. A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger and W. Wessels, (Dordrecht: 1988) p. 71.

Moreover the "Gymnich formula"<sup>108</sup> placed the responsibility for representing European views in the hands of the Presidency. The formula required the Presidency, in the name of the member states of the Community, to take charge of the process of informing and consulting allied and friendly nations.<sup>109</sup>

Thus the Presidency, that is the Foreign Minister and his administration of the country holding the office of the President in the Community Council, became both the "driving force" and the "spokesman" of cooperation in foreign policy. The representational duties gave each foreign minister and his officials an opportunity to play a larger and more visible role on the international stage.<sup>110</sup>

Yet these tasks imposed a real burden particularly on the small countries when they occupied the Presidency during the six-month period.<sup>111</sup> Another problem was the continuity of EPC beyond the six-month period of each Presidency. The invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 especially showed the inability of the Community to react to events taking place

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108. The Gymnich Agreement (April 1974) was a compromise, which made it possible to link the USA to EPC consultations. By this agreement, it was agreed that "Whenever one of the Nine wished to initiate consultations on a certain topic, provided the other states agreed, the presidency would begin consultations with the USA before political decisions were finalized" (Beate Kohler, "Euro-American Relations and EPC", in: EPC. Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe, Bonn: 1982, p. 88).

109. Schoutheete, p. 72.

110. Wallace, p. 51.

111. Stein, p. 54.

during the juncture of two Presidencies.<sup>112</sup> That is why the Foreign Ministers in the London Report of 1981 agreed that "the Presidency will be assisted by a small team of officials seconded from preceding and succeeding Presidencies" and assigned to the staff of their embassies in the Presidency capital as a further means of alleviating its burden. The President was also given the permission to delegate certain tasks to his successor or predecessor.<sup>113</sup> The SEA of 1986 despite the establishment of a political secretariat, confirmed the dominant role of the Presidency as: the maintenance, coordination and management of EPC in foreign policy and the representation of the member states in the international arena.<sup>114</sup>

Since EPC is based on the consensus principle the Presidency is obliged to hear all its partners before it announces an official declaration, prepares proposals for resolutions and reports, addresses itself in the name of the Twelve at international conferences and organizations, or gives answers to the questions of European Parliamentarians.<sup>115</sup> He has to establish, at the end of his term, a summary of declarations and documents adopted during the six-months which all together constitute the records of

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112. Greilsammer, p. 58.

113. Stein, pp. 54-55.

114. Greilsammer, p. 59.

115. Elfriede Regelsberger, "From Ten to Twelve- A New Dimension for European Political Cooperation (EPC)", in: The International Spectator, July-Dec. 1985, Vol: 10, No: 3/4, p. 43.

political cooperation. As well as this he fixes the dates and agendas of the meetings. He has the right and duty to initiate discussions. Another task of the Presidency is the preparation of the records of all meetings at whatever level. He is also responsible for political cooperation among the diplomatic representations of the Twelve abroad.<sup>116</sup>

The functioning of EPC thus depends on the ability of the respective Presidency to run all these mechanisms. The negotiation process going on at different levels of political cooperation; working group levels, political committee or ministerial meetings is not a "zero-sum game". The member-states have to arrive at a common position, a declaration or a collective action.<sup>117</sup> Here the Presidency plays a fundamental role, depending on his personality and dynamism, in reaching a sort of conciliation while overcoming differences of approach, rivalries, conflicts of interest, priorities of domestic politics, of each member state.<sup>118</sup> Besides the personal qualities of the Presidency, such as judgement, tact, ability and personal knowledge, the domestic political situation of that country which holds the Presidency is a significant factor.<sup>119</sup> If a government crisis or similar political hitch coincides

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116. Schoutheete, pp. 76-78.

117. ibid., p. 78.

118. ibid., p. 79.

119. ibid., p. 79.

with the period of the presidency, this causes negative impacts and diverging results on the efficiency of EPC procedures. These can be considered as the weak points of the system.

In the area of political cooperation the presidency exercises an unshared power in terms of management, initiative, execution, external representation, and search for compromise. Thus the effectiveness of political cooperation depended to a large extent on that of the presidency. Each step in the development of political cooperation has been marked by an increase in the presidency's authority. With regard to its powers and responsibilities, the presidency has a certain element of originality. The guiding role of the presidency makes it easier to take decisions by reconciling different positions of the Twelve within an intergovernmental process.

## **2. The Secretariat**

The Single European Act of 1986 modified the structures of political cooperation and provided an institutional instrument in the form of a secretariat.<sup>120</sup>

According to the functions -whether political or organizational- undertaken by the secretariat, its structure can be called "strong" or "light". The SEA established a

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120. Research Group on European Affairs, European Deficits, European Perspectives: Taking Stock for Tomorrow, Bertelsmann Foundation Publ., Gütersloh: 1989, p.133

light secretariat since its role is restricted to  
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organizational tasks.

