

## Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council (Bonn, 30 and 31 May 1972)

**Caption:** In May 1972, the Allied governments, welcoming the progress made with regard to East–West relations and, in particular, the conclusion of significant agreements and arrangements, give the go-ahead to the opening of multilateral discussions linked to preparations for a conference on security and cooperation in Europe and accept the offer of the Finnish Government that these talks be held in Helsinki.

**Source:** Ministerial Communiqués 1970-1979. 30th-31st May, 1972, Bonn, North Atlantic Council, Chairman : Mr. J. Luns. [ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: NATO, [21.12.2005]. Available on <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c720530a.htm>.

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[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/final\\_communique\\_of\\_the\\_ministerial\\_session\\_of\\_the\\_north\\_atlantic\\_council\\_bonn\\_30\\_and\\_31\\_may\\_1972-en-790951e1-e50f-49f2-853f-5026ddd8da8a.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/final_communique_of_the_ministerial_session_of_the_north_atlantic_council_bonn_30_and_31_may_1972-en-790951e1-e50f-49f2-853f-5026ddd8da8a.html)

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## Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council (Bonn, 30 and 31 May 1972)

Chairman: Chairman: Mr. J. Luns.

1. The North Atlantic Council met in Ministerial Session in Bonn on 30th and 31st May, 1972.
2. Ministers reaffirmed that the purpose of the Alliance is to preserve the freedom and security of all its members. Defence and the relaxation of tension are inseparably linked. The solidarity of the Alliance is indispensable in this respect. Allied governments seek an improvement in their relations with the countries of Eastern Europe and aim at a just and durable peace which could overcome the division of Germany and foster security in Europe.
3. Ministers noted progress in relations between Western and Eastern countries, increasing contacts between the leaders of these countries, and the conclusion of important agreements and arrangements. They welcomed these developments flowing from major initiatives undertaken by their governments, which had full and timely consultations on these subjects. Such consultations will continue.
4. Ministers welcomed the signing by the United States and the USSR of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and the interim agreement on Certain Measures with respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. They believe these two agreements limiting the strategic arms of the United States and the USSR will contribute to strategic stability, significantly strengthen international confidence, and reduce the danger of nuclear war. Ministers also welcomed the commitment by the United States and the USSR actively to continue negotiations on limiting strategic arms. They expressed the hope that these two agreements will be the beginning of a new and promising era of negotiations in the arms control field.
5. Ministers noted with satisfaction that the treaty of 12th August, 1970, between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union and the treaty of 7th December, 1970, between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Polish People's Republic are to enter into force in the near future. They reaffirmed their opinion that these treaties are important, both as contributions towards the relaxation of tension in Europe and as elements of the modus vivendi which the Federal Republic of Germany wishes to establish with its Eastern neighbors. Ministers welcomed the declaration of 17th May, 1972, in which the Federal Republic confirmed its policy to this end and reaffirmed its loyalty to the Atlantic Alliance as the basis of its security and freedom. They noted that it remains the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany to work for circumstances of peace in Europe in which the German people, in free self-determination, can recover their unity; and that the existing treaties and agreements to which the Federal Republic of Germany is a party and the rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers relating to Berlin and Germany as a whole remain unaffected.
6. Ministers also welcomed the progress made since their last meeting in the talks between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR. They regard the conclusion of the agreements and arrangements between the competent German authorities, which supplement the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin of 3rd September, 1971, as well as the signature of a Treaty on Questions of Traffic between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR, as important steps in the effort to improve the situation in Germany. They thus feel encouraged in the hope that, in further negotiations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR, agreement might be reached on more comprehensive arrangements which would take into account the special situation in Germany.
7. Ministers noted with satisfaction that the governments of France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union have arranged to sign the Final Protocol to the Quadripartite Agreement. The entry into force of the entire Berlin Agreement being thus assured, the Ministers hope that a new era can begin for Berlin, free of the tension that has marked its history for the past quarter century.
8. In the light of these favorable developments, Ministers agreed to enter into multilateral conversations concerned with preparations for a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. They accepted with

gratitude the proposal of the Finnish Government to act as host for such talks in Helsinki at the level of Heads of Mission under the conditions set out in its aide-memoire of 24th November, 1970. Accordingly, they decided to work out with other interested governments the necessary arrangements for beginning the multilateral preparatory talks.

9. Ministers stated that the aim of Allied Governments at the multilateral preparatory talks would be to ensure that their proposals were fully considered at a Conference and to establish that enough common ground existed among the participants to warrant reasonable expectations that a Conference would produce satisfactory results.

10. Prepared in this way, a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe should constitute an important factor in the process of reducing tension. It should help to eliminate obstacles to closer relations and co-operation among the participants while maintaining the security of all. Allied governments look forward to a serious examination of the real problems at issue and to a Conference which would yield practical results.

11. Ministers considered 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.

12. Ministers noted the Report of the Council in Permanent Session concerning a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The Report examined the issues which might be included on the Agenda of a Conference as set forth in paragraph 13 of the Brussels Communiqué of 10th December, 1971, as well as the procedural questions relating to the convening of a Conference. Ministers directed the Council in Permanent Session to develop further its substantive and procedural studies in preparation for a Conference.

13. Ministers representing countries which participate in NATO's Integrated Defence Program recalled the offers to discuss mutual and balanced force reductions which they had made at Reykjavik in 1968, at Rome in 1970, and subsequently reaffirmed.

14. These Ministers continue to aim at negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions and related measures. They believe that these negotiations should be conducted on a multilateral basis and be preceded by suitable explorations. They regretted that the Soviet Government has failed to respond to the Allied offer of October 1971 to enter into exploratory talks. They therefore now propose that multilateral explorations on mutual and balanced force reductions be undertaken as soon as practicable, either before or in parallel with multilateral preparatory talks on a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

15. These Ministers noted the studies conducted since their last meeting on political, military and technical aspects of mutual and balanced force reductions. They instructed the Permanent Representatives to continue this work in preparation for eventual negotiations.

16. These Ministers stated that the present military balance of forces in Europe does not allow a unilateral relaxation of the defence efforts of the Allies. Unilateral force reductions would detract from the Alliance's efforts to achieve greater stability and detente and would jeopardize the prospects for mutual and balanced force reductions.

17. Ministers took note of a Report by the Council in Permanent Session on the situation in the Mediterranean. They expressed their concern regarding the factors of instability in the area which could endanger the security of the members of the Alliance. They instructed the Council in Permanent Session to follow closely the evolution of the situation and to report to them at their next meeting.

18. The next Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council will be held in Brussels in December 1972

19. Ministers requested the Foreign Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to transmit this Communiqué on their behalf through diplomatic channels to all other interested parties, including neutral

and non-aliened governments.