

CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

EXEMPLAIRE
COPY

N. 157

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH
13th September, 1960

NATO RESTRICTED
DOCUMENT
AC/89-D/32

SUB-COMMITTEE ON SOVIET ECONOMIC POLICY

COMECON CHARTER

Note by the Economic Service

Attached for the information of the Sub-Committee is an unofficial translation of the charter of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON). The Charter was signed in Sofia in December, 1959 by representatives of member governments of the Council (Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Rumania and the USSR). The Charter took effect on April 13th, 1960, after it had been formally ratified by the member governments. The document was first published in Izvestia (Sofia) on February 23rd, 1960. It appeared in English in the August, 1960 issue of "East Europe". A French text will be circulated as soon as it has been obtained.

(Signed) R. E. LÜKE

OTAN/NATO,
Paris, XVIIe.

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THE COMECON CHARTERARTICLE IAims and Principles

1. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance aims to assist, through the unification and co-ordination of the efforts of the member countries of the Council, in the planned development of the national economies, in the speeding up of economic and technical progress in these countries, in raising the level of industrialisation of the countries with less developed industry, in the constant increase of labour productivity, and in furthering the welfare of the member peoples of CEMA.

2. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is based on the principle of sovereign equality of all member countries of CEMA.

The economic and scientific technical co-operation of the member countries of CEMA is based on the principles of equal rights, respect for national interests, mutual advantage and comradely mutual aid.

ARTICLE IIMembership

1. The original members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance are the countries which have signed and ratified this Charter.

2. Admission to membership in CEMA is open to other European countries which share the aims and principles of the Council and agree to accept its Charter obligations.

3. Any member country may leave the Council after informing the custodian of this Charter (the USSR). Such notice will take effect six months after being received by the custodian. Upon receiving such notice, the custodian will inform the member countries of the Council.

4. The member countries of CEMA agree:

(a) to carry out the recommendations adopted by them;

- (b) to render to the Council and its employees the necessary assistance in fulfilling the functions set forth in this Charter;
- (c) to make available to the Council all material and information necessary for the realisation of the tasks entrusted to CEMA;
- (d) to inform the Council as to the fulfillment of the recommendations adopted by the Council.

ARTICLE III

Functions and rights

1. In conformity with the aims and principles set forth in Article I of this Charter, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance:

(a) organizes:

thorough economic and scientific technical co-operation among the member countries of the Council for the most rational utilisation of their natural resources and for the speeding up of their economic development;

preparation of recommendations on the most important questions of economic relations resulting from the plans for developing the national economies of the member countries of the Council, with a view to co-ordinating these plans;

the study of economic problems which are of concern to the member countries of the Council;

(b) assists the member countries of the Council in developing and implementing joint projects in the field of:

industry and agriculture of the member countries of the Council, on the basis of a consistent realisation of the international Socialist division of labour and the specialisation and co-operation of production;

transportation, for insuring, first of all, the growing transportation of export-import and transit freight of the member countries of the Council;

the most efficient utilisation of capital investment made by the member countries of the Council in projects to be carried out on the basis of joint participation;

the development of international trade and exchange of experience among the member countries of the Council and with other countries;

the exchange of scientific technical achievements and of advanced production experience;

(c) undertakes other actions necessary for the achievement of the aims of the Council.

2. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, through its organs acting within the bounds of their competence, is authorised to accept recommendations and decisions according to this Charter.

ARTICLE IV

Recommendations and Decisions

1. Recommendations are adopted on questions of economic and scientific technical co-operation. The recommendations are reported for study to the member countries of the Council.

The implementation of recommendations adopted by the member countries of the Council is carried out according to the decisions of the Governments or the competent organs of those countries in accordance with their laws.

2. Decisions are adopted on organizational and procedural questions. The decisions take effect, if nothing to the contrary is provided in them, from the day the protocol of the session of the corresponding organ of the Council is signed.

3. All recommendations and decisions in the Council are adopted only with the consent of the member countries concerned, and each country is entitled to state its position on any question studied in the Council.

The recommendations and decisions do not concern countries which have abstained on a question. However, each of these countries may subsequently join the other member countries of the Council which have adopted the recommendations and decisions.

ARTICLE V

Organs

1. To realise the functions and rights described in Article III of this Charter, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance has the following organs:

Session of the Council;

Conference of Representatives of the Countries
in the Council;

Permanent Commissions;

Secretariat.

2. Other organs, as they prove necessary, may be established according to the Charter.

ARTICLE VI

Session of the Council

1. The Session of the Council is the supreme organ of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The Session has the right to study all questions within the competence of the Council, and to adopt recommendations and decisions according to this Charter.

