

# WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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Original: English

C (59) 127

29th September 1959

## SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

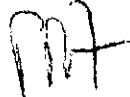
### European Universities Committee

As the Council were informed in document C(59)88, the Second Conference of European University Rectors and Vice-Chancellors, which was held in Dijon on 9th/15th September 1959, were asked to make recommendations concerning the future of the Conference and of the European Universities Committee.

After discussion of this matter, the Conference adopted by a large majority the report of their own Working Party which is attached herewith.

The recommendations contained in the report are now submitted for consideration by the Council, who are requested:

- (a) to take note of the report and transmit it to the Cultural Committee;
- (b) to maintain the European Universities Committee in existence until the new Committee envisaged in the report can be constituted.

  
9 Grosvenor Place,  
London, S.W.1.

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RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN  
UNIVERSITIES COMMITTEE AND THE CONFERENCE OF  
EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY RECTORS AND VICE-CHANCELLORS,  
MADE TO THE CONFERENCE IN DIJON ON 12TH SEPTEMBER  
1959, BY THE WORKING PARTY APPOINTED BY THE CONFERENCE

Membership of the Working Party

Dr. R. AITKEN, (Chairman)	Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham
Prof. E.J. BIGWOOD	University of Brussels (President of the European Universities Committee)
Prof. C. CERETI	Rector of the University of Genoa
Prof. H. COING	University of Frankfurt am Main
M. A. LOYEN	Rector of the University of Poitiers
Dr. H.J. REININK	Director-General of Arts and Internat- ional Cultural Relations, Netherlands Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences (Vice-President of the European Universities Committee)
Prof. E. WAALER	Rector of the University of Bergen

Introduction

The Working Party has considered the future of the Conference of European University Rectors and Vice-Chancellors and of the European Universities Committee, in the light of the report made to the present Conference by the Committee under Professor Bigwood's chairmanship, and the discussion which ensued at the session of the Conference on 10th September.

I. CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY RECTORS AND VICE-CHANCELLORS

The Working Party regards it as essential that in any future organisation the universities and their representatives should have full freedom to initiate and conduct discussion of any matter of concern to European universities, to publish information or express or publish conclusions, and to consult directly with universities and other bodies without political control.

It therefore recommends that the Second Conference of European University Rectors and Vice-Chancellors, meeting in Dijon, should set up a "Standing Conference of European University Rectors and Vice-Chancellors" which shall meet at least once every 5 years in a university city in one of the member countries of the Conference.

The "Standing Conference" shall review all university matters for the purpose of:

- (1) advising European universities on all questions of common interest;
- (2) holding itself available for consultation by Governments on university matters;
- (3) making recommendations to national, international and supranational organisations and institutions on university matters.

The Conference should maintain all necessary contacts with national, international and supranational university bodies.

## II. COMMITTEE

At the same time, the Working Party regards it as advantageous that in future a close association of universities and government representatives should be maintained, in order that universities may become more fully acquainted with the problems of governments and in order that governments may become more fully acquainted with the views and experience of universities and therefore more ready to consult them.

The Working Party therefore recommends:

1. that the work of the present European Universities Committee should be continued by an advisory Committee on university questions;
2. that the Committee should have the following functions:
  - (a) to be a source of advice to European governments and inter-governmental organisations on matters of education and research coming within the university field and concerning Europe in general;
  - (b) to facilitate consultation and collaboration among the universities of Europe;
  - (c) at its discretion to collect information and publish documents bearing on European university problems;
3. that the Committee should be constituted by up to three members nominated by each country; that not more than one of these members may be an official or other nominee of the government of the country; that other members should be rectors, vice-chancellors or professors nominated by the appropriate university body in the country;

4. that the Committee should normally meet once a year in a European university city of their choice;
5. that provision should be made in the procedural rules of the Committee for meetings of its academic members alone when such meetings are considered desirable by the academic members. When meeting separately the academic members would constitute a direct organ of the "Standing Conference", would act on its behalf, and in particular would be responsible for the organisation of the five-yearly Conferences;

similarly, provision should be made for the governmental members of the Committee to meet separately if necessary;

6. that the Committee should elect its Chairman, who must be an academic person but may be either one of the nominated members of the Committee or an academic person invited from outside the Committee to accept the chairmanship;
7. that the Secretary of the Committee should be appointed on the recommendation of the Committee;
8. that the Committee might appoint a Bureau of not more than nine members, widely drawn from different countries, to which it will delegate sufficient powers to ensure the prompt and efficient conduct of its business during intervals between meetings. Like the full Committee, the Bureau should meet in any European university city of its choice.

#### Final Recommendation

If, as is understood, the Council of Europe are considering setting up an official advisory body on university matters, it is very desirable that the Committee here proposed should fill this rôle. The Committee, in this case, should have equal status with the Committee of Cultural Experts of the Council of Europe; and should be recognised by the Committee of Ministers, as is the present European Universities Committee, as the independent expert body to be consulted on all questions concerning the universities of member countries.

It is recommended that until the new Committee is constituted, which it is hoped may be by 1st January 1960, Western European Union should be requested to maintain the present Committee in existence; and that, in the interim, the necessary negotiations with the Council of Europe should be carried out in co-operation with the Secretary-General of Western European Union by the present Bureau of the European Universities Committee, including a representative of Turkey or Greece.