MINISTERIAL COUNCIL
LUXEMBOURG, 28 APRIL 1987

COMMUNIQUE


2. Ministers stressed the important role WEU can play in the development of a European Union, an important stage in which was the signature of the Single European Act. They emphasized the importance of further strengthening the European component of the North Atlantic Alliance. The Alliance needs a strong and united Europe which jointly analyses and defines more clearly its security interests. To this end, they intend to develop WEU further as a suitable forum. Such a development will also serve the interests of all the Allies. The defence of a free Europe is also the defence of North America.
3. Their overriding objective remains to strengthen peace in freedom and to prevent any kind of war or intimidation by military means. They reaffirmed that there is, for the foreseeable future, no alternative to the Western concept for the prevention of war, which must continue to be based on an appropriate mix of conventional and nuclear forces which together provide a credible deterrent against all forms of aggression. They stressed the need to maintain the effectiveness of this strategy through the linkage of Europe's security to that of North America. Recalling the indivisible nature of security in the North Atlantic Treaty area, Ministers re-emphasized the essential commitment of the United States and Canada to the defence of Europe. The presence of US nuclear forces and the presence of US troops in Europe remain indispensable for the security of the whole Alliance.

4. In this context, Ministers recalled the importance of the contribution made by the seven member countries of WEU to Alliance defence capabilities. They stressed that a strong conventional component is a fundamental prerequisite for an effective defence of Western European territory.

They recalled that five member States provide delivery systems and the facilities for nuclear weapons which remain under US control. They acknowledged the contribution made by France's and Britain's independent nuclear forces to the Western deterrent by increasing the uncertainty in the mind of a potential aggressor.
5. The considerations stated above remain fully valid in the context of the current evolution in East-West relations.

   All aspects of the East-West dialogue affect the security interests of Europe. WEU Ministers reiterated their wish to see Western Europe continue to participate actively in the development of this dialogue and to shoulder its responsibilities fully.

   The member Governments of WEU will continue, while retaining strong defences, to strive to develop cooperation and dialogue with Eastern European countries.

6. Ministers underlined their determination to make full use of the CSCE follow-up meeting in Vienna for progress in all fields. In this context, they reaffirmed their commitment to all the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid concluding document. The balanced implementation of these provisions is the prerequisite for a more constructive development of East-West relations in all fields, political and military as well as economic and technological, and in the field of human rights and contacts. Each step towards the free movement of individuals and ideas allows progress towards overcoming the division which continues to affect Europe and towards building a stable framework for peace and security in Europe.
7. Arms control and disarmament efforts aimed at effectively verifiable agreements leading to a stable balance of forces at lower levels are an integral part of Western security policy. A successful outcome of the current East-West negotiations depends on the continued solidarity between Europe and the United States.

Ministers noted with satisfaction that conditions and prospects for dialogue between East and West on arms control had improved. A recent expression of this improvement has been the intensification of the negotiations in Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union, as evidenced by the visit of Secretary of State Shultz to Moscow. Ministers expressed the hope that the prospects for progress would be confirmed and would materialize in agreements which would ultimately reduce the hitherto undiminished threat represented by the Soviet military capability.

8. Ministers wished to recall that the basic proposal in the field of land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles was formally presented by the United States as long ago as 1981. If the achievement of an agreement proves possible, this will be as a result of the constructive approach and the steadfastness of the Western countries concerned. They underlined that any arms control agreement should meet the fundamental security requirements of the West.
Ministers examined with interest the growing possibility of an agreement aimed at the total elimination of American and Soviet longer-range intermediate land-based nuclear missiles, which should be effectively verifiable. They fully support the US efforts for its conclusion.

Ministers recalled their serious concern at the existing Soviet superiority in shorter-range intermediate nuclear missiles and the requirement not to neglect this in any INF agreement. In this context, they noted that the Soviet Union had, in response to earlier proposals tabled by the United States, recently made statements on these missiles, the content of which should be carefully studied as soon as they are clarified in writing. They underlined the importance of ongoing consultations within the Alliance.

9. Underlining the great importance which they attach to progress also being made in the field of strategic weapons, Ministers reiterated their support for the US proposal – which they consider a priority – for a 50% reduction of Soviet and American strategic offensive forces. As for negotiations on space and defence systems, every effort must be made in Geneva to arrive at agreement on the relationship between US and Soviet strategic offensive weapons and defensive systems with the aim of strengthening strategic stability.
10. Ministers reiterated that reductions in nuclear weapons would increase the importance of removing the conventional superiority of the Warsaw Pact and eliminating chemical weapons, given the need for a stable balance at all times.

They underlined the need to focus on the problems arising from geostrategic asymmetry and the Warsaw Pact's capability for surprise attack or for the initiation of a large-scale offensive action.

11. Ministers stressed their determination to intensify their efforts to strengthen stability and security in the whole of Europe, through increased openness and the establishment of a verifiable, comprehensive and stable balance of conventional forces at lower levels. They recalled the Brussels Declaration of 11 December 1986. They expressed their hope that the informal discussions taking place in Vienna in a constructive atmosphere would, within a reasonable time, lead to an agreement allowing the opening of new negotiations on conventional arms control in Europe aimed at eliminating existing disparities.

They recalled at the same time their determination to strive for the continuation of the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures in Europe.

Only a stable East-West balance of forces at each stage of the arms control process can ensure security in Western Europe.
12. Ministers also underlined their commitment to the conclusion of a comprehensive and effectively verifiable, global ban on chemical weapons.

13. Ministers stated their resolve to continue their efforts towards the establishment in Europe of the technological and industrial base necessary to ensure the development of a strong and competitive European armaments industry, this being an important aspect of Europe's contribution to defence. In this connection, they reaffirmed the importance they attach to the generation of more, and more systematic, collaboration in the field of conventional armaments.

14. Ministers took note of an interim report on European security interests in the present strategic context. This report was prepared in accordance with the mandate set out at the informal Ministerial meeting of the WEU Council in Luxembourg on 13 and 14 November 1986.

They mandated the Permanent Council to finalize this report and, on this basis, to draw up a common document identifying the principles of European security with a view to its examination, possible adoption and publication, at their next Ministerial meeting in The Hague.

15. Ministers took note of the report prepared by the Special Working Group analysing the politico-strategic implications of the current research programmes on strategic defence systems. They instructed the Special Working Group to continue to examine the implications of ballistic missile defence within the framework of its reflections on the problems affecting security interests in Western Europe.
16. With regard to the problems of security in the Mediterranean, Ministers took note of the draft outline study prepared jointly by France and Italy which, in conformity with their decision of November 1986, would provide a basis for reflection by a group of experts acting under the authority of the Council.

17. Ministers noted with satisfaction that the reactivation of the Organization, which allowed for a close association of the Foreign and Defence Ministers, had become a reality. They heard a report by the Presidency on the reorganization of the intergovernmental structures of WEU.

They pointed out that the measures still to be taken should be specified by 31 December 1987 and that the possible collocation of the ministerial organs in one capital should also be contemplated. They therefore instructed the Permanent Council to present them with definitive proposals at their Autumn meeting.