2. The Session of the Council is composed of the delegations of all member countries of the Council. The composition of the delegation of each country is defined by the government of the country concerned.

3. The regular Sessions of the Council are convened twice a year in the capitals of the member countries of the Council, under the chairmanship of the head of the delegation of the country in which the Session takes place.

4. An extraordinary Session of the Council may be convened on the request of not less than one-third of the member countries of the Council.

5. The Session of the Council:

(a) studies:

proposals on economic and scientific technical co-operation presented by the member countries of the Council, as well as by the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council, by the Permanent Commissions and the Secretariat of the Council;

the report of the Secretariat of the Council on the activity of the Council;

(b) defines the course of action of the other organs of the Council and the basic questions on the agenda of the forthcoming Session of the Council;

(c) performs other functions necessary to achieve the aims of the Council.

6. The Session of the Council is entitled to establish those organs which it considers necessary for the fulfillment of the functions entrusted to the Council.

7. The Session of the Council establishes its own procedural regulations.

ARTICLE VII

Conference of the Representatives of CEMA Countries

1. The Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is composed of representatives of all the member countries of the Council - one for each country.

The representative of each CEMA country has a deputy in the staff of the Secretariat, the necessary advisers, and other staff. The deputy is authorised to perform the functions of representative in the Conference.

2. The Conference has sessions whenever necessary.

3. The Conference has the right, within the area of its competence, to adopt recommendations and decisions in conformity with the Charter.

The Conference may also introduce proposals for study in the Council Session.

4. The Conference:

(a) studies the proposals of member countries of the Council, of the Permanent Commissions and of the Council Secretariat, on the implementation of recommendations and decisions adopted by the Session of the Council, as well as on matters of economic and scientific technical co-operation which must be solved in the period between the Council Sessions;

(b) studies in advance, if need be, the proposals of the member countries of the Council, those of the Permanent Commissions and those of the Council Secretariat, which proposals are placed on the agenda for the forthcoming session of the Council;

(c) co-ordinates the work of the Permanent Commissions; studies their reports on their completed work and on their future activity;

(d) approves:

the number and salaries of the employees, and the budget of the Council Secretariat, as well as the report of the latter on fulfillment of the budget;

(d) establishes control organs for checking the financial activity of the Secretariat of the Council;

(f) executes other functions proceeding from this Charter, as well as from the recommendations and decisions of the Session of the Council.

5. The Conference has the right to establish auxiliary organs for preparing questions in advance.

6. The Conference establishes its own procedural regulations.

ARTICLE VIII

Permanent Commissions

1. The Permanent Commissions of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance are formed by the Session of the Council for the purpose of assisting the further development of economic relations between the member countries of the Council, and for the organization of many sided economic and scientific technical co-operation in the various sectors of the national economies of these countries.

The regulations on the work of the Permanent Commissions are approved by the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council.

2. Each member country of the Council appoints its representatives to the Permanent Commissions.

3. The Permanent Commissions have the right, within the area of their competence, to accept recommendations and decisions in conformity with the Charter. The Commissions can also introduce proposals for study in the Session of the Council and in the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council.

4. The Permanent Commissions work out projects and prepare proposals for implementing economic and scientific technical co-operation as provided in paragraph 1 of this Article, and fulfill functions proceeding from this Charter and from the recommendations and decisions of the Session of the Council and the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council.

The Permanent Commissions submit yearly reports to the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council on their completed work and on their future activity.

5. The sessions of the Permanent Commissions are carried on, as a rule, in their permanent location, which is determined by the Session of the Council.

6. The Permanent Commissions, when necessary, can establish auxiliary organs. The composition and competence of these organs, as well as the place of their conferences, are determined by the Commissions themselves.

7. Every Permanent Commission has a Secretariat, headed by the Commission's secretary. The apparatus of the Commission's Secretariat is included in the composition of the Council Secretariat and is financed by its budget.

8. The Permanent Commissions establish their own procedural regulations.

ARTICLE IX

Secretariat

1. The Secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is composed of a Secretary of the Council, his deputies, and such personnel as may prove necessary for realisation of the functions entrusted to the Secretariat.

The Secretary and his deputies are appointed by the Session of the Council, and conduct the work of the Secretariat of the Council.

The personnel of the Secretariat is composed of citizens from the member countries of the Council, in conformity with the regulation regarding the work of the Secretariat of the Council.

The Secretary of the Council is the main person of the Council. He represents the Council before the official persons and organizations of the member countries of the Council, and other countries, as well as before international organizations.

