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PRESS STATEMENT BY SCG CHAIRMAN H. ALLEN HOLMES, 24TH JULY 1986

The NATO Special Consultative Group (SCG) met today to discuss the status of the INF negotiations in Geneva. Ambassador Maynard Glitman, negotiator for INF, briefed the SCG on developments in the talks during the last round, 8th May - 26th June, and prospects for the upcoming round, which begins 18th September.

The Group reiterated its support for the US proposal of 24th February, developed after intensive Allied consultations, which offers a detailed, phased and concrete approach to the global elimination of US and Soviet LRINF missile systems by the end of the decade as well as appropriate constraints on SRINF missile systems. The Group also noted that the US interim INF reduction proposal of 1st November remains on the table. Additionally, the Group supports the US efforts to achieve progress in Geneva on effective INF verification measures side by side with progress on reaching agreement on reductions and limitations of INF missile systems.

The SCG reaffirmed the Alliance's readiness to modify, halt, reverse, or dispense altogether with LRINF missile deployment as part of a balanced, equitable, and effectively verifiable arms control agreement.

The SCG noted the continuing Soviet modernization programmes for LRINF and SRINF missile systems. The Group also recalled that the SS-20 force remains 441 launchers with 1,323 nuclear warheads.

The SCG endorsed the continuing US commitment to seek common ground and accelerate progress toward an INF agreement as mandated at the November Summit, as well as US readiness to engage in genuine give-and-take. The Group also expressed the hope that Soviet INF negotiators will proceed with substantive and detailed negotiations at the next round of the Nuclear and Space Arms Talks.

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