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Statement By Richard R. Burt
Chairman, NATO Special Consultative Group

The Special Consultative Group held its fourth meeting of 1984 today. This meeting reflects the Allies' longstanding practice of consulting closely and continuously on all aspects of the NATO 1979 dual-track decision on intermediate-range nuclear force modernization and arms control.

Among the highlights of our meeting:

We reviewed the attitude of the Soviet Union toward the INF negotiations, on the basis of all the information available to Alliance members. The continuing refusal of the Soviet Union to return to INF arms control talks in Geneva is a matter of profound regret. This negative Soviet approach to arms control contrasts sharply with the repeated expressions by the Allies of their readiness for negotiations to resume at any time, and their willingness to undertake a serious, flexible and active negotiating effort when they do.

In the month and a half since we last met, member states of the Alliance have advanced major initiatives to break the impasse in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations in Vienna and to achieve a comprehensive, worldwide and verifiable ban on chemical weapons. The Group noted that the Soviet reaction to these Western arms control initiatives also has so far been disappointing. The Allies will continue to work for progress in these important negotiations.

The Group noted that the Soviet Union is continuing the construction of new SS-20 bases in both Eastern and Western parts of the Soviet Union, despite the fact that the Soviet Union has already deployed twice as many LRINF warheads as are included in the entire five-year NATO program.

We affirmed our commitment to seek an equitable arms control agreement, providing for significant reductions of both sides land based LRINF missiles, and NATO's willingness on the basis of such concrete results in the negotiations to halt, reverse, or dispense with its LRINF deployments altogether.

The SCG will continue to meet on a regular basis.