



ORGANISATION DU TRAITE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
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NATO SECRET

To: Secretary General
cc: Deputy Secretary General
Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs
Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning
and Policy

From: Executive Secretary

Summary record of a private meeting of the Council on
29th January, 1968

- I. Follow-up to the Harmel Report;
- II. Agenda for the next meeting of
the Political Committee and
Disarmament Experts.

1. FOLLOW-UP TO THE HARMEL REPORT

The CHAIRMAN recalled that it had been agreed at the last meeting on 23rd January to adjourn the discussion on the follow-up to paragraph 13 of the Harmel Report until the present meeting. In the meantime he had taken the opportunity to circulate document PO/68/58 with a view to clarifying further the issues which had to be discussed.

2. He suggested proceeding in the order mentioned in the PO, namely:

- first, to decide on procedures concerning studies on balanced force reductions and more specifically whether the Ad Hoc Group which had already met should pursue its work in the framework of the Council or the Defence Planning Committee;
- secondly, to discuss the revised proposal which would be circulated by the United States concerning a subject to be put as the first item on the agenda for the meeting of the Political Committee with disarmament experts;
- thirdly, to consider a tentative list of further "technical" subjects which has been drawn up by the Political Committee for discussion with disarmament experts;
- fourthly, to consider also the Canadian proposal that the four Western Delegates at the Geneva Conference might discuss with the Committee the follow-up in the field of disarmament and arms control;

- and finally, as he had already pointed out at the last meeting, the Council might wish to give guidance to the Political Committee on the procedures to be followed in carrying out the studies to be prepared or to ask the Committee to present recommendations in this respect.

Studies on Balanced force reductions

3. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE recalled that his Government had seen no objection to the Defence Planning Committee going on with a study it had initiated, subject, however, to the proviso that France would be free to make known its views once the results of the study were submitted to the Council. However, several delegations having urged that the French Delegation should take part in this study, which was included in paragraph 13 of the Harmel Report, the French Government had decided to take account of these friendly invitations and authorised his delegation to participate.
4. In reply to a question by the Chairman on whether or not France was willing to participate also in the ad hoc group, the French Representative stressed that he could not commit himself to participate in a group whose terms of reference he was not aware of.
5. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE recalled that the ad hoc group was merely an informal drafting group which had met only once to consider draft terms of reference put forward by the United Kingdom Delegation. After a very preliminary discussion the meeting had been adjourned at the request of his own delegation.
6. He was in favour of starting anew at Fifteen and of asking the Political Committee at senior level to prepare terms of reference.
7. The DANISH and GERMAN REPRESENTATIVES welcomed the French decision and agreed to the Netherlands proposal.
8. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE also supported this view. He further recalled that the United Kingdom proposal in the ad hoc group and the preliminary comments had been put together in a memorandum circulated by the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs on 22nd November (DPA/67/229/1). Finally, he drew attention to the fact that balanced force reductions had some links with Force Planning and that once the Political Committee had agreed on terms of reference, a sub-committee would certainly have to enter into military considerations of a technical character at a very early stage.
9. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE expressed the hope that an agreement by the Political Committee on terms of reference could be reached as soon as possible, so that experts having some experience in Force Planning matters could start their analysis and define, in particular, what kind of forces would be involved and what was meant by "balanced" in this context. He recalled that Fourteen members of the Alliance had reserved or earmarked forces to NATO which was no longer the case for France. He wondered whether the French Delegation was willing to discuss French forces and to what degree. It would be unfortunate, in his view, if the body undertaking this study would be limited or delayed in its work because a part of the subject would have to be set aside. He would prefer to clear the matter in the Council before asking the Political Committee to start drafting terms of reference.

10. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE also favoured a new start but warned against prejudging the terms of reference before these had been agreed upon.

11. The BELGIAN and ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVES felt that the Political Committee would need more guidance from the Council on the delicate matter raised by the United States Representative, whilst the NETHERLANDS, UNITED KINGDOM and DANISH REPRESENTATIVES stressed that mutual force reductions meant that there should be an agreement between countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain about what kind of forces this reduction would apply to, and that French forces were an element of the whole picture. After having heard the French statement, they asked whether the Political Committee needed any further guidance to start a political analysis on what could be the realistic proposals to be put forward to the other side.

12. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE emphasised that he was not in a position either to answer the question raised by the United States Representative or to take part in a discussion about the work already done by an ad hoc group in which he had not participated. He wished to study any relevant document and in particular the draft circulated by the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, in order to be able to get instructions for a future meeting.

13. The CHAIRMAN suggested that all delegations should study this memorandum and that a preliminary discussion on the terms of reference be held in the Council as soon as was convenient to the French Delegation.

14. The COUNCIL agreed to this suggestion.

II. AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE AND DISARMAMENT EXPERTS

15. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE recalled his previous suggestion that in addition to the usual exchange of views on technical matters, the POLADS and the Disarmament Experts should address themselves to a more general question, that could be summarised as "After Non-Proliferation Treaty, what next?" In view of objections raised by several delegations, he had endeavoured to reformulate his proposal in the form of a questionnaire (see Annex) covering all aspects of paragraph 13, it being understood that questions C and D would be considered by the Disarmament Experts as part of their semi-annual meeting.

16. The CHAIRMAN asked for comments on the United States proposal as compared to the list of subjects in PO/68/58.

17. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE said that if the United States proposal were to be accepted, he would ask that question A be reformulated on the lines of sub-paragraph 4(a) in PO/68/58, namely arms control and mutual force reductions in Europe, and that this item, which seemed essential for the rest of the work, be discussed at a very early stage in the Political Committee.

18. As regards questions C and D in the American proposal, he felt that the Political Committee should consider the opportunity of asking the experts to discuss other subjects as well, including specific points concerning questions A and B.

19. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE expressed some concern that the Disarmament Experts, whose primary role was to discuss technical matters, would get more and more involved in discussions of a political character. His Authorities had a strong preference for keeping the drafting of the list of subjects under the control of the Political Committee for subsequent approval by the Council.

20. The BELGIAN, DANISH AND FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES were also in favour of leaving to the Political Committee all the preparatory work. They made various suggestions so that the broad question of "strategic arms balance" be broken down into several items.

21. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE said that he could accept the United States questionnaire as general guidance for the Political Committee. As far as his previous proposal was concerned, he said that, in view of objections raised, he would now propose that the Deputy Representatives of the Four Western Powers in the Geneva Disarmament Conference should be invited to attend with observers from other delegations.

22. Following an exchange of views it appeared that, at the present meeting, no delegation except Greece, was in a position to agree either to the United States or to the Canadian proposal. Nevertheless, several delegations stressed that as the meeting with Disarmament Experts was to take place on 27th February, there was some urgency in having a draft agenda as soon as possible.

23. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE then suggested that the Political Committee at senior level be asked to discuss this agenda at the earliest possible date, taking into account:

- items A and B in the United States proposal;
- items (c) and (d) in paragraph 4 of PO/68/58, these two last items to be discussed with the Disarmament Experts at the end of February;
- the question of strategic arms race being set aside for the moment.

24. This proposal was generally agreed ad referendum.

25. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE insisted, however, that there should be no rigid distinction between the Political Committee and the Disarmament Experts who were part of the Committee.

26. In conclusion, the COUNCIL agreed, ad referendum, that the Political Committee meeting at senior level should discuss the final formulation of the following items proposed by the United States Delegation for subsequent approval by the Council:

"What should be the arms control and disarmament objectives of the Allies in the next few years?

- A. What arms control measures are particularly important to European security?
- B. In considering the strategic arms balance, what measures afford the best chance to reach next arms control and disarmament agreements? (It is understood that item B is to include a briefing by the Nuclear Powers on future perspectives of a nuclear disarmament under the aspect of the durability of a Non-Proliferation agreement.)"

27. In addition, the COUNCIL agreed ad referendum that the Political Committee, meeting with Disarmament Experts at the end of February, should discuss the following items:

- the use of biological and chemical weapons;
- regional conventional arms transfers;
- any other business
(Under this item, for example, the question of Field Test "First Look" may be raised.)

W. K. H.

8/2/68

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