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PRESS COMMUNIQUE M1-(71)1/7

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FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The North Atlantic Council met in Ministerial Session in Lisbon on 3rd and 4th June, 1971.

2. The continuing political aim of the Atlantic Alliance is to seek peace through initiatives designed to relax tensions and to establish a just and durable peaceful order in Europe, accompanied by effective security guarantees. The Alliance remains indispensable to peace and stability in Europe and to the security of all its members.

3. Ministers reviewed the international situation, concentrating their attention on Europe and the Mediterranean.

4. They assessed the state of progress of the several initiatives which Allied countries had undertaken within the framework of the established policy of the Alliance to intensify contacts, explorations and negotiations with members of the Warsaw Pact and other European states. The purpose of all these initiatives is to seek just solutions to the fundamental problems of European security and thus to achieve a genuine improvement of East/West relations. They noted with satisfaction the results obtained and expressed the hope that the continuation of these efforts would lead to further progress helping the development of détente. The Allies have consulted and will continue to consult closely on these diplomatic activities.

5. Ministers welcomed the continued negotiations between the US and the USSR with the aim of placing limitations on offensive and defensive strategic arms. They noted the useful discussions held in the North Atlantic Council on this subject. Ministers also welcomed the agreement between the US and the USSR announced on 20th May, regarding the framework for further negotiations, and expressed the sincere hope that it would facilitate discussions leading to the early achievement of concrete results enhancing the common security interests of the North Atlantic Alliance and stability in the world.

6. In reviewing the Berlin question, Ministers underlined the necessity of alleviating the causes of insecurity in and around the city. During the past quarter of a century, much of the tension which has characterized East/West relations in Europe has stemmed from the situation in and around Berlin. Thus, the Ministers would regard the successful outcome of the Berlin talks as an encouraging indication of the willingness of the Soviet Union to join in the efforts of the Alliance to achieve a meaningful and lasting improvement of East/West relations in Europe.

7. Ministers therefore reaffirmed their full support for the efforts of the governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States to reach an agreement on Berlin. They shared the view of the three governments that the aim of the negotiations should be to achieve specific improvements based on firm commitments without prejudice to the status of Berlin. In this context, they emphasized the importance of reaching agreement on unhindered movement of persons and goods between the Federal Republic of Germany and Western Sectors of Berlin, on improved opportunities for movement by residents of the Western Sectors, and on respect for the relationship between the Western Sectors and the Federal Republic as it has developed with the approval of the three governments.

8. Ministers were of the view that progress in the talks between German Authorities on a modus vivendi, taking into account the special situation in Germany, would be an important contribution to a relaxation of tension in Europe.

9. Ministers, having reviewed the prospects for the establishment of multilateral contacts relating to the essential problems of security and co-operation in Europe, again emphasized the importance they attach to the successful conclusion of the negotiations on Berlin. They noted with satisfaction that these negotiations have entered into a more active phase and have enabled progress to be registered in recent weeks. They hope that before their next meeting the negotiations on Berlin will have reached a successful conclusion and that multilateral conversations intended to lead to a conference on security and co-operation in Europe may then be undertaken. In this spirit they invited the Council in Permanent Session to continue, in the framework of its normal consultations on the international situation, its periodic review of the results achieved in all contacts and talks relative to security and co-operation in Europe, so that it could without delay take a position on the opening of multilateral talks.

10. In anticipation of these multilateral contacts, the Council in Permanent Session actively pursued preparations for discussions on the substance and procedures of possible East/West negotiations, and submitted a report to this effect to Ministers.

The report stressed that the successful outcome of such negotiations would have to be founded on universal respect for the principles governing relations between states as cited by Ministers in previous communiqués and declarations. The various prospects for developing co-operation between East and West in the economic, technical, scientific, cultural and environmental fields were closely examined. The report also reviewed in detail the essential elements on which agreement would be desirable in order to promote the freer movement of people, ideas and information so necessary to the development of international co-operation in all fields.

11. Ministers noted these studies and instructed the Council in Permanent Session to continue them pending the initiation of multilateral contacts between East and West. Ministers stressed that they would press on with their bilateral exploratory conversations with all interested states.

