

NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY AND NATO NUCLEAR POLICY

REPORT OF A SEMINAR IN THE HAGUE

3 NOVEMBER 2000



Conference on the NPT Review Conference and NATO Nuclear Policy

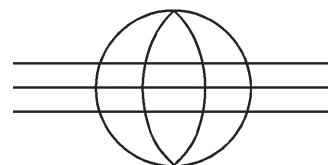
Report of a Seminar in The Hague, 3 November 2000

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FOREWORD

The Netherlands, together with Belgium, Germany, Italy and Norway form a 'dissident' group on nuclear policy in NATO. This like-minded group of countries have come to be known as the 'NATO 5.' They tend to support the New Agenda Group (formerly, the New Agenda Coalition, consisting of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden) agreeing that more steps need to be taken towards nuclear disarmament. Canada, although not part of the 'NATO 5' group, can be considered like-minded due to its public criticisms of present NATO nuclear policy. At the recent Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in April 2000, the NATO 5 countries acted as a kind of intermediary between the nuclear weapons states and the former New Agenda Coalition (NAC). The Netherlands and Norway took the lead in these negotiations. It is generally recognized that the NATO 5 played a critical role in bringing about the successful conclusion of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

On September 6, 2000 the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Jozias van Aartsen acknowledged in the Dutch parliament, during a Foreign Affairs Committee meeting evaluating the NPT conference and the NATO paragraph 32 process, that the 'group of five' would continue to cooperate in the coming months. This is especially interesting when viewed in connection with the upcoming NATO ministerial meeting in December 2000, during which a report will be presented on the outcome of the initial stage of the 'paragraph 32' evaluation process of NATO non-proliferation policy. There is at least some degree of tension between the outcome of the NATO evaluation 'process' and the outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference noted above. The aim of our conference in The Hague, on November 3, 2000, was to explore the various components of this tension.

The Netherlands parliament provided an auspicious location for bringing together parliamentarians from the NATO 5 countries and Canada, as well as NAC countries; NGO representatives; the diplomatic community in the Hague and NATO officials. This meeting served the dual purpose of creating closer cooperation between parliamentarians of the above countries. As Drs. Jan Hoekema, MP (the Netherlands) who hosted the conference together with Mr. Bert Koenders, MP (the Netherlands) noted in his closing statement.

'... there have always been people working very hard on these issues in the NGO's, of course also in governments. What was lacking to some extent I think was the synergy of the different actors from different angles with different responsibilities coming together. So I think it has been a very good idea by PENN and IPPNW and the PGA to bring this crowd together and to have a try at some synergy and to continue the debate on international security issues.'

He also noted his hope that more meetings would follow from this one. We heartily agree.

The Hague, 10 November 2000

Shazia Rafi, Secretary General, Parliamentarians for Global Action
Dr. Herman Spanjaard MD, IPPNW-Netherlands, Vice-president IPPNW Europe
Karel Koster, Project Director PENN

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Jan Hoekema has been a member of the Dutch parliament from 1994 onwards. He is the foreign affairs spokesman of D66, one of the parties of the governing coalition. From 1977 onwards he was the head of the directorate for political UN affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, responsible for worldwide UN arms control matters (chemical and biological weapons and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons). He is a member of the PGA board.

Bert Koenders has been in the Dutch parliament since 1997, where he is the foreign affairs spokesman for the parliamentary Labour Party. In the past he worked for the UN in Mozambique, South Africa and Mexico. He was also part-time European director and consultant for Parliamentarians for Global Action, specialised in projects and missions on international monetary policy and Africa.

Roland Krueger has been head of the Nuclear Policy Section of the Defence Planning and Operations Division at NATO Headquarters since 1997. He works at NATO on contract for a three year period and will return to the German Bundeswehr, where he fulfilled a number of functions before coming to Brussels. Among others he was a nuclear planning officer at the NATO Centag HQ in Heidelberg and worked at the Ministry of Defence in Bonn.

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Ted Whiteside is Head of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Centre at NATO. Before taking up this position he was a counsellor in the Canadian delegation to NATO, responsible for a wide range of political and defence issues, including theatre ballistic missile defence. After that he became deputy head of the disarmament, arms control and cooperative security section in the political affairs division at NATO from where he moved to his present position.

Opening Statements

Mr. Bert Koenders

(Foreign Affairs spokesman of the Labour Party in the Dutch parliament and member of Parliamentarians for Global Action)

I would like to welcome you very much. This is the second meeting we are organising on this issue. I think the strength of this kind of meeting is that we are working together with different groups and organizations that can form new alliances to discuss the new nuclear debate in the world, because the debate is very different from what we had in the Cold War in the eighties. Some of the elements are still similar, but they take place in a completely different setting. It is important that we continue our discussions even if public opinion is not ready for this in all of our countries and to engage them in the future of this century, in which the issue of proliferation is one of the major issues.

We are holding this meeting at a propitious time. There is some positive feeling around the issue of nuclear weapons compared to the last time. I am not overly optimistic, but we have to see that the NPT Review Conference has ended in a success. In the UN, we have seen an interesting vote this week on the resolution of the New Agenda Coalition. Many countries that last year would not have thought of voting in favour of this resolution have done so this week, for instance the US government, but also the UK, with the French government abstaining.

At the same time, there are many challenges we have to face. One of these is the problems that we have again with the discussions on nuclear negotiations and arms control in the context of START. One of the major challenges is the issue of tactical nuclear weapons. I had hoped these could be included in START III, but this looks difficult at this moment. We have to find a strategy for that. We also need a lot more negotiations and initiatives on verification, on the disposition of fissile materials, on strict compliance, on nuclear testing by India and Pakistan, and on the parties that are not acceding to the Treaty.

To what extent are the responsibilities of NATO member states induced by the fact that the NPT Review Conference has been held? One of the major elements will be the so-called Article 32 process, which is a technocratic term for the discussions that are being held in NATO's High Level Group to see to what extent NATO nuclear policies should be adapted to new realities. I have my doubts whether it is also major in terms of the negotiations between the different countries. If we are looking at issues of transparency and openness on nuclear issues, which is, in my view, possible and nec-

essary in this day and age, then it should also be possible to have this discussion in a more public and open manner, with parliaments and NGO's. I think the Article 32 process should not be kept in the framework of official negotiations only and that at least the outcome should be discussed with all parties concerned.

It is a major element of non-proliferation that you show openness on where nuclear weapons are stored and what task they have. In my view, we need a new policy in the context of NATO as it is still not possible for me as a parliamentarian in this country to know if we have tactical nuclear weapons in the Netherlands. Of course, we know they are there, but officially I know nothing. If we talk about transparency in global terms and in the context of new initiatives by my government in the NPT Review Conference, I think NATO's public policy on this should be changed. At the moment, governments are bound by NATO rules and I feel that is no longer logical, if it has ever been.

Lastly, I think the Negative Security Guarantees should be strengthened, showing to all countries involved to what extent the nuclear countries are abiding by the rules.

Mr. Malcolm Savidge

(MP of the Labour Party for Aberdeen North and Chairman of the All Party Group on Global Security and Non-Proliferation)

It was against the background of a general lack of public interest in the matter of nuclear weapons that in 1999 a group of MP's and members of NGO's in Britain got together. We discussed whether we could form a group that could focus on this issue. First of all, we had a basic choice to make whether it should be a campaigning group working on a specific agenda or whether it would be better to form a debating and discussion group working on an open agenda and without any agreed collective positions.

We opted for the second, because we felt it was important to encourage cross-party discussion and because these issues were so important that they ought to transcend partisan politics. In moving the party consensus, one had better chances of moving individual parties. Parties of the Left have often been frightened that parties of the Right would accuse them of being soft on defence. Therefore it was much better to get all the parties involved in discussion. When it came to trying to have meetings with members of other legislatures, it would also be easier to get dialogue with people from across other parties and across different points of view, if we did not stand for any particular point of view. If we

had important speakers, they would not just be speaking for the converted. We felt that this issue was of such overwhelming importance that it deserved more rational discussion and far less sloganising than had sometimes happened in the past.

