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FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The North Atlantic Council met in Ministerial Session in Washington, D.C., on 29th, 30th and 31st May, 1984. Ministers agreed as follows:

1. The North Atlantic Treaty, signed in Washington on 4th April, 1949, continues to fulfil the expectations of the Allies. It is a major factor for peace and stability in an era of world-wide change and numerous conflicts. The strength of the Alliance and the solidarity born of shared values and reinforced by the practice of consultation between its sovereign member states have secured peace in the Treaty area and the freedom of its peoples.

2. The Atlantic Alliance is a defensive Alliance. None of its weapons will ever be used except in response to attack. The firm adherence of members of the Alliance to their commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty, the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act contributes to the maintenance of peace and to the strengthening of international law. Faced with the continued expansion of Soviet military strength beyond reasonable defence needs, the Allies are determined to safeguard their legitimate security interests. They look to the Soviet Union to respect these as the Allies respect the legitimate security interests of the Soviet Union.

Without seeking superiority, the Allies will maintain the conventional and nuclear forces necessary to deter and defend against aggression and to resist attempts at intimidation. To this end they will continue to seek more effective and balanced transatlantic armaments co-operation, bearing in mind the need for efficiency, economy of costs and exploiting and sharing of emerging technologies.

3. Ministers took note of the thorough appraisal called for at their last meeting with a view to achieving a more constructive East-West dialogue. They issued the "Washington Statement on East-West Relations". They reaffirmed their continued intention to work for genuine détente through building up more contacts and co-operation

with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, while maintaining effective defence and firm political resolve. The aim of the Allies remains the establishment of a stable, long-term relationship based on mutual trust and understanding, and on respect for sovereignty, self-determination and human rights. They do not accept the Soviet view that confrontation between the social systems of East and West is inescapable. All states should work resolutely to realise the hopes of the peoples of the world for peace and progress, and to dissipate the common fears of war and misery.

4. Both the achievement of balanced arms control agreements and the restoration of confidence in East-West relations would reduce the risks of conflict and provide an enduring basis for peaceful progress.

5. The members of the Alliance are committed to ensure security by a balance of forces at the lowest possible level. In consultation with the Allies concerned, the Government of the United States has made a comprehensive series of proposals in the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) and the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) at Geneva for substantial reductions leading to arms control agreements which would be balanced, equitable and verifiable. The Allies concerned have offered to halt, reverse or modify deployments of US-INF - including the removal and dismantling of missiles already deployed to Europe - on the basis of concrete results at the negotiating table. They call upon the Soviet Union to resume negotiations on nuclear forces without preconditions or delay. In the absence of concrete negotiated results, longer-range INF missiles are being deployed in accordance with the December 1979 decision, all parts of which are of equal importance.

6. The policy of the Alliance is to maintain nuclear weapons at the lowest level possible for effective deterrence. The Allies concerned withdrew 1,000 nuclear weapons from Western Europe in 1980 and will over the next few years withdraw another 1,400, as well as one weapon for every Pershing II and cruise missile deployed. The resulting stockpile will be the lowest in Europe for some 20 years.

7. In the Conference on Disarmament the Allies continue to seek balanced, realistic and verifiable disarmament measures. They welcome the contributions made by several Allies, in particular the comprehensive draft treaty submitted by the United States for a world-wide verifiable ban on the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. The Conference on Disarmament is the forum where an effective ban on chemical weapons can be negotiated, and the Allies will work seriously to that end.

The Allies remain gravely concerned about strong evidence of the use of chemical weapons in South-East Asia and Afghanistan, in violation of international law, and of Soviet involvement in the use of such weapons. With regard to recent developments in the conflict between Iran and Iraq, they reiterate their categorical condemnation of any use of these weapons.(1)

The Allies have also proposed that the Conference on Disarmament identify, in the first instance, through substantive examination, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They regret that so far the Soviet Union and the Eastern countries have opposed the establishment of the appropriate working group.

The Allies welcomed the willingness of the United States to discuss with the Soviet Union research programmes on strategic defence.

8. The Allies participating in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks, in accordance with their commitment to these negotiations and following a review decided upon by Ministers at their meeting last December, have tabled a major new proposal in Vienna. This proposal seeks to resolve some of the most basic issues of these negotiations, in particular on the long-standing question of obtaining a satisfactory data base, and offers a new approach to the reductions and limitations process. If the East is prepared to match the flexibility demonstrated by the West in the new initiative, it will be possible for real progress to be made towards an MBFR agreement that provides for substantial, verifiable reductions of personnel to equal collective levels of ground forces and parity of combined ground and air forces in Central Europe.

