

Recommendation 383 of the WEU Assembly on the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe (Paris, 16 June 1982)

Caption: On 16 June 1982, as the Euromissiles crisis unfolds, the Assembly of Western European Union (WEU) adopts Recommendation 383 on the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe. Noting that the Soviet Union has a disturbing superiority in heavy intercontinental missiles and intermediate-range forces, the Assembly recommends that the WEU Council should call on the North Atlantic Council to press for an agreement on the zero option in the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) talks. But it advises continuing with preparations for the possible deployment from 1983 of cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe.

Source: Assembly of Western European Union. ‘Recommendation 383 on the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe (Paris, fourth sitting, 16th June 1982)’ in Proceedings: Twenty-eighth ordinary session: First Part, Vol. II, Minutes: Official Report of Debates. Paris: Assembly of WEU. June 1982, pp. 40-41.

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RECOMMENDATION 383***on the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe***

The Assembly,

- (i) Believing that the balance of all nuclear forces can be assessed only as a whole, but noting that the Soviet Union has a disturbing superiority in heavy intercontinental missiles and in intermediate-range forces, while the United States lead in total numbers of nuclear warheads has been reduced;
- (ii) Believing that arms control and adequate defence measures are two sides of a balanced security policy designed to prevent war, not only nuclear war;
- (iii) Stressing the importance of the conventional component of the NATO deterrent forces;
- (iv) Reiterating its belief that the NATO dual decision of 17th December 1979 remains the basis both for adjusting the imbalance in intermediate-range forces, an imbalance which has been increased by the deployment of 300 SS-20s so far reported, and for negotiating the zero option;
- (v) Regretting that SALT II remains unratified although at the time of its signature endorsed by the Assembly and all NATO governments as a step in a necessarily continuous process of strategic arms control negotiations, and that nearly three years have elapsed since its signature without further progress;
- (vi) Welcoming the declaration of the United States Government that it will refrain from actions which undercut existing strategic arms agreements as long as the USSR shows equal restraints, and comparable statements of the Soviet Union, and appealing to both governments to formalise those statements at the opening of the START negotiations;
- (vii) Believing that in view of the mutual benefits of such control the strategic arms reduction talks should be opened urgently and pursued independently of other aspects of East-West relations, and welcoming therefore President Reagan's speech of 9th May 1982 calling for them to open at the end of June, and making realistic proposals for significant reductions of strategic nuclear weapons;
- (viii) Hoping also that the opening of those talks will have a beneficial effect on the INF negotiations which must be conducted in the framework of START;
- (ix) Stressing the need for a verifiable comprehensive test ban in order to block the development of ever more sophisticated nuclear weapons;
- (x) Stressing the importance of concrete confidence-building measures of the type agreed at Helsinki as a precursor and complement of balanced reductions in the armouries of both sides;
- (xi) Seeing in most peace demonstrations both in Europe and the United States, an expression of deep and justified concern about the dangers of an unrestricted arms race and the possibility of nuclear war;
- (xii) Regretting however the unilateral trends and over-simplifications apparent within movements which ignore the need for military stability, both nuclear and conventional, and for objective analysis of the facts in order to negotiate reductions;
- (xiii) Welcoming the publication of "NATO and the Warsaw Pact Force Comparisons" for which the Assembly has repeatedly called, and believing that a continuing effort must be made by governments and parliamentarians to inform the public objectively about the nature of the threat and the basis of allied defence and arms control policies;
- (xiv) Regretting that in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union public opinion has no opportunity to discuss freely the concepts on which European and international security should be based,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

- A. Call on member governments acting in the North Atlantic Council,
 - 1. To continue the present much improved close and continuous consultations to ensure that an agreed allied position is maintained on all aspects of nuclear deterrence and nuclear arms control;

2. To ensure that preparations continue in the countries concerned for the deployment from 1983 of the agreed levels of ground-launched cruise and Pershing II missiles less any reductions previously agreed in the INF talks;
 3. To press for the earliest agreement in the INF talks on the zero option for land-based missiles, and the step-by-step pursuit of these talks to include other weapons systems, and the eventual inclusion of battlefield systems in these or the MBFR talks;
 4. To welcome the resumption of the SALT process through the proposed opening of START in June, and to press for the closest linking of these to the INF talks and the continued mutual respect of all SALT limits during the negotiations;
 5. To give increased emphasis to the negotiation and adoption of effective procedures for verification, as essential for any agreement on arms control and reduction;
 6. To ask the United States Government to examine seriously Senator Jackson's proposal for a joint United States-Soviet Union command post in a neutral country to deter the possibility of war by accident or miscalculation;
 7. To bring up to date and publish from time to time on an agreed objective basis the NATO comparison of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces, and to urge the Soviet Union to be equally forthcoming and objective in publishing force comparisons;
- B.1. Call on member governments to pursue active information policies, to ensure that public opinion is objectively informed both about the nature of the threat and about the purposes of allied defence and arms control and reduction policies;
 - B.2. Develop a European approach to the political aspects of the discussions in the North Atlantic Council.