We have a set-up in the British Parliament where we have something called an 'all party parliamentary group'. This is an official organisation set up under strict rules with minimum numbers of members from the government, the main opposition parties and the other opposition parties. We felt that if we went for that status, we would get the attention of the media and the public that the issue needed and had been lacking for nearly a decade. We decided to set up the All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Security and Non-Proliferation, which we started in January of this year. We did not want this to be divisive and decided wherever possible where there were other parliamentary groups we could work with, we would have joint meetings with them. Precisely to avoid the sort of fracturing that had tended to occur in the past.

The first main meeting we actually had was with the film actor Kirk Douglas, we invited the Foreign or Defence spokespeople of all three main parties to also speak on the platform, and we also had Dr. Ellsworth from the Oxford Research Group. I must say that it succeeded beyond our wildest hopes in attracting the attention of the media and in raising public awareness. We got the front pages of nearly every newspaper in Britain. Even celebrity magazines did not just have photographs, but they actually seriously discussed the issues. We did not only have coverage in the news in the UK but throughout Europe and in fact in the world beyond.

Michael Douglas himself spoke very movingly and particularly called for the UK to take more of a leading role in nuclear arms control. He had meetings with both Robin Cook, our Foreign Secretary, and Peter Hain, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Disarmament Matters, both of whom have taken a very positive role in the NPT Conference and possibly in this week's decision at the UN.

Subsequent meetings included a meeting with Ambassador Dhanapala, the UN under-secretary for Disarmament Affairs, at which he made a very interesting proposal which I believe has the Secretary-General's support that we ought to be having an international conference at which all nations could be invited, including the unofficial nuclear weapon states that refuse to take part in most current treaty negotiations.

In Parliament, We have had a debate on National Missile Defence. We have had briefings from national and international experts on a fairly regular basis. We

have succeeded in attracting all party attendances; we had an all-party delegation to Washington. We went over there a week after the failure of the last of the NMD tests and so we obviously had very interesting discussions, particularly on NMD and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty with people from both parties and right across the defence spectrum. We invited them to a return visit and hope to achieve that.

We have had a lot more debates, on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, on the NMD. Weapons of Mass Destruction in general have been more debated. Our Foreign Affairs Select Committee has produced a unanimous report on WMD.

As the Group itself does not take collective positions, I will from here on make one or two personal perceptions of the position in Britain on some of the issues that are relevant to our discussion today.

On the issue of the CTBT, I think it would be fair to say that Britain is overwhelmingly in support of the US president rather than the Senate. That is the official position of all the political parties.

Obviously there is a direct involvement on the issue of missile defence for Britain because Fylingdales, which is in the UK, would be involved as a tracking station. *What I can say on this issue is speculative and unofficial.* As far as the government position is concerned, which is not official, we obviously believe we have a special relationship with the US and therefore I suspect that we say things privately that we are reluctant to say publicly. There is a perception that our Foreign Office is very unsympathetic to Missile Defence and that our Defence Department is rather more sympathetic if it can bring jobs or money to the defence industry. I shall leave people to make their own conclusions whether this is true or not.

The front bench of the Conservative Party is strongly pro missile defence, but there are a number of distinguished members of that party that have a lot of experience in the defence field, foreign ministers, who are against it. The Liberal Party would be against, as most other smaller parties.

The report of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee records that the consensus of expert evidence was that the rogue state threat in the US had been massively hyped both as far as its extent and immediacy were concerned. They felt it had been driven by political and commercial interests rather than by strategic objective assessment. In their conclusions on that particular issue, they recommended that the UK government – remember that this is a unanimous recommendation on a cross-party basis – should articulate very strong concerns in relation to missile defence and should encourage our US

allies to seek other ways to reduce the threats that they perceive.

Mr. Richard Ekwall

(Minister at the Swedish Embassy in The Hague)

I shall be quite brief but I would like to say a few words on the outcome of the vote last Wednesday on the New Agenda resolution on the First Committee in the UN and perhaps also share with you quite briefly the impressions from the result of that vote and perhaps a word also on how we intend to go forward on this issue.

It is very interesting to look at the result of the vote last Wednesday. There were in fact 146 votes in favour and that included also three of the nuclear weapon states: the United States, the United Kingdom, and also China. There were three no-votes, passed not surprisingly by India, Israel and Pakistan. And finally there were eight abstentions: France, Russia, and then Monaco, Bhutan, Mauritius, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan. There is no doubt about the fact that there was overwhelming support for the resolution this year. 146 yes-votes is quite impressive, and three of the nuclear weapons states were included in that vote in favour.

If we also look at the voting patterns, we can see that all of the member states of the EU, except France, voted in favour. The passing was also the same as regards the NATO countries. Again, all of them except one member state of NATO. So obviously my government, and I think the governments of all the other members of the New Agenda initiative are very pleased with the result of the vote in the First Committee. This vote has now confirmed the consensus reached at the NPT Review Conference earlier this year. And as a result the non-proliferation regime has been further consolidated and strengthened. At the same time, a strong UN norm has been created out of the agreements reached at the NPT Conference.

Of particular importance to the New Agenda countries is that the thirteen steps towards disarmament laid down in the NPT document had been so to speak locked in within the framework of the UN. And this also means that the 1995 decision, some practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT, has at long last been filled with substance. It is now up to the nuclear weapon states to implement the measures to which they have committed themselves, both in the NPT document and through this resolution at the UN General Assembly.

In a communique issued in connection with the General Assembly, the ministers of the New Agenda countries made public their objective to follow up with the five nuclear weapon states their intention on how to make progress with respect to the commitments they

entered into during the spring. This will now be done before the end of this year and we also hope that there will be deep discussions following in Geneva after that.

We also hope that this dialogue will further extend the constructive spirit that was forged in May and confirmed now this week in New York and help bring about the kind of concrete disarmament measures which are needed in order to further the strength of the non-proliferation regime and make progress towards a safer world.

The Non-Proliferation Review

Ms. Nicola Butler

(Analyst at the Acronym Institute, United Kingdom)

The 2000 Review document essentially provides a five year plan of action for the period from now up till the Review Conference in 2005. Two aspects of the final document are particularly important.

First, the unequivocal undertaking to achieve nuclear weapons' elimination gives diplomatic weight to the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and provides the strongest yet political interpretation of the Article VI nuclear disarmament obligation. It is now publicly accepted by all the NPT states.

The second point to note is that the practical steps in the NPT document are not linear but are mutually complementary and reinforcing. No stage depends on a previous stage for its completion. Measures have to be addressed in parallel as part of an overall process of reducing the legitimacy and reliance on nuclear weapons.

The next step for the NPT must be implementation of the 2000 nuclear disarmament plan. I am going to talk in a bit more detail about some of the specific issues in that plan.

The first area I want to mention is the issue of strategic nuclear disarmament and the ABM Treaty. The NPT document calls for 'the early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible while preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability'.

President Clinton's announcement in September that the decision on whether to proceed with deployment of National Missile Defence would be deferred, has reduced some of the immediate sense of crisis relating to the ABM Treaty. Nonetheless, NMD remains a significant obstacle to progress on strategic arms reductions between the US and Russia. US administration officials have been keen to stress that in spite of Clinton's announcement, US efforts to amend the ABM Treaty are still a high priority. On September 6th, US national security advisor Andy Barker made clear that the US are not prepared to engage in serious discussions on the START III nuclear reductions treaty except for and in parallel with ABM amendment talks. At the same time, the emerging Russian position is that Russia will only embrace START III talks if the ABM Treaty remains fully in support.

