

Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council (Brussels, 3 and 4 December 1970)

Caption: At the Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council held in Brussels on 4 and 5 December 1969, the Allied governments declare themselves ready to enter into multilateral contacts with all interested governments to determine when it would be possible to convene a conference, or a series of conferences, on security and cooperation in Europe as soon as the talks on Berlin have reached a satisfactory conclusion and insofar as the other ongoing talks are proceeding favourably.

Source: Ministerial Communiqués 1970-1979. 3rd-4th December, 1970, Brussels, North Atlantic Council, Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio. [ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: NATO, [20.12.2005]. Available on <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c701203a.htm>.

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Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council (Brussels, 3 and 4 December 1970)

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

1. The North Atlantic Council met in Ministerial Session at Brussels on 3rd and 4th December, 1970. Foreign, Defence and Finance Ministers were present.
2. Ministers again stated that the political purpose of the Alliance is the common search for peace through initiatives aiming at the relaxation of tension and the establishment of a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe, accompanied by appropriate security guarantees.
3. The Council received a statement from President Nixon which pledged that, given a similar approach by the other Allies, the United States would maintain and improve its own forces in Europe and would not reduce them except in the context of reciprocal East-West action. Ministers expressed their profound satisfaction at the reaffirmation of Alliance solidarity expressed in this statement.
4. Ministers reviewed the international situation as it had developed since their last meeting in May in Rome. They noted that 1970 had been a year of extensive diplomatic activity by member governments of the Alliance to initiate or intensify contacts, discussions and negotiations with the members of the Warsaw Pact and with other European countries. Ministers paid particular attention to the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks, the Treaties negotiated by the federal Republic of Germany with the Soviet Union and Poland, intra-German relations, Berlin and the situation in the Mediterranean
5. Ministers welcomed the resumption at Helsinki in November of the negotiations between the United States and the USSR on Strategic Arms Limitations. They expressed the hope that the talks would lead, at an early date, to an agreement strengthening peace and security in Europe and in the world.
6. Ministers noted with satisfaction the signing of the Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the USSR on 12th August, 1970, and the initialing of the Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Polish People's Republic on 18th November, 1970. They welcomed these Treaties as contributions toward reduction of tensions in Europe and as important elements of the modus vivendi which the Federal Republic of Germany wishes to establish with its Eastern neighbors. Ministers noted the clarification's made in the context of the Treaties, and reflected in the exchanges of notes between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Three Powers, to the effect that quadripartite rights and responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole remain unaffected pending a peace settlement which would be based on the free decision of the German people and on the interests of European security. Ministers welcomed the beginning of an exchange of views between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR and expressed the hope that this exchange will prepare the ground for genuine negotiations between the two. Ministers reviewed the development of the quadripartite talks in Berlin.
7. In considering the situation with regard to Berlin and Germany, Ministers recalled their statement in the Brussels Declaration of 5th December, 1969 (paragraph 10) to the effect that concrete progress in both these fields would constitute an important contribution to peace and would have great weight in their evaluation of the prospects for improving East-West relations in Europe. Indeed, these prospects would be put in question failing a satisfactory outcome to the current Berlin negotiations. With this in mind, Ministers stressed the importance of securing unhindered access to Berlin, improved circulation within Berlin and respect by all for the existing ties between the Western sectors of Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany which have been established with the approval of the Three Powers. They underlined the need for an understanding between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR on a negotiated settlement of their mutual relations which would take account of the special features of the situation in Germany.
8. Ministers took note of a report on the situation in the Mediterranean prepared on their instructions by the Council in Permanent Session. They noted that the evolution of events in the area gives cause for concern and justifies careful vigilance on the part of the Allies. They recommended that consultations on this

question should continue, and they invited the Council in Permanent Session to keep the situation under review and to report fully thereon at their next meeting.

9. As a result of their review of the international situation and its positive and negative aspects, Ministers emphasized that these developments in Europe and the Mediterranean all affect the Alliance directly or indirectly, and have a bearing on the possibilities of reducing tensions and promoting peace.

10. Ministers noted that the initiatives which had been taken by Allied Governments had already achieved certain results which constituted some progress in important fields of East-West relations. Nevertheless their hope had been that more substantial progress would have been recorded in bilateral exploratory contacts and in the on-going negotiations, so that active consideration could have been given to the institution of broad multilateral contacts which would deal with the substantial problems of security and co-operation in Europe. They affirmed the readiness of their governments, as soon as the talks on Berlin have reached a satisfactory conclusion and in so far as the other on-going talks are proceeding favorably, to enter into multilateral contacts with all interested governments to explore when it would be possible to convene a conference, or a series of conferences, on security and co-operation in Europe. In this event, the Council would give immediate attention to this question.