The presidency system has been encountering with some sort of administrative constraints. First of all, a member state has to wait for six years to reassume the Presidency. Secondly, the same member state, after waiting for six years, can hold the office only for six months. Thirdly, while procedures are developing, national officials are  
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constantly changing. In order to overcome these problems

a specialized permanent body was created which is held responsible for providing a back-up for the day-to-day problems of political cooperation, and which is in a way helping the presidency to compose its thoughts and to store a "body of knowledge" that was in danger of dying with the  
123  
"troika" Among the functions of the Secretariat are:

- a. assisting the Presidency in the organization of political cooperation meetings, including the preparation and circulation of documents and the drawing up of minutes;
- b. working with the European Correspondents group;
- c. assisting the chairman of the working groups;

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121. The British and the Italians were supporting a "light" secretariat where as the French proposed a "strong" one which deals with political issues.

122. P.S. da Costa Pereira, "The Use of a Secretariat," in: European Political Cooperation in the 1980s A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe?, ed. A: Pijpers, E. Regelsberger, and W. Wessels, (Dordrecht: 1988), pp. 93-94.

123. ibid., p. 94.



- d. assisting the Presidency in the preparation of texts to be published on behalf of the member states, including replies to parliamentary questions;
- e. maintaining the European Political Cooperation archives;
- f. preserving the rules according to which political cooperation operates;
- g. assisting the Presidency in its contacts with third countries;
- h. organizing on its premises all working party meetings and, if necessary, meetings of the Ministers and the Political Committee.

The member states appoint the "secretariat head" for a three-year term of office. Coordinating the secretariat's activities and establishing high-level contacts with external bodies, particularly with the Political Directors, are among his responsibilities.<sup>124</sup> There are also "five civil servants" who are diplomats in their national bureaucracies and enjoy the status of the member states' diplomatic delegations to which they belong administratively.<sup>125</sup> They are appointed by their governments for terms of two -and- a-half years according to an "extended troika formula, and exercise their functions under the auspices of the state<sup>126</sup>

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 124. ibid., p. 93.  
 125. ibid., p. 87.  
 126. ibid., p. 87.

holding the presidency of the Community.<sup>127</sup> The Secretaria  
does not have its own budget; some of its expenses are met  
from the Community budget, while other costs are born by  
national administrations and by political cooperation (i.e.  
the presidency). If we take into consideration the different  
levels of wealth among the member states we can conclude  
that the secretariat remains entirely dependent on the  
Presidency.<sup>128</sup> In addition to that it does not have its own  
diplomatic network to supply high-quality information, for  
this it has to rely on the respective national diplomatic  
services and the press.<sup>129</sup> It lacks a free circulation of  
information within the secretariat which otherwise create  
its own esprit de corps. The secretariat was created to  
assist the successive Presidencies in exercising their  
responsibilities. It also serves as an advisor to the  
Presidency on its actions in general. Moreover, the  
secretariat may influence decision-making by organizing  
archives, presenting past experience in one way or another,  
providing an element of continuity in foreign policy action  
and serving as a catalyst or initiator of decisions or by  
setting up obstacles to decisions.<sup>130</sup>

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127. Greilsammer, p. 58.

128. Costa Pereira, p. 86.

129. *ibid.*, p. 88.

130. Greilsammer, p. 58.

The Secretariat is the only institutional setting of EPC. The presence of a limited but permanent staff specialized in questions of political cooperation is worth to consider.<sup>131</sup> Its creation is based on pragmatic reasons. It is at the service of the presidency and has no autonomy. It deals mainly with the issues which are perceived as less important by the Presidency. Yet the secretariat may develop gradually now that the SEA has established a deeper coordination between EPC and the Community. The secretariat is located in Brussels in the same building as the Council of the EC. In spite of a greater geographical distance between the secretariat and the Foreign Ministry holding the presidency, its proximity to the Community institutions may contribute to the declared aim of the "cohesion" of EPC and EC (Art 30 (5) SEA).<sup>132</sup> Due to its ideal situation in relation to the Community institutions in terms of distance, it promises to play a greater role in furthering European Union where the policies of EPC and the Community must be in coordination. At least it possess this potential.<sup>133</sup>

### 3. The Coreu (Correspondance Europeanne)

One of the aims of EPC was to link directly Foreign Ministers and their Ministries throughout European capitals.<sup>134</sup> Within each Ministry of Foreign Affairs a

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131. Schoutheete, p. 82.  
132. Regelsberger, 1988, p. 33.  
133. Costa Pereira, p. 101.  
134. Regelsberger, 1988, p. 11.