Despite Russia's endorsement of START II, the ratification legislation adopted by the Russian Duma contains a number of conditions that will be unacceptable

to the US Congress, in particular ratification of the 1997 changes to the status and scope of the ABM Treaty, which the current Senate would be almost certain to reject, regarding them as limiting their NMD options.

On October 6th, the US Senate and House of Representatives issued a single version of the FY 2000 Defence Authorization Bill and sent the text to the President for expected signature. The text calls for a US Nuclear Posture Review, but at the insistence of the Republican Congressional majority constrains the next US President to maintain START I deployment levels of at least 6,000 warheads until the whole process of START II ratification is complete.

Governor Bush has stated a preference for unilateral options outside the START process, while Vice-president Gore has expressed disapproval of options outside START. Many observers predict that if Bush is elected and the Republicans regain control of Congress, the next Defence Authorization Bill will give Bush more leeway to make reductions.

It is clear from recent statements from US officials including Defense Secretary Cohen that the views of allied governments were taken very seriously in deferring a decision on NMD deployment. Early warning facilities are based on the territories of other NATO members, in particular the UK and Denmark, and these facilities are regarded as essential to the plans. A number of NATO allies have made their concerns clear, some in public, some privately, in NATO meetings and through bilateral contacts with the US. With much of the pressure for missile defence coming from the US Congress rather than the administration, I think there is definitely a need for greater dialogue between members of the parliaments in Europe and their US counterparts on this issue.

The second area that I want to mention is the reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives. This is the first time that the NPT parties have addressed tactical nuclear weapons. In 1991, under presidents Bush and Gorbachov, Russia and the US made unilateral declarations that they would reduce, redeploy and in some cases eliminate tactical nuclear forces. Russia withdrew its weapons from the Soviet republics and the US removed tactical nuclear weapons from surface ships and attack submarines. There is, however, increasing uncertainty as to whether these declarations have been implemented in full, in particular on the Russian side, and there is great pressure to address tactical nuclear weapons more systematically. Russia is

believed to continue to deploy approximately between three and six thousand tactical nuclear weapons.

The US has removed most from active deployment but there remain a small but significant number in its arsenal, including 100 to 150 tactical weapons based in several NATO countries in Europe including the Netherlands, which is seen as highly provocative by many in Russia. The remaining NATO weapons are said to be mainly political weapons used to deter war rather than to fight war. Unfortunately these political weapons also send a very strong political message to potential proliferators. Both India and Pakistan have exploited NATO's nuclear strategy to their own advantage, by arguing that NATO's retention of nuclear weapons justifies their own nuclear programmes and by mimicking NATO nuclear policy in their own policies.

NATO's continued practice of nuclear sharing has also come in for increasing criticism in recent years within the NPT Review Process and many non-nuclear weapon states have been highly critical of NATO nuclear doctrine and strategy.

Since the end of the Cold War, Britain and France have taken important steps in unilateral nuclear disarmament cutting tactical and obsolete nuclear weapons. At this stage, only China has not undertaken any unilateral nuclear reductions.

There are many options for dealing with tactical nuclear weapons and UNADIR has recently published proposals including strengthening some of the existing initiatives through providing verification for them. Ideas such as freezing deployment of tactical nuclear weapons, prohibiting deployment in new territories, such as new NATO members or Russian allies such as Belarus, withdrawing nuclear weapons to the country of origin, which could perhaps involve some of the weapons which are deployed by US NATO in Europe, and prohibiting the production and development of new types of tactical nuclear weapons. The overall objective would be a universally applicable treaty banning and eliminating all tactical nuclear weapons, with a robust verification regime.

The third area that I want to mention is the agreement that there should be a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies. Again this is the first time that the NPT parties have addressed this issue in an NPT document albeit in a slightly coded language. Although the language is watered down more than many non-nuclear weapon states would have liked, it is clear that the concern behind it is the retention by NATO and Russia of deterrence policies based on the potential first use of nuclear weapons and also the possibility of an

extended role for nuclear weapons in countering the threat of use of biological or chemical weapons.

Following a suggestion from Germany that NATO might consider adopting a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, the April 1999 Washington Summit of NATO heads of state and government initiated a review of arms control policy [in this conference also referred to as the paragraph 32 process, ed.] which will report in December of this year. A pledge of no first use, although declaratory at first would help to increase confidence building and could be backed up with verifiable steps in de-alerting. Such a pledge could also play a role in negotiations with China, which has always made first use a central tenet of its non-proliferation platforms. This might be a way to engage Beijing in other matters, for instance the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty and transparency. The alternative is for some countries, most recently joined by Pakistan, to continue to claim that the threat to initiate the use of nuclear weapons in any conflict is essential for their national security, whilst denying others the right to even develop nuclear weapons.

The fourth area is the area of agreed forced measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear systems. The Non-Aligned States and the New Agenda states have been pressing for nuclear weapons to be taken off alert, de-activated and for the warheads to be separated from the delivery vehicles. In their statement of May the 1st at the NPT Review Conference, the five nuclear powers for the first time stated that none of their nuclear weapons remain targeted. They have now promised to go further but so far there is little indication of what they intend to do.

The US has commissioned a study in accidental or unauthorized nuclear weapons' use but concluded that other measures would address the threat just as well. The US has gone for solutions such as beefing up programmes to increase command and control in Russia and of course NMD to destroy an incoming rogue missile.

In '98 first Britain and then France announced operational changes resulting in reduced notice to fire for their nuclear submarines, which could be construed as a first step towards de-alerting. They have so far rejected calls to go further however.

As NATO nuclear weapons in Europe are air-launched and not submarine-launched, they are generally viewed as no longer being on hair trigger alert, although British and US submarines assigned to NATO are still on patrol 24 hours a day.

China is generally viewed as having its forces off alert through technical constraints. However, as China reacts

to US NMD plans, this situation could change in the years to come.

Concerned that the US and others may consider providing assistance to India and Pakistan to improve nuclear command and control systems, non-nuclear weapons countries have been quick to point out that across the board de-alerting and progressive de-activation and de-weaponisation would offer a far less inflammatory and more secure answer to this problem.

On the point about increased transparency by the nuclear weapons states, this commitment was particularly hard-fought by China, which resisted earlier language, calling for transparency regarding nuclear arsenals. Russia and the US have already moved some way towards transparency in their bilateral relations. Britain also took a big step in 98 when it published details on its nuclear arsenal and fissile material holdings as part of the UK's Strategic Defence Review, but China and France in particular did not want to reveal nuclear-related information. NATO also, as was mentioned earlier, has to date been unwilling to reveal the number and location of its nuclear weapons in Europe, even though government observers have made their estimates known.

As the Alliance moves forward with NATO enlargement, with democratic control over the military as a key criterion for membership, the continued high level of secrecy concerning the numbers of Alliance nuclear posture is inconsistent with the concept of an Alliance of democracies.

Transparency is an essential first step towards accountability and effective verification. Some of the nuclear weapon states have begun to give fuller accounts of their nuclear inventories and steps taken to comply with the NPT at NPT Review conferences. This needs to be encouraged further with detailed reports being delivered and discussed as a regular part of the Preparatory and Review Conference meetings. The non-nuclear weapon states need to make clear their future expectations regarding such reports and discussions.

The concept of a nuclear arms register was put forward by Germany's foreign minister Klaus Kinkel in November '93 but was quickly dropped in face of opposition from France and lack of support from the other nuclear weapon states. Robin Cook, Britain's Foreign Secretary, expressed support for a nuclear arms register at that time but no discernible progress has been made on that issue since. Countries such as Canada, Australia, Japan and the Netherlands which are known to be strong advocates of the UN's conventional arms register could consider a joint initiative to explore this idea further. There would be the added bonus of reinforcing their credibility with regard to the conventional arms

register where the nuclear weapon states and their allies are currently vulnerable to accusations that they refuse for themselves the openness they insist on for the rest of the world.

