



ORGANISATION DU TRAITÉ DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

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PO/58/496

To : Permanent Representatives
From: Secretary General

PRÉPARATIONS FOR A POSSIBLE SUMMIT CONFERENCE

Attached is a summary of the discussion of the Committee on Procedure and Co-ordination for a possible Summit Conference, held at its meeting on 26th March, which I am circulating with a view to facilitating the Council's discussion of the note by the United Kingdom Delegation (PO/58/495).

(Signed) P.-H. SPAAK

26th March, 1958

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COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND CO-ORDINATION
FOR A POSSIBLE SUMMIT CONFERENCE

Meeting held at the Palais de Chaillot,
Paris, XVIIe, on Wednesday, 26th March 1958

The Committee considered the document submitted by the United Kingdom Delegation entitled "Statement of the Western Position on a Summit Meeting" (subsequently circulated to the members of the Council as PO/58/495).

2. The United Kingdom representative explained that his Government was anxious to publish this document in the near future, if possible before Easter.

3. Discussion by the Committee revealed the expediency of underlining that the purpose of the document was to terminate the exchange of letters between the USSR and the NATO countries and to make a definitive statement on the Western position concerning procedural questions.

4. Several representatives wished it to be made perfectly clear to the Soviet Union that the document contained the views of the NATO member countries as a whole.

5. As regards the substance of the document, several delegations suggested a rewording of paragraph 4. The French Delegation undertook to submit an amendment to the text.

6. In connection with the preparatory conversations to be conducted with the Soviet Union through diplomatic channels, the Committee discussed the three following points:

(a) Date of the opening of the conversations:

The question was raised as to whether it was desirable for these diplomatic conversations to start only after the NATO member countries had reached agreement on all the problems which might be dealt with at a Summit Conference, or whether it would not be better to start them immediately, in which case the NATO countries would have the advantage of regaining the diplomatic initiative and would be able immediately to engage in useful discussions with the Soviet Union on certain preliminary questions.

(b) Place of the diplomatic contacts:

It was proposed that these contacts should take place either in Moscow or Washington. Although different members of the Committee expressed individual preferences, no firm views were held on this point.

It was suggested in the course of the discussion that the decision should be left to the countries which would be responsible for conducting the conversations.

(c) Choice of the countries to be given the task of conducting diplomatic contacts:

It was pointed out, in the first place, that the countries chosen to conduct these diplomatic conversations would not necessarily be the only ones subsequently convened to a meeting of Foreign Ministers or to a Summit Conference. The membership of these meetings should be discussed at a later date.

It was generally held that the number of countries to participate in these preparatory conversations should be very small.

In this connection, two suggestions were put forward: that these diplomatic conversations should be conducted by the United States alone; that they should be conducted by the three Western Powers which participated in the Geneva Conferences.