9. The Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid Concluding Document are foundations on which to build constructive relations. The Allies reaffirm their commitment to the full and effective implementation by all states participating in the process initiated by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) of the principles which participating states have undertaken to respect in their relations with each other. All principles and provisions agreed in Helsinki and Madrid, including those concerning relations between states, human rights and contacts between individuals, must be implemented. The Allies are especially concerned over disregard, in particular by the Soviet Union, of the humanitarian provisions, which affects not only internationally known personalities but also a great many others.

In the continuing CSCE process the members of the Alliance will pursue efforts to conduct an in-depth dialogue and develop co-operation between all participating states.

(1) Greece recalled its position as it has been expressed during previous Ministerial sessions.

At the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE) in Stockholm the Allies at the outset tabled concrete proposals in conformity with the mandate agreed at the Madrid CSCE Follow-up Conference. These proposals call for an agreement on measures designed to build confidence and increase security through openness about armed forces and military activities throughout the whole of Europe so as to reduce the risk of miscalculation or the possibility of surprise attack. In order to give further effect and expression to the existing duty of all participating states to refrain from the threat or use of force in their mutual relations, agreement would be necessary on the above concrete measures in accordance with the Madrid mandate.

10. The situation in Poland and in particular the recent increase in the number of political prisoners continues to give cause for serious concern. The Allies call upon the Polish authorities to respect the aspirations of the people for reform and dialogue and to abide by the commitments in the Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid Concluding Document, particularly with regard to trade union freedom and human rights. The Allies remain ready to respond to steps which create the opportunity for constructive political and economic relations with the West.

11. The Allies condemn the massive devastation and suffering inflicted on the civilian population by the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. Increasingly severe attacks such as the latest assault on Panjshir suggest the Soviet Union is stepping up its brutal campaign. This is in violation of fundamental principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act and in flagrant defiance of repeated calls by the United Nations General Assembly for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops, the restoration of Afghanistan's independence and non-aligned status, self-determination for the Afghan people and the voluntary return of refugees to their homes in safety and honour. It is for the Soviet Union to honour its obligations under the United Nations Charter, to withdraw its troops immediately and to allow the Afghan people to determine their own future.

12. The maintenance of a calm situation in and around Berlin, including unimpeded traffic on all the access routes to the city, remains of fundamental importance for East-West relations. The Allies welcome the efforts of the Federal Republic of Germany to strengthen Berlin's economy.

They also express the hope that the continuation of the Federal Government's dialogue with the GDR, together with its efforts to achieve further practical progress in inner-German relations and in improvements for travel in both directions, will directly benefit Berlin and the Germans in both states.

13. Trade conducted on the basis of commercially sound terms and mutual advantage, that avoids preferential treatment of the Soviet Union, contributes to constructive East-West relations. At the same time, bilateral economic relations with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe must remain consistent with broad Allied security concerns. These include avoiding dependence on the Soviet Union, or contributing to Soviet military capabilities. Thus, development of Western energy resources should be encouraged. In order to avoid further use by the Soviet Union of some forms of trade to enhance its military strength, the Allies will remain vigilant in their continuing review of the security aspects of East-West economic relations. This work will assist Allied governments in the conduct of their policies in this field.

14. The Alliance, which respects the sovereignty and legitimate interests of all states, works for peace, security and development. Its member countries seek to expand economic and cultural relations with all countries and are committed to give assistance to developing nations, believing these policies are mutually beneficial and contribute to peaceful evolution. They consider respect for genuine non-alignment by all states an important contribution to international stability.

The Allies recognise that events outside the Treaty area may affect their common interests as members of the Alliance. They will engage in timely consultations on such events, if it is established that their common interests are involved. Sufficient military capabilities must be assured in the Treaty area to maintain an adequate defence posture. Allies who are in a position to do so will endeavour to support those sovereign nations who request assistance in countering threats to their security and independence. Those Allies in a position to facilitate the deployment of forces outside the Treaty area may do so, on the basis of national decision.

15. The Allies recall their commitment under Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty and reaffirm the importance of programmes intended to benefit the economies of less favoured partners who need aid for development.

16. The Allies remain seriously concerned about acts of international terrorism. In accordance with the relevant provision of the Bonn Declaration, they reiterate their determination to take effective measures for the prevention and suppression of such criminal acts, which are a threat to the democratic institutions they are pledged to defend, to stability and to the conduct of international relations.

17. The next regular meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Ministerial Session will be held in Brussels in December 1984.

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As on previous occasions, the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs reserved his Government's position on the present Communiqué.

Denmark and Greece reserve their positions on the INF part of this Communiqué.

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The Foreign Ministers paid tribute to the departing Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Dr. Joseph Luns, who is retiring after devoting a major portion of his professional life to upholding Western security through the Alliance. During his thirteen years as Secretary General, Dr. Luns has made uniquely important contributions to co-operation among individual Allies and to the cause of Allied unity. The Foreign Ministers expressed their profound appreciation of Dr. Luns' outstanding services to the Alliance and to the cause of peace and freedom.