Finally I would like to mention the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The NPT final document underscored the urgency of obtaining the necessary signatures and ratifications to achieve the early entry into force of the CTBT. Pending entry into force the parties called for a moratorium on nuclear test explosions. It is now more than four years since the CTBT was concluded. It will be important for a further conference of CTBT signatories and ratifiers to be convened, as provided for under article 14 of the Treaty. In recent years NATO has given consistent and high level support to the CTBT and continued encouragement from US allies both in governments and in parliaments would be very helpful in nudging the US Senate towards ratification of the Treaty.

In conclusion, the broad international agenda for progress on nuclear arms control and disarmament has rarely ever been more clearly established and articulated than it has now. Over the years the NATO countries have been among the strongest supporters of the NPT. The NATO foreign ministers meeting in Florence in May of this year welcomed the outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and said that it would contribute to carrying forward the conclusions reached there. With the NATO review on arms control due to report next month, this would be the Alliance's first opportunity to put this commitment into practice. If the Review is used merely for PR purposes and to endorse existing NATO nuclear posture and policy, it will be a setback to global disarmament efforts and the health of the international proliferation regime. If, however, it marks the beginning of a serious process of internal Alliance reflection on the value and purpose of nuclear weapons, then it could prove valuable in strengthening the NPT.

The parliaments of NATO countries played a key role in NATO enlargement through the ratification process. As I have indicated, there are many areas in which the policies of NATO and its member countries could play a significant role in the arms control and disarmament arena. What I hope will come out of this meeting is that parliamentarians from across the NATO countries can help to play an important part in implementing the NPT's 2000 agreement by working together across national boundaries to push for its implementation. Thank you.

Discussion

Mr. Cees Homan

(Retired general, research fellow at Clingendael)

Attending meetings such as this, it always strikes me that we are discussing the five nuclear weapon states and sometimes also India and Pakistan, but Israel is never mentioned. According to several publications, Israel has 100 to 200 nuclear weapons, including missiles, mines and artillery, and it is expected that they will equip their new submarines built in Germany with nuclear warheads as well. Why is Israel never taken into consideration in plans of action with respect to problems of nuclear weapons? Why is there no pressure on Israel to make their nuclear weapons at least somewhat more transparent?

Mr. Jan Hoekema

(Foreign Affairs spokesman of the Liberal Democrat Party in the Dutch Parliament, member of Parliamentarians for Global Action)

I was very much intrigued by Ms. Butler's remark that especially Bush considered unilateral measures. Could she explain why? Maybe the point is that Bush considers nuclear weapons as a sort of military machinery which is redundant or not absolutely necessary. Ironically, he has in a way a more ambitious and a more peaceful agenda than Al Gore because he wants to do it in a unilateral way. So what is the reason why Bush would opt for unilateral reductions?

Professor Paolo Cotta-Ramusino

(Landau Network Centro Volta, Landau)

There is a need for increasing and co-ordinated European activity as regards the difficult situation of nuclear materials and experts in Russia and in order to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism.

Second observation is about ballistic missile defence. There is a difficulty in this field. You can put it this way. Why should the Americans do what we say? I think that is the reaction the Americans have taken. We have to stress in a delicate manner that it has a negative effect on global stability. The effect in China is very serious. NMD is conceived by the Chinese as an act of enmity against them. They do not believe that it is only against North Korea. It pushes them to increase their nuclear force.

There is yet another serious aspect, which has not yet been mentioned. Tactical nuclear defence is of even greater concern. Tactical nuclear missile defence in this area can have a very serious effect on the regional balance of power. What can you say about that?

Mr. Savidge

In the Select Committee Report, they made a specific mention of Israel and the whole danger that exists in the Middle East, particularly if the peace process does not work through. In the NPT Review Conference, Israel was at last specifically mentioned. It took a degree of careful negotiating to have the US agree to that.

One of the biggest incentives to Arab countries for proliferation must be the fact that Israel has nuclear weapons. Pressure has to be put on that and on getting a peace settlement as that is going to be the basis to try and persuade Israel to abandon its nuclear policy.

Ms. Butler

I completely agree with that. Israel was also named in a highly controversial resolution from Egypt on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East to the First Committee in the last week.

Mr. Koenders

What are the expectations that this issue will be seriously on the agenda? Especially if peace is considered to be a precondition for taking it to a political level? We do not say that we have to solve Kashmir before we talk about India and Pakistan.

Mr. Savidge

I suspect that, in practice though, trying to resolve problems in India and Pakistan may well be very closely tied up with trying to resolve Kashmir. This is where nuclear issues are so all-pervading, because if we are to avoid disaster we not only have to prevent nuclear wars, but also the causes of nuclear wars.

Mr. Koenders

Professor Cotta mentioned the issue of tactical and ballistic missile defence. Are there any comments on this issue, in which the Far East is of crucial importance?

Mr. Savidge

Personally, I think this is a very important matter. China would have every reason to suspect that BMD could be used against China. Already some of the extreme proponents are saying that they want it against China and not just against North Korea. If missile defence is developed, that lobby will become more and more vociferous. If China is encouraged to increase its nuclear weapons, look at the possible knock-on effect. India would be likely to increase its nuclear weapons and Pakistan would be likely to respond to that.

There is also the danger that some of the proponents of ballistic missile defence suggest that one need not worry about China, because the US can expand to an

extent that the Chinese cannot afford to compete. Some even take that view with Russia as well. In my view, destabilising a nuclear weapon state is an extremely dangerous thing in itself and could encourage the export of missile and weapons technology from those countries, at a state level or a private criminal level.

Both the Bush advisers and other people, for instance Harold Brown, the former Democrat Defence Secretary, have said that you could move from theatre missile defence to ballistic missile defence. One of the things they are advocating is boost phase interception. I find that terrifying. They talk about the possibility that missiles, possibly on ships, possibly in other ways, are distributed around the world. They argue that during the boost phase the rocket is a better target as it is larger and slower, it is hot, and you cannot get decoys. All this is true, but it is also true that the maximum possible time the boost phase lasts is five minutes. If a rocket is to be fired at another rocket and hit it in less than five minutes, how long does that give you between the supposed detection of a rocket launch and the firing of an interceptive missile at another nuclear weapon state? In how many seconds would that decision have to be taken? And does that make any of us feel safer?

Ms. Butler

It is important to note that China was actually proceeding with modernising its nuclear arsenal in any case, but the current debate in the US can only encourage and accelerate that process. Incredibly damaging things have been said in the debate, whether or not a decision is taken or not to proceed with deployment, for instance some of the things published on the US Space Command's website.

On the question about why Governor Bush appears to be going for unilateral rather than bilateral reductions, I can only speculate. His father George Bush senior had obviously had a very successful record in this area with the reductions that he made unilaterally. It is also related to an increasing unilateralism in the US in general. Bush's idea on unilateral reductions is linked very strongly with pushing forward very fast on National Missile Defence and would disregard the ABM Treaty.

Tactical nuclear weapons

Mr. Koenders

What would now be a sensible new agenda for tactical nuclear weapons in your view? Could it also lead to unilateral steps?

Mr. Savidge

In many ways, I favour the suggestion made by the US National Academy of Sciences that it is time that all nuclear weapons stocks were included in the negotiations rather than just small defined groups.

One advantage I can see to mutual unilateral steps is that both the Russian and the US presidents would be able to come to unilateral agreements which they would not have to put through the Senate or the Duma as they would in the case of peace treaties. But perhaps that is a slightly cynical view.

Ms. Butler

I just like to say that I think unilateral and multilateral steps can be combined together quite effectively on an issue like this. Steps towards greater transparency could be taken on the NATO side. I have heard suggestions that the NATO tactical nuclear weapons could be used as a bargaining chip with Russia in START III negotiations. The best approach would be to combine unilateral steps on NATO's side with a very strong appeal to Russia to engage in this issue through the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council, with a view to basically unilateral steps followed by tying this down in the form of a treaty with proper verification.