11. In the meantime, the Council in Permanent Session will continue its study of the results which might be achieved at any such conference or series of conferences, and of the appropriate exploratory and preparatory procedures, including the proposals that have already been advanced. The Allied Governments will also pursue energetically their bilateral exploratory conversations with all interested states on questions affecting security and co-operation.

12. Ministers recalled that any genuine and lasting improvement in East-West relations in Europe must be based on the respect of the following principles which should govern relations between states and which would be included among the points to be explored: sovereign equality, political independence and territorial integrity of each European state; non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of any state, regardless of its political or social system; and the right of the people of each European state to shape their own destinies free of external constraint. A common understanding and application of these principles, without condition or reservation, would give full meaning to any agreement on mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force.

13. In the field of international co-operation, the contacts mentioned in paragraph 10 might provide an opportunity to consider ways and means of ensuring closer co-operation between interested countries on the cultural, economic, technical and scientific levels, and on the question of human environment. Ministers reaffirmed that the freer movement of people, ideas and information is an essential element for the development of such co-operation.

14. Ministers noted that Alliance studies on the various aspects of the mutual and balanced force reductions question have further progressed since the Rome Meeting and instructed the Council in Permanent Session to pursue studies in this field.

15. Ministers representing countries participating in NATO's integrated Defence Program re-emphasized the importance they attach to mutual and balanced force reductions as a means of reducing tensions and lessening the military confrontation in Europe and recalled the Declarations on this question issued at Reykjavik in 1968 and at Rome earlier this year. They noted that the Warsaw Pact countries have not directly responded to these Declarations but have mentioned the possibility of a discussion at some future time of the question of reducing foreign armed forces on the territory of European states.

16. These Ministers renewed their invitation to interested states to hold exploratory talks on the basis of their Rome Declaration, and also indicated their readiness within this framework to examine different possibilities in the field of force reductions in the Central Region of Europe, including the possible mutual and balanced reduction of stationed forces, as part of an integral program for the reduction of both stationed and indigenous forces.

17. Ministers reaffirmed their profound interest in genuine disarmament and arms control measures. In this connection, they expressed their satisfaction with progress towards a ban on the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea bed. They further considered the pursuit of Allied efforts and studies in all fields related to disarmament to be essential, including those concerning biological and chemical weapons. They invited the (council in Permanent Session to continue to examine these matters

18. Ministers endorsed the recent Council recommendation to Allied Governments to start work at once in order to achieve, by 1975 if possible but no later than the end of the decade, the elimination of intentional discharges of oil and oily wastes into the sea. This and other accomplishments of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society during the past year were welcomed by Ministers as evidence that the Allies are effectively combining their resources to stimulate national and international action on environmental problems.

19. Ministers examined a report on the achievements of the Conference of National Armaments Directors and its subordinate bodies in the promotion of co-operation in research, development and production of military equipment during the four years of its existence. They noted that, in spite of the excellent progress that had been made in the exchange of information on defence equipment, it had proved possible to establish relatively few firm NATO projects for co-operative development and production of equipment. They recognized that more political support would be necessary to overcome the obstacles to greater co-operation. They agreed to the need for a more positive approach in order to achieve the financial and operational benefits of more widespread adoption of jointly developed and produced equipment.

20. Ministers of the countries participating in NATO's integrated defence program met as the Defence Planning Committee on 2nd December, 1970.

21. Ministers concentrated their discussion on a comprehensive study, which has been in progress since last May, of the defence problems which the Alliance will face in the 1970s. They approved for public release the text at Annex.

22. Ministers confirmed that NATO's approach to security in the 1970s will continue to be based on the twin concepts of defence and detente. They reaffirmed the principle that the overall military capability of NATO should not be reduced except as part of a pattern of mutual force reductions balanced in scope and timing. They agreed that East-West negotiations can be expected to succeed only if NATO maintains an effective deterrent and defensive posture. Ministers confirmed the continued validity of the NATO strategy of flexibility in response, which includes forward defence, reinforcement of the flanks and capabilities for rapid mobilization, and calls for the maintenance of military capabilities which are able to provide an appropriate counter to any aggression. They noted the continuous rise in Soviet defence and defence-related expenditure and the evidence that the USSR is continuing to strengthen still further its military establishment, including that in the maritime field where Soviet power and the range of its activity have markedly increased. They, therefore, emphasized the need for improvements in NATO's conventional deterrent, as well as the maintenance of a sufficient and modern tactical and strategic nuclear deterrent.

