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SCG CHAIRMAN'S PRESS STATEMENT

The NATO Special Consultative Group (SCG) met today under the chairmanship of Ambassador Allen Holmes to discuss the status of the INF negotiations. Ambassador Maynard Glitman, U.S. negotiator for INF, briefed the Group on developments from the last negotiating round, September 18th - November 12th, and also on results from the meetings which were held in Geneva December 2nd-5th.

The SCG reiterated its full support for the U.S. INF proposal presented on October 23rd which reflected the INF-related understandings reached during the meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at Reykjavik. In particular, the Group supported the inclusion in that proposal of the agreement reached in principle by the President and the General Secretary to equal global ceilings for U.S. and Soviet LRINF missile warheads, consisting of 100 such warheads outside Europe and their elimination in Europe, along with constraints on shorter-range INF missile systems and follow-on negotiations on further limitations and reductions of LRINF missiles and shorter-range INF missiles.

The SCG emphasized the requirement to constrain equally and concurrently shorter-range INF missiles, as previously proposed by the United States, and to undertake promptly subsequent SRINF negotiations. The Group also emphasized its support for the U.S. efforts to reach agreement in Geneva on effective INF verification measures side by side with progress on reaching agreement on reductions and limitations of INF missile systems.

The Group reaffirmed the Alliance's readiness to modify, halt, reverse, or dispense altogether with its deployment of LRINF missiles as part of a balanced, equitable and effectively verifiable arms control agreement. The Group also confirmed NATO's determination to continue the deployment of LRINF missiles as scheduled, in the absence of an INF arms control agreement with the Soviet Union obviating the need for such deployments.

The Group reaffirmed its own long-held position that negotiations on INF are vital in and of themselves and should therefore lead to a separate agreement on its own merits, and not be held hostage to progress in any other negotiations. Soviet insistence on doing so would contradict Soviet assurances given at the highest level. The SCG, therefore, calls upon the Soviet Union not to hold progress in INF hostage to any other agreement.

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

The SCG recognized that it is time now to build energetically upon the common ground that has been recently established by expanding areas of convergence and negotiating vigorously to narrow areas of difference. The Group, therefore, expressed the hope that Soviet INF negotiators will join with their U.S. counterparts in proceeding with substantive and detailed negotiations looking toward the early conclusion and implementation of a sound, durable and separate INF agreement.