Mr. Koenders

I like your reaction, but I do not know whether it will work in practice.

Mr. Lamberto Zannier

(Counsellor at the Italian Embassy in The Hague)

In my feeling, the unilateral commitments from the US and Russia in the early nineties to get rid of their tactical nuclear weapons worked on the NATO side. 90 % of these weapons disappeared from Europe within a few years; all land-based systems were removed. This did not work so well in Russia. It worked on the side of the withdrawal with the massive assistance of especially the US and also the European states. On the dismantlement side, there was the problem of infrastructures and then the storage and all that. And then we had the developments in the Russian doctrine, which pushed things in the direction of maintaining these weapons. Yet we should still try to keep the track of pushing for further progress in unilateral disarmament alive, injecting new

arguments. For instance, one of the points the Russians make to us is that their weakness in the conventional area makes it necessary for them to retain a certain number of tactical nuclear weapons. On the other hand, if this new, adapted CFE Treaty enters into force, we have an argument that there is more stability in the conventional area and therefore there is less need for a complementary element in the tactical field. Secondly, we Europeans could perhaps try to put more money and assistance in the Russian project of dismantlement and help them speed up the process. Of course, we should not preclude a negotiating track either, which could be added to put more pressure on that.

Mr. Koenders

This is an interesting point which includes unilateral steps and a broader agenda with Russia, although there are some difficult elements in the cleaning up issue. We need a lot of money for that and it is also difficult to put it into practice in the Russian context at the moment.

Mr. Mient-Jan Faber

(General secretary Interchurch Peace Council IKV)
If the US, unlike China and France, is in favour of transparency, why is it so difficult to give information about nuclear weapons in Europe? Is it really the US or the European countries themselves?

Mr. Ries de Weerd

(A former naval officer, involved in Defence Planning, presently IKV member for the Lutheran Churches)
The US Congress reports of the public hearings on the storage of nuclear weapons in Europe are unclassified and in these you can find a lot of information on this topic.

Mr. Koenders

According to my information, NATO's information policy makes it impossible for my government to tell me or other members of parliament and the public where we have what. Does the availability of information in the US Congress reports mean that there are different policies in different countries within the NATO context?

Ms. Butler

It is a very good question to ask why this information is regarded as classified in Europe. There is sensitivity in some of the NATO countries and obviously it would require a consensus of all the NATO countries, I presume, before the information could be released. I think, however, a lot can be inferred from material that is in the public domain.

Mr. Savidge

It would be true to say that the present government has given a great deal more transparency than previous governments. However, on a lot of issues the US Congress would give you considerably more information. In Britain, you tend to get a bland and fairly unrevealing answer to written or oral questions in Parliament.

Mr. Koenders

Is it correct, Mr. Krueger, that NATO's official policy makes it impossible for national governments to say anything about that?

Mr. Roland Krueger

(Head Nuclear Policy Section, Defence Planning and Operations, NATO)

All nations that are NATO members have signed an agreement as to safeguarding of classified information and that is binding to them all until they all agree that it should be lifted. But indeed the national policy differs from nation to nation with regard to saying what is on a nation's soil or not. I would say that all those nations that have American nuclear weapons on their territory under US custody feel obliged by that common NATO policy. Some other countries that joined NATO later and have a policy of never stationing nuclear weapons on their soil have a different policy.

Mr. Otfried Nassauer

(Director Berlin Institute for Transatlantic Security, BITS)

The availability in public of the storage sites was an accident in the US Congress. It is US policy that once information is in the public domain you can follow up on this. Requests under the Freedom of Information Act of the last years regarding the locations where the storage sites are, have been tried again and again so that there is an updated record of that. You do not, however, know whether there is something in them.

Professor Cotta

All the deployments of US nuclear weapons in Europe are based on bilateral agreements. All these agreements were signed at the end of the fifties, beginning of the sixties. The owner country and the host country are thus bound by a reciprocal agreement. It is not a general NATO policy. There are seven countries which have this bilateral agreement, which is rather rigid. The Agreement for Co-operation for the Use of Atomic Energy for Defence Purposes provides the general framework. The Programme of Co-operation contained in this is classified. At the bottom of that, there is the Stockpile Agreement, which contains all the data about location and

time. Even if the US has shown more openness under the Freedom of Information Act, the other countries have not followed. As the agreements are bilateral, the situation has been frozen since the end of the fifties. The number of nuclear weapons has decreased dramatically from 7,000 to the present 180 or 150, but the number of countries hosting nuclear weapons has not decreased even by one.

Confidence and Security Building Measures: the Process

Karel Koster

(Director of the Project on Nuclear Non-Proliferation in The Netherlands)

The next session is going to deal with confidence and security building measures. It focuses on the evaluation process that has been going on since the NATO Summit in April 1999, partially in reaction to initiatives from Germany and Canada preceding that summit. Mr. Whiteside, who is in the middle of that evaluation process, can tell us a lot more about it. We as NGO's like to call it an evaluation process but are very careful in formulating it that way, because sometimes you find official denials that say it is nothing of the kind and something less than a full-blown evaluation. I am sure that we can get some kind of clarification on that this afternoon. After Mr. Whiteside has described this process, Mr. Sköld will react to this in a perhaps critical fashion.

Ted Whiteside

(Head of NATO's Weapons of Mass Destruction Centre on proliferation issues)

I will be talking about the framework of the process and not about the contents of the process, as it will be only ministers who will decide what part of the process they decide to share with the public. First a couple of words as background.

The process of identifying options for confidence and security building measures in NATO goes back to April 1999 at the Washington Summit. At that Summit the following statement was made by ministers: 'In the light of overall strategic developments and the reduced salience, the reduced importance of nuclear weapons, the Alliance will consider options for confidence and security building measures, verification, non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament.' Since April 1999, a great deal of work has been undertaken within NATO Headquarters on this subject. I will give you some information about its background. The statement in the light of overall strategic developments has led to a stocktaking exercise within the Alliance to understand where we are in the year 2000. A number of issues come to mind.

First, Start II will one day lead to Start III. Start II's very ambitious reduction of nuclear arsenals has however not yet taken place. Both of these issues are now problematically linked to NMD. So in terms of strategic nuclear arsenals there is a great deal of promise but also a great deal of entanglement, because of the NMD debate between United States and Russia over the last year.

Second, where are we in terms of nuclear tests? The CTBT has been signed but not ratified. The major play-

ers have unilateral moratoria on nuclear testing but the situation in terms of international law is not a clear one.

Third, in terms of chemical weapons the OPCW has a very ambitious programme of implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1997. Huge strides have been made in identifying and destroying chemical weapon stockpiles. A great deal of promise but also despair. Russia has not yet been able to destroy even one percent of its stockpiles. Other nations whom we know are involved in chemical weapons research and development are neither signatories or ratifiers of this particular agreement.

In another area of taking stock of the international situation and exploring overall strategic developments, it is clear that the Biological Weapons Convention does not have any teeth to it. There has been an international effort underway for the last few years to find a verification protocol for the BWC. This is indispensable because biotechnology represents the frontier where arms can be made on the cheap and where it is extremely difficult to ascertain the difference between legitimate research work and something that will lead to the production of biological weapons.

Again taking stock: in terms of conventional weapons, the CFE adapted treaty has now been signed, but not yet ratified. Russia is having difficulties given the crisis in its North Caucasus to reduce the number of deployed forces and equipment. It is not compliant with the current CFE Treaty. Its undertakings under the Istanbul Conference of last year to reduce its forces and get out of Moldava and Georgia are in fact in difficulty and it is not clear whether Russia will be able to meet its commitments there. Ratification of the adapted treaty is far from clear.