23. The security of NATO being indivisible, Ministers underlined the special military and political role of North American forces present in Europe as an irreplaceable contribution to the common defence. In parallel they welcomed the important decision of European member nations participating in NATO's integrated defence program to make an increased common European effort to strengthen the defence capability of the Alliance. The establishment of a special European Defence Improvement Program of substantial additional measures will significantly strengthen NATO's capacity for defence and for crisis management in fields, including communications, which have been identified in the "AD 70s" Study as having particular importance.

24. In respect of the above Study, ministers invited the Defence Planning Committee in Permanent Session to draw up a suitable program and to ensure that all possible progress is made.

25. Ministers noted the force commitments undertaken by member nations for the year 1971 and adopted the five-year NATO force plan covering the period 1971-1975. They gave directions for the development of a force plan for the next NATO planning period.

26. Ministers viewed with concern the evidence of continuing growth in Soviet military strength in the Mediterranean. Such developments, they felt, could constitute an increasingly significant threat to the security of the Alliance. Ministers commented with approval on steps which have been taken to improve the Alliance's defence posture in the Mediterranean. Referring to their Communiqué issued in Brussels on 11th June of this year, Ministers directed that urgent attention be given to the development and implementation of further appropriate measures.

27. Within the field of crisis management, Ministers reviewed communications facilities for high level political consultation and for command and control; they agreed to a number of important measures designed to improve and expand these vital facilities. They encouraged further efforts in the field of civil preparedness and civil emergency planning. They noted progress made on various defence studies. They also noted that the trend towards more sophisticated equipment at increasing cost may well continue, and they stressed that forthcoming modernization programs would offer an opportunity for increased co-operation.

28. The Ministerial Meeting also provided the Defence Ministers comprising the Nuclear Defence Affairs Committee (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States) with the occasion to review work recently in progress in the Nuclear Planning Group and plans for the future. Acting on the recommendation of the Nuclear Defence Affairs Committee, the Defence Planning Committee adopted the policy documents elaborated by the Nuclear Planning Group at their meeting in Venice last Spring and finalized at Ottawa in October this year. These documents are in consonance with NATO's strategy of flexibility in response.

29. The next Ministerial Meeting of the Defence Planning Committee will take place in the Spring of 1971.

30. The Spring Ministerial Meeting of the Council will be held in Lisbon on 3rd and 4th June, 1971.

31. Ministers requested the Foreign Minister of Belgium to transmit this Communiqué on their behalf through diplomatic channels to all other interested parties including neutral and non-aligned governments.

Annex

Alliance Defence for the Seventies

1. The Allied countries participating in the integrated defence efforts decided at a meeting of the Defence Planning Committee in Permanent Session in May of this year to examine in depth NATO defence problems for the next decade.

2. The North Atlantic Alliance has made a practice over the years of periodically conducting major reviews and adapting its policies to accord with the changing circumstances of the times. A notable recent example was the study undertaken in 1967 which resulted in the Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance establishing defence and detente as complementary pillars of its activities. That Report stated that *"collective defence is a stabilizing factor in world politics. It is the necessary condition for effective policies directed towards a greater relaxation of tensions"*. Against this background, governments earlier this year recognized the particular timeliness of a full and candid exchange of views among the Allies on their common defence over the next ten years. This examination of NATO's defence capability in the light of current and prospective military and political developments has now been completed.

3. NATO's approach to security in the 1970s will continue to be based on the twin concepts of defence and detente. Defence problems cannot be seen in isolation but must be viewed in the broader context of the Alliance's basic purpose of ensuring the security of its members. There is a close inter-relationship between the maintenance of adequate defensive strength and the negotiation of settlements affecting the security of

the member states.

4. The 1970s could develop into an era of successful negotiations between members of the North Atlantic Alliance and those of the Warsaw Pact. On Western initiative, there are now negotiations under way between East and West which could lead to a real relaxation of tensions. It is hoped that there will be satisfactory progress in on-going talks on a limitation of strategic nuclear weapons and on an improvement of the situation in and around Berlin, and in other current negotiations between individual members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The Alliance will continue to seek improved East-West relations, and in the framework of this effort, one of its principal aims will be to engage the Soviet Union and its allies in meaningful talks on mutual and balanced force reductions and other disarmament measures. Progress in this field would facilitate dealing with the defence problems of the next decade. This period might also see convened one or more conferences on European security and co-operation.

5. On the other hand, the Allies cannot ignore certain disturbing features in the international situation. The evidence thus far suggests that the USSR, intent on extending and strengthening its political power, conducts its international relations on the basis of concepts some of which are not conducive to detente. In particular, its concept of sovereignty is clearly inconsistent with United Nations' principles. At the same time, Soviet military capabilities, besides guaranteeing the USSR's security, continue to increase and provide formidable backing for the wide-ranging assertion of Soviet influence and presence, persistently raising questions regarding their intentions. In real terms, there has been a continuous rise in Soviet defence and defence-related expenditures between 1965 and 1969 of about 5 % to 6 % per year on average and the evidence is that the USSR is continuing to strengthen its military establishments still further. The contrast between these figures and the corresponding information relating to the Alliance may be seen from paragraph 10 below. Whether East-West relations can in these circumstances be significantly improved will depend mainly on the actions of the USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies, and on the attitudes they bring to negotiations now in progress or in prospect.

