

# **Western European Armaments Group**



## **Rome Declaration**

**MEETING OF THE WEAG DEFENCE MINISTERS**

**ROME, 16 MAY 2002**

## **WEAG ROME DECLARATION**

1. The Defence Ministers of the nineteen member nations of the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), the European forum for armaments cooperation, met in Rome on 16 May 2002.
2. They reviewed the evolving situation in the field of armaments and the specific armaments cooperation activities carried out under WEAG. Their discussion focused in particular on the future of WEAG and WEAO (Western European Armaments Organisation), a policy on future ministerial meetings, and the signature of several WEAG/WEAO documents related to cooperative defence research and technology.
3. Concerning the future of WEAG and WEAO, Defence Ministers at their meeting in Marseille on November 2000 provided guidance for the continuation of work towards a final report to be presented at this meeting. As a consequence, further studies have been undertaken with special regard to the political and institutional developments in Europe and possible options for European armaments structures have been identified, taking into account the developments in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the EU Headline Goal and the NATO Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI).  
Defence Ministers noted with satisfaction the report presented by the National Armaments Directors on "Options for European Armaments Structures".  
In particular, they:
  - agreed that WEAG, as the widest forum of European nations, could make a valuable contribution in maximising convergence on the important issue of armaments cooperation;
  - noted with interest the aims and possible functions of European armaments cooperation along the lines set out in the above-mentioned report;
  - recognised that developments in the ESDP, the EU Headline Goal and the NATO DCI or its follow-on provide a window of opportunity to utilise WEAG's competence in the field of European armaments cooperation.
4. In the above framework, Ministers concluded that WEAG is to be maintained as a forum for political consultations in the field of armaments in Europe and for the promotion of cooperation among member nations.  
They also agreed that WEAG/WEAO should play a more proactive role in European armaments cooperation taking into account the developments in the ESDP, the EU Headline Goal and the NATO DCI or its follow-on, and accordingly decided to re-examine the scope of the internal structure's work.  
Furthermore Defence Ministers agreed to examine the assignment of additional functions to WEAO, to be determined after appropriate study based on the work already completed in the development of the Masterplan.  
As far as a European Armaments Agency was concerned, Ministers endorsed the concept of an evolutionary process, envisaging its establishment as soon as all appropriate conditions are met and political consensus is reached, and agreed that any outstanding work should continue under the direction of NADs.

5. Considering that the WEU Council at ministerial level will no longer meet on a regular basis, Defence Ministers approved a policy proposal on WEAG Defence Ministers' meetings, which defines the modalities and frequency of their meetings.
6. Defence Ministers approved a report from the Board of Directors of the Western European Armaments Organisation covering the activities from November 2000 to the present. They expressed their satisfaction concerning the achievements of WEAO in reaching the value of 500 millions euros for a total of 120 approved active research and technology projects, of which 35 projects represent commitments by the participating nations and 25 EUCLID/SOCRATE contracts which have since been signed.  
Pursuant to the decision of the WEU Council to open up participation in WEAO to new WEAG member states, the Defence Ministers confirmed their intention to make that participation effective through the signature of amendments to the WEAO Memorandum of Understanding.
7. Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Poland and Sweden expressed their interest in being admitted as new Participants in WEAO. Through the signature of Amendment 1 to the WEAO MOU, Defence Ministers welcomed the admission of the Czech Republic, Finland, Poland and Sweden to WEAO, thus bringing the Participants to 17 nations.
8. The signature process for the following documents related to defence research and technology has commenced and is to be concluded at the earliest opportunity by all Defence Ministers:
  - Amendment 1 to the WEAO MOU, which allows the admission of the Czech Republic, Finland, Poland and Sweden as new Participants in WEAO.
  - Amendment 1 to the EUROPA MOU, which allows Poland to become a Participant in the EUROPA MOU.
  - Amendment 2 to the Test Facilities MOU, in order to admit the Czech Republic and Poland as Participants in the MOU and to improve the provisions of the MOU.
  - Amendment 4 to the SOCRATE MOU, which allows all WEAG Nations to participate in WEAG R&T cooperation projects through the SOCRATE MOU.