Last, NATO has taken stock of what is happening in a whole new area over the last ten years and that is the indiscriminate and very destabilising accumulation of small arms and light weapons, particularly in the Balkans and what can be done to stem this flow of small arms and light weapons.

From April 1999 until the present time, a number of NATO committees have studied ways to identify new confidence and security building measures. Some of the ideas that are clearly in discussion are along the following lines and these are meant to encapsulate this process and simply put it in a common sense perspective, as to what now has to be done.

First, NATO has taken stock again of what it has done itself. NATO has a long-standing commitment to arms control and disarmament, NATO is not a signatory to

any international treaty but it has promoted a lot of international regimes, for example with the CFE-treaty. Second, in terms of nuclear arsenals and nuclear arms control NATO again is not a signatory but the alliance has reduced markedly its tactical weapons and it has stated that it has no reason, no intention, no plan, no need to station on the territory of the three new members, again indicating a great deal of restraint and showing by example that NATO is very concerned about proliferation at the international level.

Third, in terms of its nuclear posture, the Alliance has not only reduced its nuclear stockpiles, it has also assisted both Russia and newly independent states in reducing chemical and nuclear stockpiles.

Lastly, NATO has made confidence and security building measures practical steps to reduce the problems related to small arms and light weapons both in terms of export controls as well as getting rid of them by destroying them.

Another step the NATO has been taking in the course of the last year and a half is to bolster its own internal mechanisms for dealing with proliferation issues: nuclear, biological and chemical. The Alliance launched the WMD initiative: the Weapons of Mass Destruction initiative, in April 1999. We've now created a centre at NATO Headquarters with people with tremendous experience and skills in this area, to do two things. First to find out how the Alliance can politically assist in non-proliferation efforts internationally, and secondly to react cautiously, prudently in ensuring that the Alliance's military forces if need be could operate in a WMD environment so they can carry on the work even if they were faced with a WMD adversary as we saw in the Gulf. These are prudent steps both in terms of the political as well as the defence side of the WMD initiative.

Finally, some remarks about some obvious areas where the Alliance wants to work in the future. I am not foreclosing that ministers will underscore this.

We have a very robust consultation now with Russia on proliferation issues and want to keep that up. We want to establish common ground with Russia because there are common concerns. If there is one nation in the world that should be concerned about proliferation, it is indeed Russia and that is why NATO has undertaken careful steps to engage it.

In terms of NMD, this is something that has been discussed within the Alliance. NATO did not shy away from the issue of NMD but in fact ministers stated that there would be a series of consultations on NMD. I believe that it was in fact part and parcel of the US president's decision to defer, that it was based on what has

been happening within the Alliance over the course of the last year.

I close with the following three points. The process that has been underway since 1999 was neither a precondition for the NPT Review Conference nor is it in any way a direct result of the NPT Review Conference. It started far before that and it will continue. I believe these issues will continue beyond December. There is a substantial ministerial report that will be viewed by ministers in December and a lot of the NATO activities particularly in the engagement with Russia constitute in and of themselves confidence and security building measures. I trust that this quick procedural, structural framework overview is helpful.

Mr. Koster

That does give a very clear and structural overview of what's going on in Brussels and what keeps us as NGO's very much occupied as a very natural result of our activities. In Brussels of course we have a listening and observation post and that is the Centre of European Security and Disarmament which has been active for many years. So we find it only logical to invite a representative of the CESD, Thomas Sköld, to give their point of view in this.

Mr. Thomas Sköld

(Centre for European Security and Disarmament, CESD, Brussels)

Now that we have heard the view from inside NATO, I would like to talk about how the Arms Control process is seen from the outside. While the review deals with all aspects of arms control, including conventional weapons, I will be focusing my presentation on the discussion within NATO related to the nuclear issues, which so far have not lived up to expectations. Why not? What were these initial expectations? What can we realistically expect now? And what can YOU as NATO member parliamentarians do to influence NATO to harmonize commitments taken in other nuclear arms control fora, such as the NPT? This is what I would like to cover here today.

First, before diving into details and paragraph quoting, I would like to take a step back and look at why the debate of NATO nuclear doctrine is so important in reducing nuclear danger worldwide.

One of the biggest challenges to stopping the spread of nuclear weapons is reducing their value, political or otherwise, in states that possess them. The hypocrisy of recognized Nuclear Weapons States pointing the finger at new states acquiring nuclear weapons must be addressed more seriously. That the 19 member states of

NATO still embrace nuclear weapons as the cornerstone of security, some more warmly than others, serves as convenient justification for other nations around the world to include them in their military doctrine. One of NATO's stated goals, written in its Strategic Concept, is to 'actively contribute to the development of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements' (see paragraph 40 in NATO's Strategic Concept). If NATO it is to live up to this goal, radical changes in the nuclear doctrine are necessary.

Today, NATO nuclear policy is severely out of step with the international climate regarding nuclear arms control. We have heard here today about the commitments made at the NPT Review Conference where all 19 NATO member states agreed to the final document calling for the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapons states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

We have also learned about the recent vote in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, where the New Agenda Resolution was accepted by all NATO states but France. This resolution calls for the diminishing role of nuclear weapons in security policies to '... facilitate the process of their total elimination'. In the evolution of the New Agenda text, this particular phrase was originally a very pointed paragraph directed at NATO doctrine.

The current arms control review in NATO has been viewed as an opportune chance to bring about the changes needed to make NATO members comply adequately with these arms control agreements, as well as make NATO policy more responsive to developments in other international fora. The ultimate goal would of course be a complete removal of nuclear weapons from NATO defence policy. But not even the most idealistic observer believes that this will happen any time soon. This does not, however, preclude NATO states from slowly embarking on the path of complete nuclear disarmament. Expectations were high after the NATO Washington Summit last year where the Allies committed themselves to an arms control review. The hope was that this would include a review also of NATO's nuclear doctrine. It is with great disappointment we now see that discussion on nuclear policy has been minimal and probably limited to issues related to transparency and confidence building measures, at best.

So, what happened? To fully understand why the progress has been so slow and the agenda so limited, we have to look at the political context surrounding the Washington Summit last year.

It all started in the run-up to the Summit when a group of NATO members began raising concerns about

NATO's nuclear posture, which has not changed since the Cold War. An initial call came from German Foreign Minister Fischer calling for a policy of 'no-first use' of nuclear weapons. NATO now follows a policy of flexible response, where NATO is deliberately vague about how it would respond to attack or even threat of attack. A group of Allies including Canada, Germany and the Netherlands pushed for a revision of the paragraphs in the NATO Strategic Concept dealing with the nuclear doctrine.

NATO nuclear doctrine was not changed at Washington, and the Strategic Concept still contains the extreme language declaring, inter alia, that nuclear weapons are essential to preserve peace and that nuclear forces remains vital to the security of Europe (see paragraph 40 and 46 in NATO's Strategic Concept).

The push by the dissenting Allies was not in vain however. It did generate language in another Washington document, the Communiqué, that would allow for an evaluation of NATO nuclear policy. This opportunity is to be found in the now famous paragraph 32 of the Communiqué, which essentially says that NATO will 'consider options' for 'non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament taking into account the 'overall strategic developments' and the reduced salience, or importance of nuclear weapons. This commitment of action has finally made it possible for NATO to start living up to the goal in the Strategic Concept that I mentioned in the beginning, namely of NATO actively contributing to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament.

So, where does the arms control review stand now? One must keep in mind that this process is secret and conducted behind closed doors. Mr. Whiteside has told us as much as he is able to and we should be grateful for him going as far as he did. What we do know is that 2/3 of the paper being prepared for the NATO Ministerial meeting in December is devoted to past accomplishments, or simply the history of arms control. This leaves a mere 1/3 of the document to forward-looking recommendations, the essential part. Sure, understanding what has happened to date is important, but it shouldn't make up the majority of a paper aiming to get NATO policy in line with current non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. It is becoming painfully obvious that outdated policies left over from a distant Cold War still dominate NATO thinking. From an outside perspective, NATO is not fulfilling its mandate of a 'comprehensive and integrated review'.

