



N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

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PO/72/344

To: Permanent Representatives

From: Acting Secretary General

FOLLOW-UP TO THE BONN MINISTERIAL MEETING

In the light of the directives issued by Ministers in the Communiqué and during their discussions at the Bonn meeting, I would like to submit to the Council for its consideration the broad outlines of a programme of work for the coming months.

2. The pace of Allied preparations will of necessity have to take account of the forthcoming start of the multilateral preparatory phase, which is now an established fact, as well as of the proposal that there be multilateral exploratory talks on MBFR before or in parallel with the opening of this phase.

3. A number of Ministers stressed the importance of full consultation between member countries on all matters connected with the preparation of a Conference and, generally speaking, on all problems which could affect Allied interests.

4. A number of Ministers insisted that public opinion be adequately informed of the activities of the Alliance so as to prevent any misunderstanding of our aims, since this could have adverse repercussions on the defence effort. The Council may wish to decide on the most suitable way of dealing with these subjects of concern to the Ministers.

East-West Negotiations (CSCE; MBFR)

5. Among the issues which the Council was directed by Ministers to develop further, in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Communiqué, some require early solution, before the start of the multilateral phase, whilst others could perhaps be clarified in the light of the trend of the initial discussions at Helsinki.

Procedural Questions related to CSCE

6. One of the most urgent tasks will be to work out "the necessary arrangements for beginning the multilateral preparatory talks" mentioned in paragraph 8 of the Communiqué. The Council could decide to instruct the SPC to refine the suggestions put forward in this connection in C-M(72)24, Volume I(Revised), paragraphs 366-375, on the basis of information collected by member countries through their bilateral contacts with the Finnish and other interested governments. It would perhaps be possible in this way to arrive at rules of procedure, acceptable to the West, for the whole of the multilateral phase.

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7. Some of the Ministers mentioned the possibility of convening a high-level meeting to take stock of the progress of our own internal preparations before the start of the multilateral phase. This suggestion could be borne in mind.

Substantive Questions related to CSCE

8. A number of questions on which views differ and which are listed in the cover note to the above-mentioned C-M document as well as in PO/72/331, were left open. While taking account of the above remarks (paragraph 5), a further effort might be made to bring the points of view of member countries closer to one another.

9. Ministers agreed, in paragraph 11 of the Communiqué, that, in the interest of security, the examination at a CSCE of appropriate measures, including certain military measures, aimed at strengthening confidence and increasing stability, would contribute to the process of reducing the dangers of military confrontation. I would suggest instructing the Senior Political Committee to resume work on those parts of Chapter II ("Certain military aspects of security") of C-M(72)24 which may require review and refinement.

10. As regards economic co-operation, the Council could invite the Economic Committee to press actively ahead with the framing of proposals with a view to arriving at Agenda papers.

11. It was repeatedly emphasised in the course of our earlier studies that the link between the various negotiating items was an important element of Western tactics. This aspect should perhaps be given further attention.

Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions

12. Ministers representing countries which participate in NATO's integrated defence programme gave instructions, in paragraph 15 of the Communiqué, for the continuation of studies on the political, military and technical aspects of MBFR, in preparation for eventual negotiations. I suggest the Senior Political Committee and the MBFR Working Group be requested to pursue their work here. The Senior Political Committee, in particular, might be asked to bear in mind, among other things, Mr. Sharp's suggestion for study of a "package" approach to MBFR and Mr. Andersen's view that further clarification of the Soviet position on MBFR is necessary.

13. Several Ministers referred to the question of participation in eventual MBFR negotiations and in prior explorations, as well as to the organization of these multilateral exploratory talks. There is no agreement on these matters yet, and I suggest that we reconsider them together with other procedural and substantive requirements for MBFR explorations and negotiations.

14. In connection with the recognised importance of fullest consultations among interested Allies on MBFR, it may become advisable to review the suitability of existing machinery, for co-ordination of policies during the multilateral exploratory and negotiating phases.

Mediterranean

15. In paragraph 17 of the Communiqué, Ministers instructed the Council to follow closely the evolution of the situation in the Mediterranean and to prepare a report for them on this subject. As in the past, the Ad Hoc Group on the Mediterranean could be instructed to draft this report.

(Signed) P. PANSA CEDRONIO