"European correspondent" coordinates the EPC work under the supervision of the Political Director. These diplomats constitute a "group of European Correspondents" which takes care of the procedural and organizational matters and prepares papers for the higher-level meetings.<sup>135</sup> This group functions as an advisory body regarding the actual organization of EPC.<sup>136</sup> They also help to coordinate EPC activities at both the European and the national levels, especially between various sections of national Foreign Affairs Ministries.<sup>137</sup> These links have been gradually extended to the embassies of the member states in third countries.<sup>138</sup>

In order to facilitate continuing contacts a special coded telex system i.e. COREU (correspondance europeenne) was installed in mid-1973 between the Foreign Ministries of Member States. In this way, exchange of information began to be carried out on a quasi-permanent basis.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, the COREU telex network has linked the foreign ministries of the Member States in such a way that they do not always need to rely for their consultations on the relatively cumbersome embassy system.<sup>140</sup> This has led to a

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135. Stein., p. 53.

136. Greilsammer, p. 57.

137. Bonvicini, 1988, p. 56.

138. Regelsberger, 1988, p. 11.

139. ibid., p. 11.

140. Hill, p. 48.

"coordination reflex", whereby no country takes an important step in external relations without first discussing the matter inside the Community.<sup>141</sup> The growth rate of this telex system has risen enormously to nearly 10.000 messages a year by 1986.<sup>142</sup>

The growing demand for information and consultation among the Foreign Services varies over time but an increase in demand has placed a considerable burden on the member states which have the task of chairing EPC. It has created difficulties for the smaller countries and those lacking bureaucratic and technical resources.<sup>143</sup> Therefore the "group of European Correspondents" is normally is backed up by personnel from other divisions during the time of a presidency, in order to cope with the overload and enlarged responsibility at that time. As mentioned above, the European Correspondent, who is often a young junior official, acts as the first assistant of the Political Director. His position underlines the flexibility and peculiar character of the EPC-decision-making structure.<sup>144</sup>

Yet, till 1986, the presence of this small unit was one of the major obstacles in the establishment of a permanent secretariat, because of the fears about further bureaucratization.<sup>145</sup> However, after the establishment of

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141. *ibid.*, p. 48.

142. Regelsberger, 1988, p. 34.

143. Bonvicini, 1988, p. 53.

144. *ibid.*, p. 56.

145. *ibid.*, p. 57.

the Secretariat by the SEA in 1986, the European Correspondent began also to cooperate very closely with the secretariat, as he has been working with his Political Director.<sup>146</sup> The European Correspondent of the country holding the presidency acts as a kind of filter for the secretariat's output as well.

Needless to say, EPC has developed important instruments to reach a common line in terms of foreign policy. The secretariat and the COREU and their working methods are based on the same principle which shapes EPC, i.e. pragmatism. Yet still the most important role is played by the presidency by reconciling the different attitudes and interests of the member states. These institutions, the presidency, the secretariat and the COREU, act as flexible and pragmatic instruments to adjust EPC to political circumstances, and to the needs and goals of European integration. They contribute to the consensus - building and cooperation processes.

**B. EPC and the Institutions and Policy Measures of the Community.**

There has been always a separation of EPC from the well-established procedures of the European Community. The progress toward establishing a relationship between these two

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146. Costa Pereira, p. 95.

systems has been slow. This separation also reflects the division of competences within the foreign ministries of the member governments. The organizational division between political and economic directorates within each foreign ministry, has reinforced the distinction between the two sets of procedures: the one in Brussels, the other travelling successively around the capitals of the member-<sup>147</sup> states. Yet the same individuals, i.e. the Heads of Government in the European Council and the Foreign Ministers,<sup>148</sup> deal with both EPC and Community matters. However, different and separate staffs do the preparatory work through<sup>149</sup> different procedures. Although the Community and Political Cooperation cannot be separated logically, in institutional terms the responsibilities in the two fields remain strictly divided: Whereas EPC affairs still remain the responsibility of the Presidency's administration assisted by the newly created secretariat, the Council of the EC disposes of its own general secretariat at Brussels for all administrative matters.

Coordination between Political Cooperation and Community activities has become a necessity, since the

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147. Wallace, p. 48.

148. In the past, foreign ministers sometimes had to fly from one capital to Brussels or Luxemburg in order to emphasize the legal distinction between a meeting of the Community and a meeting of political cooperation.

149. Stein., p. 56.

declared aim of political cooperation is the same as that of Community cooperation, i.e. the political unification of Europe.<sup>150</sup> Besides, from a negotiating point of view there is interdependence between economic and foreign policy. It is difficult to consider certain policies such as energy policy, Mediterranean policy, the Euro-Arab dialogue, relations with the U.S.A., and the CSCE process, as problems where the economic aspects of policy can be rigidly separated from the foreign policy questions.<sup>151</sup>

The Community is not a non-political entity. EPC derives much of its importance from the fact that the Community is the largest trading bloc in the world. The EC has carried on external relations although foreign policy lies outside the scope of the Rome Treaty.<sup>152</sup> Its external relations cannot be defined in strictly apolitical terms since the EC's foreign economic decision-making powers are supported by the members' vital political-diplomatic-security interests abroad.<sup>153</sup> The decision to grant or withhold foreign trade contracts, tariff preferences other favourable

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150. Gianni Bonvicini, "The Dual Structure of EPC and Community Activities: Problems of Coordination", in: European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe, ed. D. Allen, R. Rummel and W. Wessels, Institut für Europäische Politik, Bonn: 1982, p. 33.