It is recognized that the countries within NATO pushing for change are facing quite an up-hill struggle. Some noted specific challenges are the following. First

of all, we have the unwillingness of the nuclear weapons states, mainly the US and Britain to revive any discussion on nuclear policy. Then we have the new members, Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic, who finally managed to gain entry to the security arrangement of their choice and are happy about changing the premises. Lastly, even some of the allies pushing for change are facing domestic pressure stemming from the nuclear sharing discussions.

Now, the question I have for YOU is: what are the NATO member countries represented here today going to do to contribute to the necessary changes of NATO nuclear policy?

Of course, there will not be a change of nuclear doctrine at the NATO Ministerial in December. But the arms control review now underway shows that headway is possible on future discussion on NATO nuclear doctrine. What we must do, is to make sure that this discussion is kept alive and is intensified.

I will end my remarks with four more realistic recommendations for the arms control review that have been put forth by various interest groups pushing for a change in NATO nuclear policy:

- The final report should be made public, and contain forward-looking recommendations;
- Change must occur in the extreme language in the nuclear paragraphs of the Strategic Concept;
- Reform of the NATO bodies dealing with nuclear non-proliferation issues;
- Establishment of a permanent Arms Control Review with inter-parliamentary accountability.

Firstly, the arms control review was publicly announced and it is imperative to also make the final product public. It is unfortunate enough that the process has been secret and has not involved the voice of the people. We have to make clear that NATO can no longer afford the luxury of ignoring international opinion and developments when adapting its policies to new security situations. A public document is crucial if NATO wants to show that it is serious about commitments made, and that it engages the public in the debate.

Secondly, the language of the nuclear paragraphs in NATO's Strategic Concept must be changed to reduce the political value of nuclear weapons and to make NATO policy coherent with the international climate regarding nuclear arms control. Paragraph 46 of the Strategic Concept maintains that nuclear weapons 'remain essential to preserve peace'. A popular proposal for new language is to finally adopt the language suggested at a NATO meeting right after the end the Cold War. The so-called 'London Declaration' of 1990 held that 'in the

transformed Europe, [the Allies] will be able to adopt a new NATO strategy making nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort. Adopting this role for nuclear weapons would be a good step forward in the quest for harmonizing NATO policy with international agreements such as the NPT.

Thirdly, a reform of the permanent committees dealing with non-proliferation and arms control is recommended for more effective and comprehensive treatment of these issues. As it stands now, the NATO Senior Politico-Military group (SGP), despite its name, deals only with the political aspects of NATO's approach to proliferation, and the NATO Senior Defence Group (DGP) deals only with the defence aspects. The two committees do meet periodically in the format of the Joint Committee on Proliferation (JCP) and perhaps this committee should serve as the permanent body dealing with these issues. Instead of the current division of labour, a more integrated approach with political-military guidance to the North Atlantic Council is needed. This would allow NATO to more effectively and accurately address non-proliferation and arms control issues. To illustrate the importance of an integrated approach, the one-sided approach of the US National Intelligence Estimate of 1999 (NIE) assessing the ballistic missile threat to the United States serves as a good example. This report even acknowledged that it assessed 'possible and likely missile developments by 2015 independent of significant political and economic changes'. That is, when assessing the missile threat to the United States, this report took into account only what could happen, not what is probable to happen.

Lastly, it is crucial that the evaluation of NATO's approach to arms control does not end in December with the ministerial meeting. To remain relevant and uphold member states' commitments made in the NPT, the arms control review must be continuous and should have parliamentary accountability. The Dutch parliament could for example establish a joint committee together with other interested NATO member parliaments and demand a bi-annual report on progress. This could also have the potential to be integrated into the NATO Parliamentary Assembly process further down the road. A parliamentary review would put pressure on the decision-making bodies of NATO to be more accountable to the peoples of the member states, and it would keep the current momentum alive pressing for a serious discussion on the necessary change of NATO nuclear doctrine.

Discussion

Mr. Koster

Thank you for the very interesting suggestion for improvement. Now we take a little step back to what it was all about. The NPT conference and its final document and the New Agenda Coalition resolution, which has been accepted in New York, were of course statements of intent which were interpreted in our NGO circles as a serious commitment to nuclear disarmament. Now if we come back to the discussion concerning the paragraph 32 process on the one hand, and the criticism of its extent on the other, you realise there is quite a gap between the intentions at the United Nations and other fora and the process going on within NATO. Now Mr. Sköld suggested a few options for moving ahead a little faster in the process and I wonder whether Mr. Whiteside would go into those four points and respond to them.

Mr. Whiteside

The four points are very interesting and I think they are very important because they have been made before by other NGO's.

First, the public aspect of the document. My personal view is that there will be a public statement but I have no idea what is in it. I would think a lot of the nuclear issues that are not in the public domain until such time as an arms control treaty is actually signed, relating to the bilateral relationship between United States and Russia, would be unlikely to come into the public document, but we will see in December.

Secondly, the Strategic Concept issue. The Strategic Concept was agreed by heads of states. This is not a review that is at the level of governments. It will be for NATO nations to decide whether this process will lead to a subsequent review of the strategic concept.

Thirdly, I think that the change of bodies and the jurisdiction of dealing with those issues are an important issue. Within NATO, there is a lot of work to be done to make sure that we deal with the proliferation issues both from a political and a defence point of view. What I missed in your recommendation is that there already exists such a body. In addition to the defence group on proliferation issues and the political group on proliferation, there is an overarching body, much more senior to that, which tries to bring together these two various communities.

In terms of parliamentary accountability, I have no personal view, but it is clear that there is a fundamental distinction between parliaments and governments in each of the 19 NATO-countries. The resolutions in the last year's NPA report talked a lot about these issues and

there was a lot of response to that by NATO. I find the approach of providing these types of solutions very constructive and I will make sure we will see them at NATO headquarters.

Mr. Koster

Are there any questions?

Mr. Faber

In my view, these two speakers do not disagree that much. The introduction by Mr. Sköld sounded more radical than it is, but I will try to challenge him.

If we are talking here about confidence building measures, why is there no discussion in NATO on putting an end to forward deployment of nuclear weapons and bringing back American nuclear weapons to the territory of the United States?

Mr. Frank Meeuwssen

(Belgian Greens)

The US was considering last year to withdraw its nuclear weapons from Western Europe which was false information, but due to this information we found out that almost all political parties in Belgium were in favour of getting rid of these tactical nuclear weapons. Isn't the removal US nuclear weapons from our territories the priority on the nuclear disarmament agenda?

Mr. Ries de Weerd

Two questions for Mr. Whiteside. First I believe your view sounded a little pessimistic. Were you telling us that our expectations for the NATO meeting on the review document in December must be quite low regarding disarmament and arms control?

Secondly, what is your opinion about the value of this review document having in mind that a new US government could start a Nuclear Posture Review shortly after its inauguration.

Ms. Carolien van de Stadt

(Women's International League for Peace and Freedom)

If there is not going to be a review of NATO nuclear policy based on the NPT Review outcome, how long will NATO be able to maintain its solidarity, cohesion and above all reliability that it is about security and not domination?

Mr. Sköld

I am not sure whether Mr. Whiteside and I agree on all points although it would be good if there would be a constructive deliberation, that is what we are here for today. In my view, it is important to reduce the political

value of nuclear weapons. At this moment in time, it is not feasible to take nuclear weapons out of the Strategic Concept.