The Secretary of the Council has the right to authorise his deputies, as well as the Secretariat's staff, to represent him wherever necessary.

The Secretary and his deputies may participate in all conferences of the Council's organs.

2. The Secretariat of the Council:

(a) submits a report on the activity of the Council at the regular Session of the Council;

(b) helps in the preparation and carrying out of the Session of the Council, the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council, the sessions of the Permanent Commissions of the Council, and the conferences convened on decision of these organs;

(c) prepares, on recommendation of the Session of the Council or the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council, economic reports and research on material of the member countries of the Council, and publishes material on questions of economic and scientific technical co-operation among these countries;

(d) prepares:

proposals on questions regarding the work of the Council, for study in the corresponding organs of the Council;

informative and guiding material on questions of economic and scientific technical co-operation among the member countries of the Council;

(e) organizes jointly with the Permanent Commission of the Council the documentation of the many agreements on questions of economic and scientific technical co-operation, on the basis of the recommendations and decisions of the Session of the Council and the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council;

(f) undertakes other actions proceeding from this Charter, the recommendations and decisions adopted by the Council, and those adopted under the Regulation on the activity of the Secretariat of the Council.

3. The Secretary of the Council, his deputies and the personnel of the Secretariat, in fulfilling their obligations toward the Council, act as international official persons.

4. The seat of the Secretariat of the Council is in Moscow.

ARTICLE XParticipation of other countries in the work of
the Council

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance may invite countries which are not members of the Council to take part in the activity of the organs of the Council.

The conditions under which the representatives of these countries may participate in the work of the organs of the Council are defined by the Council with the agreement of the countries concerned.

ARTICLE XIRelations with International Organizations

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance may establish and maintain relations with United Nations economic organizations and with other international organizations.

The character and forms of these relations are determined by the Council with the consent of the international organizations concerned.

ARTICLE XIIFinancial Questions

1. The member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance assume the responsibility of financing the Secretariat and its activity. The share of participation in these expenses for each member country of the Council is determined by the Session of the Council, and other financial questions by the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council.

2. The Secretariat of the Council submits a report on the fulfillment of the budget for each calendar year to the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council.

3. Expenses for the support of participants in the Session of the Council, in the Conference of Representatives of the Countries in the Council, in the sessions of the Permanent Commissions of the Council, as well as in conferences carried out within the framework of the Council, are assumed by the country which has commissioned representatives for these sessions and conferences.

4. Expenses connected with the sessions and conferences provided in paragraph 3 of this Article are assumed by the country in which these sessions and conferences take place.

ARTICLE XIII

Various Regulations

1. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance enjoys all legal rights on the territory of each member country of the Council necessary for the fulfillment of its functions and for achieving its aims.

2. The Council, the representatives of the member countries of the Council, and the employees of the Council enjoy those privileges and immunities on the territory of each of these countries which are necessary for the fulfillment of the functions and for the achievement of the aims provided in this Charter.

3. The rights, privileges and immunities provided in this Article are defined by a special convention.

4. The regulations of this Charter do not affect the rights and obligations of the member countries of the Council resulting from their membership in other international organizations, as well as from international agreements concluded by them.

ARTICLE XIV

Language

1. Official languages in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance are the languages of all member countries of the Council.

2. The language used in the Council is Russian.

ARTICLE XV

Ratification of the Charter and its Enforcement

1. This Charter is subject to ratification by the countries which have signed it, according to their constitutional procedure.

2. The ratified documents will be delivered to the custodian of this Charter for preservation.

3. The Charter comes into force immediately after the ratified documents of all countries which have signed this Charter are delivered for preservation, at which time the custodial will inform those countries without delay.

4. In respect to any country which under paragraph 2 of Article II of this Charter may be accepted in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and ratifies this Charter, the latter comes into force from the day that country delivers the ratified document for preservation, at which time the custodial shall inform the other member countries of the Council.

ARTICLE XVI

Procedure in Implementation of the Charter

Each member country of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance may introduce proposals for implementation of this Charter.

Implementations of the Charter approved by the Council Session come into force immediately after the documents of these implementations ratified by all member countries of the Council are delivered to the custodial for preservation.

ARTICLE XVII

Concluding Regulations

This Charter is prepared in one copy in the Russian language. The Charter will be deposited for preservation with the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The latter will send certified copies of the Charter to the Governments of all other member countries of the Council, and will inform these Governments and the Council Secretary that the ratified documents have been deposited with the Government of the USSR for preservation.

In witness whereof, the representatives of the Governments of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance have signed this Charter.

Done in Sofia on December 14th, 1959.