151. ibid., p. 33.

152. Anastasia Pardalis, "European Political Cooperation and the United States", in: Journal of Common Market Studies, vol: XXV, No.4 June 1987, p. 275.

153. ibid., p. 275.



trade terms, diplomatic recognition and food-humanitarian-emergency aid to third countries, entails political-diplomatic-security calculations on the part of the  
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Twelve.

### 1. The Commission

With respect to the relations of EPC with the Community, the Commission is the predominant institution. The main role of the Commission in EPC is "to act as a bridge  
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with the Community". It has to make the Community framework, but the reverse is true as well. The Community is informed through the Commission about the political framework drawn in EPC discussions.

The Commission, rather than a full participant, has always been an observer in EPC. It is expected to contribute in cases where there is advantage in combining the  
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Community's political and economic potential. Yet it has been excluded from whole areas of EPC and from certain types of activity, since up to the SEA there has been no precise rule establishing the Commission's right to  
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participate in political cooperation.

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154. *ibid.*, p. 275.

155. Simon Nuttall, "Where the European Commission Comes in", in: European Political Cooperation in the 1980s; A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe?, ed. A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger, W. Wessels, Dordrecht: 1988, p. 107.

156. Nuttall, p. 104.

157. Bonvicini, 1982, p. 39.

The opinion of the Council Presidency and of the Political Committee has been decisively important in determining the Commission's role<sup>158</sup>, as its role depends on a tacit invitation from the presidency.<sup>159</sup> Although the 1981 London Report had attached importance to the Commission as being fully associated with EPC at all levels, and the Stuttgart Declaration of 1983 confirmed it, only with the SEA did the right to participate achieve a legal basis.

From then on the Commission began to take its place in EPC meetings at all levels. The President of the Commission is a member of the European Council and a member of the Commission takes part in EPC ministerial meetings. Since the end of 1987 a Director in the Secretariat General is the representative of the Commission in the Political Committee, moreover he is responsible for all forms of intergovernmental cooperation, including EPC.<sup>160</sup> Since 1982 the Commission has been directly linked with the COREU network and thereby it receives all COREUs and can send these by itself.<sup>161</sup> The Commission is also represented by its delegations at coordination meetings of member states'

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158. *ibid.*, p. 39.

159. The CSCE case was an exception since in May 1971 the six foreign ministers decided in Paris to involve the EEC Commission in this work by establishing a special ad hoc CSCE working group within the framework of EPC including representatives from the Commission as well.

160. Nuttall, p. 106.

161. *ibid.*, p. 106.

diplomatic missions in countries outside the Community, and a higher degree of intergration has been achieved abroad than it has been possible to achieve centrally.<sup>162</sup> Besides, the presence of the Commission in the Troika is important to present an overall picture of EPC and Community policy and also to give the image of a unified political and economic Community.<sup>163</sup> The Commission is the only "permanent dialogue partner" on the European side, because of the rotation of the Presidency.<sup>164</sup>

## 2. The European Parliament

Although the European Parliament has "political" control over the Commission under the Community Treaties, it does not have such power with respect to EPC and its functions are entirely advisory in accordance with the EPC documents.<sup>165</sup> It remains a speaking platform, a sort of pressure group, but not part of the machinery in the decision-making process.<sup>166</sup> Even the SEA of 1986 did not introduce any progress in this direction. The Single Act speaks of a "close association" with the Parliament. Yet this is limited to assuring that the Parliamentarians have access to information and to expressing the desire that

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162. *ibid.*, p. 107.  
163. *ibid.*, p. 110.  
164. *ibid.*, p. 110.  
165. Stein, p. 59.  
166. Greilsammer, p. 68.

their views be taken into account.<sup>167</sup> So in a way a sort of dialogue between the Parliament and the state that holds the presidency of the EPC is assured.<sup>168</sup>

### 3. Policy Measures

Once the Ministers or the Heads of Government reach a decision at the end of a meeting, this decision may take the form of a "declaration", an EPC "démarche" with a third state, a "mandate" to the President-in-office to undertake a diplomatic mission, or an "agreement on a common position" to be taken at an international conference or in an international organization, or even a "common guidance" for nationals<sup>169</sup> (e.g. the Common Code of Conduct of 1977 for national business enterprises working in South Africa).

However, when the EC countries are forced to go beyond their policy of declaratory diplomacy, their reactions to international crisis are directly affected by their heterogeneity and their limited room of manoeuvre.<sup>170</sup>

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167. *ibid.*, p. 68.

168. Generally speaking, art. 237 and art. 238 of the EEC Treaty in its revised form of the SEA gives the EP some foreign policy authority with respect to the conclusion of treaties with third countries. And if the member states want to use such a treaty as a measure of realizing common foreign policy aims the EP could under certain circumstances become "directly" involved in EPC matters.