6. The position of the Alliance and its member countries during this period of exploration and negotiation, with special reference to European security and mutual force reductions, would be weakened if NATO were to reduce its forces unilaterally, especially those in the European area, and in particular at a time when it is confronted with a steady growth in Soviet military power, which manifests itself above all in the strategic nuclear and maritime fields. NATO member states must, therefore, maintain a sufficient level of conventional and nuclear strength for defence as well as for deterrence, thus furnishing a sound basis from which to negotiate and underlining that negotiation is the only sensible road open. Progress towards a meaningful detente in an era of negotiation will, therefore, require the maintenance of a strong collective defence posture.

7. The present NATO defence strategy of deterrence and defence, with its constituent concepts of flexibility in response and forward defence, will remain valid. It will continue to require an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces.

8. It is to be hoped that success in strategic arms limitation talks will be achieved. Allied strategic nuclear capability will in any event remain a key element in the security of the West during the 1970s. At the present time, adequate nuclear forces exist and it will be essential to ensure that this capability, which includes the continued commitment of theater nuclear forces, is maintained.

9. The situation in the field of conventional forces is less satisfactory in view of certain imbalances between NATO and Warsaw Pact capabilities. Careful attention needs to be paid to priorities in improving NATO's conventional strength in the 1970s. In the allocation of resources, priority will be given to measures most critical to a balanced Alliance defence posture in terms of deterrent effect, ability to resist external political pressure, and the prompt availability or rapid enhancement of the forward defensive capability in a developing crisis. In addition to a capability to deter and counter major deliberate aggression, Allied forces should be so structured and organized as to be capable of dealing also with aggressions and incursions with more limited objectives associated with intimidation or the creation of faits accomplis, or with those aggressions which might be the result of accident or miscalculation. In short, Allied forces should be so

structured and organized as to deter and counter any kind of aggression. Important areas in NATO's conventional defence posture to which attention should be paid in the next decade include: armor/anti-armor potential, the air situation including aircraft protection; overall maritime capabilities, with special reference to anti-submarine forces; the situation on NATO's flanks; the peacetime deployment of ground forces; further improvements in Allied mobilization and reinforcement capabilities as well as in NATO communications, for crisis management purposes.

10. The Alliance possesses the basic resources for adequate conventional strength. However, member countries are confronted with diverging trends in the pattern of expenditures and costs. On the other hand the cost of personnel and equipment continues to mount and most NATO countries are faced with major reequipment programs; on the other, in many member countries the share of GNP devoted to defence has declined and, even if outlays in money terms have risen, outlays in real terms have diminished owing to inflation. In marked contrast with the trend in Warsaw Pact countries' military expenditure, defence expenditures of the NATO European countries taken as a whole and calculated in real terms went down by 4 % from 1964 to 1969.

11. It is of paramount importance that there be close collaboration among all member states to ensure the most effective collective defence posture. It is equally important that the burden of maintaining the necessary military strength should be borne co-operatively with each member making an appropriate contribution.

12. The commitment of substantial North American forces deployed in Europe is essential both politically and militarily for effective deterrence and defence and to demonstrate the solidarity of NATO. Their replacement by European forces would be no substitute. At the same time their significance is closely related to an effective and improved European defence effort. Ten of the European countries have therefore consulted among themselves to determine how it would be possible for them individually and collectively to make a more substantial contribution to the overall defence of the Treaty area.

13. As a result the ten countries have decided to adopt a special European Defence Improvement Program going well beyond previously existing plans and designed to improve Alliance capability in specific fields identified as of particular importance in the current study. This Program will comprise:

- a. an additional collective contribution, in the order of \$420 million over five years, to NATO common infrastructure to accelerate work on the NATO integrated communications system and on aircraft survival measures;
- b. numerous important additions and improvements to national forces, costing at least \$450-500 million over the next five years plus very substantial further amounts thereafter; the forces concerned will all be committed to NATO;
- c. other significant financial measures to improve collective defence capability, costing \$79 million over the next two years.

The United States and Canada have welcomed this Program, and have reaffirmed their intention to maintain their forces in Europe at substantially their current levels.

14. After careful review of the proposals emerging from the examination of defence problems in the Seventies, the Defence Planning Committee in Ministerial Session on 2nd December, 1970, adopted concrete proposals aimed at improving NATO's defence capabilities.