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STATEMENT ON THE MINISTERIAL MEETING  
OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL AT REYKJAVIK

(11 - 12 June 1987)

1. Our meeting has taken place at a time when developments in East-West relations suggest that real progress may be possible, particularly in the field of arms control. We welcome these developments and will work to ensure that they result in improved security and stability. We note some encouraging signs in Soviet internal and external policies. In assessing Soviet intentions, we agree that the final test will be Soviet conduct across the spectrum from human rights to arms control.

We reaffirm the validity of the complementary principles enunciated in the Harmel report of 1967. The maintenance of adequate military strength and Alliance cohesion and solidarity remains an essential basis for our policy of dialogue and co-operation - a policy which aims to achieve a progressively more stable and constructive East-West relationship.

2. Serious imbalances in the conventional, chemical and nuclear field, and the persisting build-up of Soviet military power, continue to preoccupy us. We reaffirm that there is no alternative, as far as we can foresee, to the Alliance concept for the prevention of war - the strategy of deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of adequate and effective nuclear and conventional forces, each

element being indispensable. This strategy will continue to rest on the linkage of free Europe's security to that of North America, since their destinies are inextricably coupled. Thus the US nuclear commitment, the presence of United States nuclear forces in Europe<sup>(1)</sup> and the deployment of Canadian and United States forces there remain essential.

3. Arms control and disarmament are integral parts of our security policy; we seek effectively verifiable arms control agreements which can lead to a more stable and secure balance of forces at lower levels.

4. We reiterate the prime importance we attach to rapid progress towards reductions in the field of strategic nuclear weapons. We thus welcome the fact that the US and the Soviet Union now share the objective of achieving 50% reductions in their strategic arsenals. We strongly endorse the presentation of a US proposal in Geneva to that effect and urge the Soviet Union to respond positively.

We reviewed the current phase of the US-Soviet negotiations in Geneva on defence and space systems which aim to prevent an arms race in space and to strengthen strategic stability. We continue to endorse these efforts.

5. We note the recent progress achieved at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament towards a total ban on chemical weapons. We remain committed to achieving an early agreement on a comprehensive, worldwide and effectively verifiable treaty embracing the total destruction of existing stockpiles within an agreed timeframe and preventing the future production of such weapons.

6. Recognising the increasing importance of conventional stability, particularly at a time when significant nuclear reductions appear possible, we reaffirm the initiatives taken in our Halifax Statement and Brussels Declaration aimed at achieving a comprehensive, stable and verifiable balance of conventional forces

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(1) Greece recalls its position on nuclear matters

at lower levels. We recall that negotiations on conventional stability should be accompanied by negotiations between the 35 countries participating in the CSCE, building upon and expanding the confidence and security building measures contained in the Helsinki Final Act and the Stockholm Agreement. We agreed that the two future security negotiations should take place within the framework of the CSCE process, with the conventional stability negotiations retaining autonomy as regards subject matter, participation and procedures. Building on these agreements we took the decisions necessary to enable the High Level Task Force on Conventional Arms Control, which we established at the Halifax Ministerial, to press ahead with its work on the draft mandates to be tabled in the CSCE meeting and in the Conventional Stability mandate talks currently taking place in Vienna.

7. Having reviewed progress in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on an INF agreement, the Allies concerned call on the Soviet Union to drop its demand to retain a portion of its SS-20 capability and reiterate their wish to see all long-range land-based missiles eliminated in accordance with NATO's long-standing objective.

They support the global and effectively verifiable elimination of all US and Soviet land-based SRINF missiles with a range between 500 and 1,000 Km as an integral part of an INF agreement.

They consider that an INF agreement on this basis would be an important element in a coherent and comprehensive concept of arms control and disarmament which, while consistent with NATO's doctrine of flexible response, would include:

- a 50% reduction in the strategic offensive nuclear weapons of the US and the Soviet Union. to be achieved during current Geneva negotiations;
- the global elimination of chemical weapons;
- the establishment of a stable and secure level of conventional forces, by the elimination of disparities, in the whole of Europe;
- in conjunction with the establishment of a conventional balance and the global elimination of chemical weapons, tangible and verifiable reductions of American and Soviet land-based nuclear missile systems of shorter range, leading to equal ceilings.

8. We(1) have directed the North Atlantic Council in Permanent Session, working in conjunction with the appropriate military authorities, to consider the further development of a comprehensive concept of arms control and disarmament. The arms control problems faced by the Alliance raise complex and interrelated issues which must be evaluated together, bearing in mind overall progress in the arms control negotiations enumerated above as well as the requirements of Alliance security and of its strategy of deterrence.

9. In our endeavour to explore all opportunities for an increasingly broad and constructive dialogue which addresses the concerns of people in both East and West, and in the firm conviction that a stable order of peace and security in Europe cannot be built by military means alone, we attach particular importance to the CSCE process. We are therefore determined to make full use of the CSCE follow-up meeting in Vienna.

The full implementation of all provisions agreed in the CSCE process by the 35 participating states, in particular in the field of human rights and contacts, remains the fundamental objective of the Alliance and is essential for the fruitful development of East-West relations in all fields.

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(1) In this connection France recalled that it had not been a party to the double-track decision of 1979 and that it was not therefore bound by its consequences or implications.

Recalling our constructive proposals, we shall persist in our efforts to persuade the Eastern countries to live up to their commitments.

We will continue to work for a substantive and timely result of the conference.

10. Those of us participating in the MBFR talks reiterate our desire to achieve a meaningful agreement which provides for reductions, limitations and effective verification, and call upon the Warsaw Pact participants in these talks to respond positively to the very important proposals made by the West in December 1985 and to adopt a more constructive posture in the negotiations.

11. In Berlin's 750th anniversary year we stress our solidarity with the City, which continues to be an important element in East-West relations. Practical improvements in inner-German relations should in particular be of benefit to Berliners.

12. It is just 40 years since US Secretary of State Marshall delivered his far-sighted speech at Harvard. The fundamental values he expressed, which we all share, and which were subsequently embodied in the Marshall Plan, remain as vital today as they were then.

13. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms. Reaffirming our determination to combat it, we believe that close international co-operation is an essential means of eradicating this scourge.

14. Alliance cohesion is substantially enhanced by the support of freely elected parliamentary representatives and ultimately our publics. We therefore underline the great value of free debate on issues facing the Alliance and welcome the exchanges of views on these issues among the parliamentarians of our countries, including those in the North Atlantic Assembly.

15. We express our gratitude to the government of Iceland, which makes such a vital contribution to the security of the Alliance's northern maritime approaches, for their warm hospitality.

16. The Spring 1988 meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Ministerial Session will be held in Spain in June.