169. Stein, p. 61.

170. Regelsberger, 1985, p. 37.

Specific national interests among the member states like Irish neutrality, Denmark's reservations towards a "political" community, Greece's independent course in foreign policy have to be specially mentioned.<sup>171</sup> The member countries despite some limitations and shortcomings still try to answer the international challenges by a strategy of "speaking with one voice" and are in favour of international cooperation instead of confrontation.<sup>172</sup> As H.D. Genscher in his speech at the UN General Assembly on 26 September 1987 emphasized, they wish to become "a centre of cooperation in the world, founded on equality and partnership."

However, EPC lacks instruments of its own for implementing a common position, so that it has to rely on member states who hold a wide range of such means, and on the Community with its budget and commercial and economic development policies powers.<sup>173</sup> This is one of the main weaknesses of EPC. On the other hand there are varying attitudes among the member states toward the use of Community

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171. ibid., p. 37.

172. Elfriede Regelsberger, "The Dialogue of the EC/Twelve with other Groups of States", in: The International Spectator, vol: XXIII,

173. Stein, p. 64.

policies as instruments, although they are aware of the economic potential of the EC as an asset to any European foreign policy.<sup>174</sup> Since the member states in common lack one of the main instruments of foreign policy, i.e. a unified armed force, they rely on financial incentives, tariff advantages, commercial rewards, or on negative economic sanctions and punishments.<sup>175</sup> However, imposition of economic sanctions against a third state creates problems of interaction between the EPC, the Community and the Member States.

As a matter of fact, the Rome Treaty of 1957 does not explicitly bind members to a common foreign policy, in other words, it does not mention politics. Nevertheless, the preamble states that members "are determined to lay the foundation of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe" which suggests the prospect of a "political union".<sup>176</sup>

Another point is that EEC Treaty Art. 224 says that the member states may act individually in the event of "serious international tension constituting threat of war", or in order to carry out obligations for maintaining peace and international security; furthermore, it foresees

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174. Pardalis, p. 280.

175. Greilsammer, p. 70.

176. Pardalis, p. 275.

consultations if sanctions are likely to affect the functioning of Common Market.<sup>177</sup> Nevertheless, Greilsammer argues that the Community has not developed a systemic mechanism with respect to economic "rewards" for the states that apply the principles proclaimed in EPC. For instance, although countries like Greece, Spain and Portugal were rewarded by acceptance in the EC for abandoning dictatorship, other Third World countries were also granted commercial advantages without considering whether there were democratic processes or respect for human rights or international law in those countries.<sup>178</sup> Thus there exists the problem of ineffectiveness of sanctions and aids because of the mildness of the sanctions and because of the lack of concerted action by those who impose them. So another shortcoming of EPC is that the mechanism of sanctions does not rest upon any legal basis but on group expectations of mutuality.

Recently the SEA of 1986 emphasizes the "coherence" between external policies at the economic level and foreign policy. Art. 30 paragraph 5 says that "the external policies of the European Community and the policies agreed in EPC must be consistent". The provisions of the Single Act reflect the reality of an ever growing interdependence of these two issues. In this way, issues of both "high" and "low" politics are brought together to improve Europe's

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177. Stein, p. 65.

178. Greilsammer, pp. 70-71.

international profile. Yet the ability of the Twelve to transform their willingness into policy proposals and concrete actions by "speaking with one voice" depends on finding a common denominator, as well as on an increased mutual interest and better knowledge of the activities of the various actors. While offers in terms of trade concessions and financial aid cause tensions among the member states, measures of diplomatic support and consultations are less connected.<sup>179</sup>

The EC itself is such an open forum that states find themselves compelled to view policy-making on Treaty related issues in a narrow national perspective. Within EPC there is more confidentiality and more room for discreet compromise but EPC has been handicapped by the principle of consensus.<sup>180</sup> Moreover, in the case of EPC the tools available at a distinctively "European" level of implementation are limited. It seems that the ability of Europeans to agree on declarations and general policy stances<sup>181</sup> is in itself a form of implementation. However, their adherence to a common European stance at the declaratory level and their pursuit of more material national interests

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179. Regelsberger, (The Dialogue of the EC/Twelve with other Groups of states) p. 257.

180. D. Allen and M. Smith, "Europe, the United States and the Middle East: a Case Study in Comparative Policy Making", in: Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. XXII, No.2, Dec 1983, p. 136.

181. ibid., p. 143.



may show disparities. That is why translating declarations into economic commitments is a major achievement on the part of the Community. The first success in terms of joint declarations and joint positions was the case of the European Conference on Cooperation and Security (CSCE) in which the Nine formulated a common strategy and took the initiative for the CSCE. They came together in one of the very important areas of foreign policy. The signing of the Final Act (1975) must be considered actual recognition of the Community by the East as well. The Nine were perceived by the smaller countries, seeking to counterbalance the hegemony of the superpowers, as an attractive partner.<sup>183</sup>

Another very important declaration was the Venice Declaration of 1980 which recognized the principles of "Palestinian self determination" and "a negotiating role for the PLO" and of Israel's right to a secure existence.<sup>184</sup> This declaration is prominent among the public results of EPC and it reflects the determination of Europe to continue its efforts to find a way to peace since the stability and prosperity of the future of Western Europe is closely bound with that of the Middle East.<sup>185</sup>

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182. ibid., p. 139.

