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MINISTERIAL MEETINGS OF THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE
AND THE NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP ON 12TH JUNE 1997

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

1. The Defence Planning Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation met in Ministerial session in Brussels on 12th June.

2. We look forward to the forthcoming Summit meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Madrid on 8th and 9th July 1997. The Summit will advance NATO's adaptation in all its aspects. The Alliance's military structures and its defence planning process will continue to have important roles to play in the new NATO that is emerging from this comprehensive transformation.

3. We reaffirm that collective defence planning is the linchpin of the Alliance's cohesion and military effectiveness. We therefore welcome the results of the review of the Alliance's defence planning process. The new procedures will ensure a single, coherent planning process capable of developing the forces and capabilities needed to conduct the full range of Alliance missions including WEU-led operations. Defence planning will also take into account the requirements stemming from the intensification of our relations with our Partners.

4. We approved the 1997 Ministerial Guidance, which analyses the implications of the current strategic environment, reviews trends in political, military and economic developments and their effects on Alliance military capabilities and provides political guidance for defence planning activities in NATO, both national and collective, for the period up to 2004 and beyond, including the development of the 1998 NATO Force Goals. Our guidance reflects the increased complexity of defence planning which must take account of the requirements of the full spectrum of Alliance missions. This includes maintaining an effective Alliance capability for its core function of collective defence, which underpins the contribution NATO is able to make to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. It also

encompasses the ability to conduct peace support operations. The successful implementation, through the NATO-led Stabilisation Force, of the military aspects of the Peace Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina is impressive proof of this ability. We have tasked force planners to study the possibility of providing a clearer indication of the availability of the required forces and capabilities for such missions. As part of the full range of its missions and of the building of ESDI within the Alliance, NATO is also ready to support WEU-led operations. For the first time, Ministerial Guidance includes a contribution provided by the WEU.

5. As part of Ministerial Guidance we issued guidance on the resources required to enable our Military Authorities to draw up force plans in a realistic financial framework and to provide advice to nations on the financial effort required to undertake the full range of Alliance missions. We agreed on the need to provide the level of resources necessary to make an effective military contribution to the full spectrum of NATO's roles and missions, particularly in reinforcement capabilities, and to continue to ensure an equitable sharing of defence burdens. We also placed particular emphasis on investment in equipment with priority being given to capability areas where shortfalls have been identified, specifically the mobility, flexibility and sustainability required to perform the full range of Alliance missions.

6. The intensification of Allied defence efforts to address the risks posed by nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons and their delivery means is an integral part of Alliance adaptation to the new security environment. Alliance defence planning must address the potential threat or use of NBC weapons in future contingencies involving proliferants. As part of Ministerial Guidance we issued guidance on the capabilities needed to deter, and if necessary respond to, the use of such weapons. We agreed that these capabilities were among the key areas for longer term planning and that a high priority should be given to these capabilities in the 1998 force proposals.

7. We welcomed the briefing from US Secretary of Defence Cohen on the recently completed Quadrennial Defence Review and, in particular, the United States' strong commitment to NATO including the continued US force presence in Europe and the US emphasis on force modernisation which will significantly enhance Alliance capabilities.

8. We welcome the signing of the Founding Act and look forward to reciprocal exchanges with Russia in the framework of the Act on nuclear weapons issues, including doctrine and strategy, and consultations on nuclear safety issues. We are convinced that such exchanges can help to increase transparency and build mutual confidence between NATO and Russia. The 27th May statement made by President Yeltsin in Paris to the effect that Russia will no longer target NATO countries should

contribute to developing this mutual confidence.

9. We also welcome the agreement reached between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin at Helsinki to reduce strategic nuclear warheads to a level of 2000-2500 in a START III treaty. At the same time, we urge the Russian Federation to ratify the START II Treaty promptly so that the negotiations on START III may begin soon.

10. We attach great importance to the NPT Review Process and welcome the outcome of the Preparatory Committee which met in New York on 7-18th April. We encourage all states to sign and to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as soon as possible so that the CTBT can enter into force. We support the early beginning of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

11. We reiterate that Alliance nuclear forces are not targeted at any country and reaffirm that the fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Alliance is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion. In the light of the changed security environment, these forces have been substantially reduced in numbers. Russia still retains a large number of tactical nuclear weapons of all types. We renew our call upon Russia to bring to completion the reductions in its tactical nuclear weapons announced in 1991 and 1992, and to further review its tactical nuclear weapons stockpile with a view towards making additional significant reductions.