MEMORANDUM FOR SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER ATLANTIC
ALLIED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF CHANNEL

SUBJECT: NATO Rules of Engagement

INTRODUCTION

1. The report on Exercise GOLDEN ROD - FALLEX 68 prepared by (1) the Council Operations and Exercise Co-ordination Working Group as well as the report on this exercise prepared by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (2) notes the need for defining, in advance of aggression, rules of engagement which would be appropriate to various levels of confrontation. In its preliminary report on this (3) exercise the Military Committee has concurred in the need for pre-established NATO Rules of Engagement. The problem does not include ACE land-based air defence forces for which satisfactory (4) rules already exist.

2. The Military Committee considers that adequate and comprehensive NATO Rules of Engagement would best be worked out by the three Major NATO Commanders and has noted that the subject is (2) under study within ACE (5) and that SACLANT has already prepared rules for his command. However, some main points pertinent to the preparation of such rules are indicated in the following paragraphs.

(1) DPC/D(69)3, 14 Jan 69
(2) SHAPE 1710.8, 29/14-7/4-7008/69, 15 Apr 69
(3) MCM-13-69, 5 Feb 69, para 13
(4) MC 66/1, 23 Sep 60
(5) SACLANT OPERATION ORDER No. 1-68, 12 Dec 68
MAIN POINTS

3. There is a requirement for arrangements to provide political and military guidance to all forces under NATO command in a period of tension or crisis, in order to ensure that any military actions or dispositions would be fully in consonance with the aims and intentions of the Alliance. One of the means for providing such guidance would be by referring to the NATO Rules of Engagement. These have been stated by the DPC thus: "Rules of Engagement are instructions to subordinate military authorities within the overall political guidance provided for the deployment and employment of a force." (1)

4. Rules of Engagement, which would apply only to forces which have been placed under NATO command, should be applicable to all situations ranging from peacetime operations through increasing tension to hostilities short of major aggression.

5. The Rules of Engagement must be militarily acceptable without imposing any unnecessary restraints on military commanders' authority to take actions dictated by the situation. In particular, the rules must be sufficiently flexible to meet the requirements of a rapidly changing situation and be applicable to circumstances which cannot be foreseen with certainty.

6. It is recognised that NATO Rules of Engagement would have to be worked out individually for the land, naval and air forces, and that the scope and format of the rules might vary from force to force. Therefore, the necessary flexibility must be allowed for in the preparation of the different rules.

(1) DPC/D(69)20, 4 Jul 69, para 4.
7. During its consultations and prior to the employment of an Immediate Reaction Force, Reinforcement Force or other Contingency Force, it must be anticipated that the NAC/DPC would want to consider the Rules of Engagement proposed by the NATO Military Authorities for the employment of that force.

CONCLUSION

8. The Military Committee invites SACEUR to prepare NATO Rules of Engagement for land and air forces, apart from ACE land-based air defence forces. These rules should be developed in conjunction with SACLANT and CINCHAN to the extent that this would be relevant, and the subject be of common interest for all three Major NATO Commanders.

9. The Military Committee invites SACLANT to assume the co-ordination and preparation of a joint three MNC proposal for NATO Rules of Engagement for maritime forces.

10. SACEUR and SACLANT are requested to submit by 31 January 1970 the proposed rules for the consideration of the Military Committee. The intention is that the MNCs' papers would form the basis for the preparation of an MC document.

FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE

N. G. PALAIIOLOGOPULO3
Lieutenant General, Hellenic Army
Director, International Military Staff

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SACEUREP
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NATO SECRET
MCM- 99 -69.
17 December 1969

CORRIGENDUM NO. 1

to

MCM-99-69, 12 Nov 69 (NS)

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Holders of the above document are requested to make the following pen and ink amendment:

Page 3, paragraph 10, delete "31 January 1970" and substitute "16 March 1970".

N. G. PALAIIOLOGOPOULOS
Lieutenant General, Hellenic Army
Director, International Military Staff

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