183. Stein, p. 65.

184. R. Tomkys, "EPC and the Middle East: a Personal Perspective", in: International Affairs, Vol. 63, no: 3, 1987, p. 430.

185. ibid., p. 436.

The UN has also become an important area for EPC. "Speaking with one voice" on world politics in the UN is demonstrated either by unitary voting behaviour or through joint contributions to debates or by a bloc-veto declaration; and not least by the regular appearance of the foreign minister of the country holding the presidency as a "speaker" for the Twelve in the general debate of the session of the General Assembly each autumn.<sup>186</sup> Yet on certain proposed resolutions that are particularly crucial, the Twelve remain divided,<sup>187</sup> Differences occur mainly on the subjects of decolonization, disarmament, the Middle East, apartheid, the new international economic order.....etc. Yet since 1977 none of the members has voted in favour of a resolution criticizing the actions of another member state.<sup>188</sup> Despite their divergences, they have proved to be a "coherent and effective group".

In achieving foreign policy objectives the Commission plays a special role since EPC is in need of Community instruments in the form of sanctions or aid. If we take a brief look at the issue of economic sanctions we see that the Community countries as members of the UN, imposed sanctions for the first time against the illegal regime in

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186. B.Lindemann, "EPC at the UN: A Challenge For The Nine," in: EPC: Towards a Foreign Policy For Western Europe, ed. D. Allen, R. Rummel and W. Wessels, Institut für Europäische Politik, Bonn: 1982, p. 110.
187. Greilsammer, p. 65.
188. *ibid.*, p. 65.

Rhodesia. Due to the pressure from Washington they had also taken punitive steps on trade terms towards Iran after the seizure of American hostages. This example can be considered as the first serious test.<sup>190</sup> Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan restrictions on trade were introduced against the S.U., but they were limited.<sup>191</sup> Further measures were introduced against the S.U. by the Community of the time of the imposition of martial law in Poland.<sup>192</sup>

The Falklands crisis was as a matter of fact a fundamental development, since for the first time economic sanctions were implemented by the Community following a decision made within the framework of EPC. Therefore Argentina's invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982 marked the first real example of collective European sanctions. Moreover, sanctions were introduced without any pressure from a non-member state and they marked a joint determination to act in support of military action being taken by one of the member states.<sup>193</sup>

Unfortunately international terrorism, which significantly affected Europe in the 1980s, did not evoke

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189. Stein, p. 65.

190. Greilsammer, p. 71.

191. ibid., p. 72.

192. Nuttall, p. 112.

193. G. Edwards, "Europe and the Falkland Island Crisis 1982, in: Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. XXII, No. 4, June 1984, p. 313.

real economic "reprisals" against Libya, Iran and Syria, which were considered to give support to terrorist activities.<sup>194</sup> Even in the case of South Africa sanctions were insignificant and did not touch on the areas that could have affected the Pretoria regime. Britain was opposed to such sanctions and many others who were also reluctant took shelter behind her.<sup>195</sup>

On the other hand, a special credit was provided from the Community budget to the Portuguese government in addition to the economic negotiations with Portugal upon her transition to pluralistic democracy in 1975. And economic assistance to Indochina refugees in 1979 and the supply of critical agricultural commodities at favorable prices to Poland in 1980 were other examples of the Community's use of aid in pursuit of foreign policy goals.<sup>196</sup> We can conclude that on several occasions the Community's economic policy has been an active support for initiatives in the field of political cooperation.

The Commission therefore fills the gap by searching out opportunities and finding ways and means of implementing what member states in EPC try to achieve.<sup>197</sup> The Community

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194. Greilsammer, p. 72.

195. *ibid.*, p. 72.

196. Stein, p. 64.

197. Nuttall, p. 115.

The Community considers EPC as an instrument to develop and maintain an independent European position.<sup>198</sup> However, the Twelve are unwilling to establish standing rules for commitments or sanctions made for international political reasons by common consent, since they believe that there is no need to put the budget, trading and agricultural practices of the EC to trouble for an unrelated purpose. That may explain to a certain degree why sanctions have<sup>199</sup> been minimal and largely informal.

Lastly, we can draw attention to the "moral weight" that the member states try to place in their joint declarations. It seems that the Europeans encourage the democratization of authoritarian regimes, the installation of pluralistic democracies, respect for human rights, and the condemnation of violations of international law.<sup>200</sup> Both in terms of harmonization of their positions and of their declaratory diplomacy in international fora, or even in terms of common actions, they attempt to create a sort of "moral force".