12. Ministers took note of the report on the situation in the Mediterranean prepared by the Council in Permanent Session. While welcoming the efforts currently undertaken to re-establish peace in the Eastern Mediterranean, they observed that developments in the area as a whole continue to give cause for concern. In the light of the conclusions of this report, they instructed the Council in Permanent Session to continue consultations on this situation and to report thereon at their next meeting.

13. The Allied Governments which issued the Declarations at Reykjavik in 1968 and Rome in 1970 and which subscribed to paragraphs 15 and 16 of the Brussels Communiqué of 1970 have consistently urged the Soviet Union and other European countries to discuss mutual and balanced force reductions. They reaffirmed that the reduction of the military confrontation in Europe - at which MBFR is aiming - is essential for increased security and stability.

14. Against this background, Ministers representing these governments welcomed the response of Soviet leaders indicating possible readiness to consider reductions of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. These Soviet reactions, which require further clarification, are, together with those of other states, receiving the closest attention of the Alliance.

15. In an effort to determine whether common ground exists on which to base negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions, these Ministers expressed the agreement of their governments to continue and intensify explorations with the Soviet Union and also with other interested governments on the basis of the considerations outlined in paragraph 3 of the Rome Declaration(1). They expressed their intention to move as soon as may be practical to negotiations. To this end these Ministers agreed that Deputy Foreign Ministers or high officials should meet at Brussels at an early date to review the results of the exploratory contacts and to consult on substantive and procedural approaches to mutual and balanced force reductions.

16. These Ministers further announced their willingness to appoint, at the appropriate time, a representative or representatives, who would be responsible to the Council for conducting further exploratory talks with the Soviet Government and the other interested governments, and eventually to work out the time, place, arrangements and agenda for negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions.

17. Reviewing other developments in the field of arms control and disarmament, these Ministers noted as a significant step forward the conclusion of a treaty banning the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the seabed and ocean floor. Allied Ministers noted with satisfaction the work done by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament with a view to reaching an agreement eliminating bacteriological weapons and toxins. They reaffirmed the importance they attach to effective and adequately verified arms limitation and disarmament measures consistent with the security of all states, and invited the Council in Permanent Session to continue to pursue the Alliance efforts and studies in all fields related to arms control and disarmament.

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(1) Paragraph 3 of the Rome Declaration reads as follows:

"3. Ministers invite interested States to hold exploratory talks on mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe, with special reference to the Central Region. They agree that in such talks the Allies would put forward the following considerations:

- (a) mutual force reductions should be compatible with the vital security interests of the Alliance and should not operate to the military disadvantage of either side having regard for the differences arising from geographical and other considerations;
- (b) reductions should be on a basis of reciprocity, and phased and balanced as to their scope and timing;
- (c) reductions should include stationed and indigenous forces and their weapons systems in the area concerned;
- (d) there must be adequate verification and controls to ensure the observance of agreements on mutual and balanced force reductions."

18. Ministers expressed satisfaction at the impressive progress achieved by the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society as reported by the Secretary General. They noted particularly the important contribution made by the Allies to combat the pollution of the seas by oil and to the development of road safety. They welcomed the fact that intensive work was under way on problems relating to coastal and inland water pollution and disaster assistance. They further welcomed the contribution the Committee had made to alerting Governments and public opinion to the problems of modern technology, as well as to the dangers for modern society arising from the deterioration of the environment. They observed that many countries of the Alliance have equipped themselves with new government structures to cope with such problems. Ministers took special note of the fact that the benefits of Allied efforts had not been confined to the countries of the Alliance but were being felt in other countries as well as in broader-based international organizations.

19. Ministers expressed their regret at the impending departure of Mr. Manlio Brosio who had informed them of his intention to resign as Secretary General of the Organization. In their tributes to Mr. Brosio, Ministers dwelt on his outstanding stewardship in often difficult circumstances and stressed the patience and perseverance which have marked his untiring work for both defence and détente. They expressed to him their deep appreciation for the distinguished service he has rendered to the Alliance and to peace in the past seven years.

20. The Council invited Mr. Joseph Luns, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, to become Secretary General of the Organization as from 1st October, 1971. Mr. Luns informed the Council of his acceptance of this invitation.

21. The next Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council will be held in Brussels in December 1971.

22. Ministers requested the Foreign Minister of Italy, as President of the Council, to transmit this Communiqué on their behalf through diplomatic channels to all other interested parties including neutral and non-aligned governments.