NATO — OTAN

PRESS SERVICE — SERVICE DE PRESSE

OTAN/NATO, 1110 Bruxelles ■ Téléphone : 41.00.40 - 41.44.00 - 41.44.90

PRESS RELEASE M-NPG-2(71)16 Brussels, 27th October, 1971
(For immediate release)

NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The NATO Nuclear Planning Group, composed of Ministers of Defence of seven NATO countries, adjourned today after a two-day conference in Brussels, Belgium.

Attending this tenth half-yearly meeting of the Group were Mr. Paul Willem Segers, Belgium; Mr. Kjeld Olesen, Denmark; Mr. Helmut Schmidt, Germany; Mr. Mario Tanassi, Italy; Lord Carrington, United Kingdom; and Mr. Melvin R. Laird, United States. Greece was represented by Ambassador P.A. Cavalierato. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Joseph M.A.H. Luns, Secretary General of NATO.

Following a briefing by Mr. Laird, Ministers surveyed developments in the balance of strategic forces that had occurred since their last meeting and engaged in a discussion of certain aspects of the balance.

Ministers received a presentation by SACEUR and reviewed the military procedures developed in conformity with the political guidelines for the initial defensive tactical use of nuclear weapons, which were approved in 1969. They exchanged views on the insight gained during the past two years and discussed the requirements essential to effective Alliance consultation and decision-making.

As a further step in the work programme initiated two years ago, Ministers continued their examination of studies designed to explore in greater depth the possible tactical use of nuclear weapons in defence of the NATO area. At this meeting, their attention was devoted mainly to a study presented jointly by Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Laird that set out a variety of options for such tactical employment of nuclear weapons. In the light of their discussion, Ministers gave further directions for continuation of the work programme.

In addition, Ministers addressed a number of specific problems related to tactical nuclear defence and issued instructions for further investigation of these problems.

Ministers agreed to hold the next meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group in Denmark in the Spring of 1972.