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198. Pardalis, p. 281.

199. ibid., p. 280.

200. Greilsammer, pp. 64-65.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

##### EPC and European Political Integration

Since the 1970s the member states of the European Communities have been trying to link their foreign policy machinery, through creating some habits and methods of problem-solving which have been taken up by other government circles as well.<sup>201</sup> In spite of their different attitudes, EPC has become an important element in the European integration process. EPC has passed through a sort of evolution during the last twenty years but it does not represent a qualitative leap forward towards closer integration. It can rather be considered as a sui generis device for co-ordinating and decision-making in foreign policy outside EC competencies.

The decisions taken within the EPC process are not legally binding since it is not a treaty-bound body. Though some achievements cannot be denied, there exist also important limitations. One of them is that Political Cooperation is an exercise in "cooperation" and "coordination", but not a common foreign policy. The traditional instruments of foreign policy remain in the hands

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201. A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger and W. Wessels, "A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe?" in: European Political Cooperation in the 1980s: A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe? ed. A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger and W. Wessels, Dordrecht: 1988, p. 269.

of the member states, as well as the right to make decisions  
on foreign policy questions.<sup>202</sup> A truly common foreign  
policy would consist of several instruments of diplomacy,  
such as political, military, economic and cultural, besides  
common financing and a decision-making centre. The most far  
reaching obligations, however, undertaken by member states  
in EPC are advance consultation with partners before  
decisions are made and the commitment to the objective of  
achieving a common position if possible.<sup>203</sup> That is why the  
field of political cooperation is perceived as "foreign  
diplomacy" rather than a "foreign policy".<sup>204</sup>

It is functioning as a negotiating forum and  
coordinating European diplomatic activities. It is rather a  
flexible and pragmatic approach where each member state  
continues to express its own view regarding international  
politics, after consultations with other members. But this  
characteristic of EPC is worth considering as an achievement  
in an interdependent world where the role of the nation state  
is questioned. As a matter of fact, EPC is considered as a

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202. Douglas Hurd, "Political Cooperation", in:  
International Affairs, vol. 57, Summer 1981, No: 3,  
p. 386.

203. Ibid., p. 386.

204. J. Weiler and W. Wessels, "EPC and the Challenge of  
Theory", in: European Political Cooperation in the  
1980s: A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe? ed.  
A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger and W. Wessels,  
Dordrecht: 1988, p. 235.

European contribution to the search for new diplomatic techniques in an international arena where group diplomacy plays a growing role. EPC has contributed to the improvement of member governments' room for manoeuvre and to an increase in their influence on international developments by providing them with a detailed knowledge of their partners' viewpoints. Thus it widens its members' perspectives and facilitates the decision-making process, since the behaviour of the partners become more transparent and more predictable.

That is why some scholars and statesmen consider the so-called "coordination reflex" developed among the foreign ministries of the member states and their diplomats as one of the utmost successes of EPC. Philippe de Schoutheete is one of them who argues that:

"The EPC brings a new element by systematically multiplying the direct contacts among the different levels, administrative and political, those responsible for decisions in each of the member states. This way, it introduces a new European dimension in a process which previously was exclusively based on national considerations."<sup>205</sup>

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205. P. de Schoutheete, La Cooperation Politique Europeenne, Brussels: 1980, p. 118, quoted in Ifestos, p. 83. (translation by Ifestos).



Furthermore, thanks to the system of the rotating presidency, EPC offers the possibility of a higher profile to a member with respect to its national and international role. It can also be used as a shield against pressure from third countries.<sup>206</sup> Particularly, the "smaller" ones in the Community benefit from the EPC "club" offering much more information on international developments than a government would be able to gather alone. In times of crisis EPC is given a high priority by all members, whereas in times of normal foreign policy business participants find it difficult to make a choice between collective diplomacy and national independence. Yet successful EPC activity has been limited to relatively minor issues, with the exception of its role in the CSCE process, since the Twelve are not able to reach consensus on a range of important issues, overcoming their policy divergences. It has served as an alibi for inaction of individual countries when asked to get involved, a collective shelter against the call for a more active foreign policy. Thereby the EPC coalition protects national sovereignties.<sup>207</sup>

One point should always be born in mind: namely, that Europe may never achieve progress on the way to political integration if member states put short-term national

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206. E. Regelsberger, "Spain and the European Political Cooperation-No Enfant Terrible", in: The International Spectator, Vol. XXIV, No:2, April-June 1989, p. 120.

207. Weiler and Wessels, p. 253.

interests above common values and goals. As long as participants look for immediate profits the whole system may suffer from immobility. In addition to the questions on which the Twelve do not agree, there are some problem areas which are not even discussed. That is why Political Cooperation is far from being "comprehensive". EPC refrains from interfering both in conflicts between member states e.g. Northern Ireland and in sensitive and vital areas such as defence.

Certainly a foreign policy that has no security dimension is incomplete and unsatisfactory. <sup>208</sup> Because of the reservations of some EPC members -Ireland, Denmark and Greece- to make progress towards a coherent concept of a European security policy, the potential of EPC seems to be rather limited for the future. Although the "civilian power" Europe seems to be an attractive partner for cooperation since it offers equal partnership in a regional grouping, the "heaviness" of the decision-making process in a system with a dozen actors based on the consensus principle can not be overlooked. Nevertheless, no government seems willing to change the current decision making process by introducing the majority voting principle which was proposed in the Tindemans Report.

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208. A. Cahen, "Consequences of the EC Enlargements for Political Cooperation, in: The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations, Baltimore, Vol. 10, No:3, Sept. 1988, p. 6.

From all this it can be concluded that the record for EPC with respect to political integration is rather mixed. Despite the successes in terms of "communaute d' information" (i.e. the exchange of information and views) and "communaute de vues" (i.e. the agreement on common viewpoints), EPC has failed mainly, in terms of "communaute d'action" (i.e. decisions and the implementation of concrete policies.) EPC has remained rather declaratory for the time being. However, member states have gained "the habit of working together" through political cooperation, and even a certain degree of "unity", in addition to increased intergovernmental political cooperation and coordination within the European framework. Yet European Union is still a goal to be achieved.

As a matter of fact, the non-binding character of EPC in legal terms, and its nature based on the consensus of all members and of the *acquis* (i.e. the formulation of basic principles and general guide-lines), leaving room for different interpretations, make participation attractive even if a country prefers to follow an autonomous course in foreign policy. <sup>209</sup> As a result, it can be argued that EPC is assumed to contribute positively to the creation of preconditions for "European political integration". Therefore EPC has still a promising future as a major

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209. Regelsberger, "From Ten to Twelve: A New Dimension for EPC", p. 44.

pillar of a United Europe. It represents a strategy for initiating and developing common endeavours in the area of foreign policy,<sup>210</sup> but not a process which will bring European political integration by itself.

That is why in dealing with characteristics of EPC the explanatory value of various integration theories are limited. Although it is accepted as a positive input in to European integration, it does not fit in traditional formulas of integration theory. "It is less than<sup>211</sup> supranational, but more than intergovernmental". The objective of EPC is not simply to abolish gradually the member states and establish ultimately a supranational authority in Europe. On the contrary, its aim is to maximize inter-state cooperation and search for common-denominator solutions to the common problems facing Europe.<sup>212</sup> It may not be fully institutionally linked with the European Community, but its establishment and development is surely related to the European integration process. In particular, the parallel membership of the states in EPC and the EEC, where they are tied with multiple cultural, economic and social ties, and the linking of EPC and Community politics, have an outstanding impact, bearing in mind the characterization of EPC as intergovernmental

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210. Cahen, p. 17.

211. Ifestos, p. 211.

212. ibid., p. 208.

not only wrong but inadequate.

Collective foreign-policy making at the European level, contrary to neo-functional theory, does not imply an automatic transfer of competencies from the national to the Community level. It may be better defined as a "pooling" and "mixing" of national sovereignty with the powers assigned to

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EC. According to the traditional federalist arguments, different levels of government should be responsible for the matters under their own jurisdiction and should be separate in their spheres of activity. However, in EPC mechanism national and Community levels of authority share the responsibility for problem solving. Each of them supplement the other in terms of instruments and legal competence in dealing with problems. As a consequence, governments and their bureaucracies are now involved in a permanent process  
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of transnational negotiations.

The member states neither involve a loss of national sovereignty nor limit themselves to their traditional national diplomacy. In a world of global interdependence a sort of collective problem-solving seems to be preferable as a strategy in preserving national interests than are

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213. Wessels, p. 15.

214. S. Bulmer and W. Wessels, The European Council, Decision-Making in European Politics, Houndmills and London 1987, p. 10.

215. R. Pryce and W. Wessels, p. 13.

individual attempts. But at the same time, this collective approach means "give and take" by limiting the autonomy in foreign policy which is highly esteemed in the traditional perceptions of the sovereign nation states in Western Europe.<sup>216</sup> Therefore EPC helps to promote "community-building" in Western Europe, while there is a general trend towards a "regionalization" of international politics in today's world. It has enlarged the ways of solving problems in addition to both Community and national procedures, but has not become a substitute for managing either Community or national affairs.<sup>217</sup>

It can be argued that member states definitely refrain from making a choice between intergovernmental cooperation and supranational integration, but pursue them in parallel, trying to tie the stronger elements of both methods together.<sup>218</sup> Thus the reality of EPC could be an additional incentive to revise theories of integration and to seek new approaches, since EPC is an independent but not isolated European phenomenon.<sup>219</sup>

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216. Regelsberger, (The Dialogue of the EC/twelve with other Groups of states) p. 256.  
217. Pijpers, Regelsberger and Wessels, p. 269.  
218. ibid., p. 269.  
219. Wessels, p. 16.

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