Mr. Whiteside

On the question of expectations and if I was pessimistic on that: the NATO comprehensive proposal on arms control in 1989 was probably the most promising area of what was going to take place over the next decade. Certainly a lot has happened in this period. If there is any pessimism on my side, it is about the problem of proliferation. India, Pakistan, the Middle East have not been easy to deal with in the course of the last five to seven years and that therefore there is an embedded sense of caution to where we are moving. It is no longer a bipolar issue now and it is very unclear what is going to happen during the next number of years. Therefore it is with great caution that NATO nations are looking at dramatic moves forward.

Are the expectations of NGO's too high or too low? I do not know. I think we are in for small steps rather than large strides.

Lastly, the issue of solidarity. I think NATO allies are much more in consensus with the nuclear stance of the Alliance than is perhaps portrayed.

NATO has reduced its reliance on nuclear weapons, its posture on nuclear weapons, and it is drawing down from the Cold War in a very dramatic fashion. I think the sense of solidarity is quite strong in the Alliance because we are going in the right direction, the direction of history in fact. What is overlooked, however, when one worries about solidarity within the Alliance, is the fact that the Alliance is working very strongly with nations that have their own troubles, for example Russia, which is getting rid of chemical weapons and nuclear stockpiles.

Mr. Sköld

I have the impression we are talking about different issues. Mr. Whiteside is focusing on disarmament outside NATO and I am talking about disarmament within NATO.

The NPT and Alliance Nuclear Policy

Mr. Roland Krueger

(Head of the nuclear policy directorate, NATO Headquarters)

NPT and Alliance nuclear policy, I have been tasked to talk about that and I would like to do that in a fashion that is at the same time looking into the future but also seeing where we have come from and trying perhaps on a slightly more philosophical note to tell you how I see NATO nuclear policy in the context of the NPT and the NPT Review Conference.

Let me start by saying that NATO has recognised as part of its broad approach to security that the transparency, predictability, lower levels of armaments and verification which can be provided by arms control and non-proliferation agreements, all support NATO's political and military efforts to achieve its strategic objectives. That means that arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements are thus in the direct security interest of the Alliance. NATO continues to attach great importance to the further development and to progress in the area of nuclear arms control and to full implementation of and compliance with, international disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

In the last communiqués of NATO ministerial meetings, this was expressed in no uncertain terms. NATO's Foreign Ministers stated in Florence in May 2000 that 'NATO allies value the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Alliance nations have dramatically reduced nuclear weapons and delivery systems and reaffirmed their commitment to work for the further reduction of nuclear weapons globally. We, the NATO Foreign Ministers, welcome the positive outcome of the NPT Review Conference. The conference agreed on the importance of universal adherence to and compliance with the NPT and it reaffirmed the commitment of all state parties to disarmament safeguards and peaceful nuclear cooperation. Allies confirmed their commitments made at the NPT Review Conference and will contribute to carrying forward the conclusions reached there.' (Paragraph 54)

That was the language of the Foreign Ministers and in tune with the 2000 NPT meeting. In their June 2000 Nuclear planning Group meeting, Alliance Defence Ministers stated: 'We welcome the positive outcome of the recent Review Conference on the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and affirm our commitments made at the Conference. NATO allies are also committed to the immediate commencement and

the rapid conclusion of negotiations on a non-discriminatory multilateral and internationally effectively verifiable and universal Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. (Paragraph 8).

We welcome the ratification of the START II Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty by Russia. Both are important steps towards even deeper reductions and ultimately the elimination of nuclear weapons on a global scale. We look forward to the implementation of START II and assure the United States and the Russian Federation of our full support for their negotiations on the basis of an agreed START III framework which would cut the arsenals of deployed strategic nuclear warheads by 80% from Cold War peaks. We renew our call upon Russia to bring to completion the reductions in its tactical nuclear weapons announced in 1991 and 1992, and to review further its much larger tactical nuclear weapons stockpile with a view towards making additional significant reductions.' (paragraph 9)

I just want to emphasize the point that the Defence Ministers speak very clearly about the elimination of nuclear weapons on a global scale. I can see absolutely no evidence that would support any claims that NATO was not interested in nuclear arms control or, for that matter, did not support the NPT.

Let me now look a little deeper into the broader context of security. The context of security, the Alliance's Strategic Concept, arms control and disarmament and NATO's nuclear policy is an element of NATO's designs for stability, crisis management and war prevention.

When addressing the role of NATO's nuclear policy in the new security environment, it is necessary first to recall two basic truths. One about the Alliance's general approach to change, and the other about its historic achievements.

Firstly, throughout its history NATO has always had a positive and constructive attitude towards handling change. As new situations developed and challenges arose, the Alliance for the most part did not simply react but it actively chose to become involved and demonstrated a willingness to contribute to shaping future security arrangements. Already in the 1967 Harmel report, the Alliance is characterised as 'a dynamic and vigorous organisation which is constantly adapting itself to changing conditions.' It is thus of great importance to understand that the present adaptation to a new security environment and the ongoing transformation of NATO itself are not just momentary or singular activities but are rather elements of an ongoing long term, almost permanent dynamic process of political and organisa-

tional evolution. That is not only true for the organisation itself. It is also true for the contents for which this organisation stands and, more so, for which its member nations stand.

Secondly, more than fifty years after the end of World War II, it is necessary to recall the unprecedented success of the North Atlantic Alliance. It has played a fundamental role in preventing any further such conflicts in Europe and in creating conditions for unparalleled peace, stability and prosperity for its members. From early on, NATO has been a proponent of a broad concept of security. Adequate collective defence arrangements and her policy of detente are not seen as contradictory but are complementary steps towards the achievement of a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe accompanied by appropriate security guarantees. Thus the Alliance is not only adapting to the new security environment but is, mainly through its preparedness for internal transformation and through its determination to work towards a new European security architecture, in fact reshaping hitherto adversarial security relationships into cooperative ones. Some examples in that context have already been mentioned by the speakers before me: NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council is definitely one, and the NATO-Ukraine commission is another. Partners in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Mediterranean Dialogue are examples of that approach.

All that said, the broad approach to security already set out in the Harmel report and fully embodied in the Strategic Concept has been progressively developed and intensified since 1991. Building on increased transparency and mutual confidence while maintaining drastically reduced defence capabilities, it is aimed at further reducing, even eliminating any risks of conflict through dialogue, through partnership and through cooperation among all European nations. As an agent of change and development, a source of stability and reliability and the indispensable guarantor of its members' security, the Alliance has played and will continue to play a key role in the process of building a new lasting order in Europe.

NATO's nuclear strategy and force posture are particularly striking examples of the Alliance's positive attitude towards adaptation and determined implementation of its broad, increasingly cooperative approach to security. The nuclear elements of NATO's strategy and force posture, quite contrary to what was said by one of the speakers before me, were not only the first major components to come under close scrutiny. They were also subjected to the most radical changes by far. This was the logical consequence of the magnitude of change in the security environment and it testifies to the allies'

desire to free structures and resources from being bound in adversarial designs wherever and as fast as possible.

We have already heard, in quite some detail, the concrete steps agreed at the conclusion of the NPT Review Conference. Let me try to sum up what NATO can do in this context, using the picture of the three baskets that was once developed in Helsinki at the CSCE conference.

The first basket are some of the steps that are already on the agenda of NATO or of allies. They include: entry into force of the CTBT; moratorium on nuclear weapons test explosions pending entry into force and implementation of START II, and START III negotiations; further efforts to reduce nuclear arsenals in a prudent and graduated manner; transfer of fissile material designated as no longer required for military purposes to peaceful uses, under international control. The Alliance is confident that there will be substantial progress in these areas where NATO or its allies have a direct role.

The second basket would contain those other steps that are presently under deliberation as part of the process that Ted Whiteside spoke about, that process initiated at the 1999 Washington Summit which is now in its consensus forming and decision making stages.

And then there is a third group of steps or measures that will have to be taken up by nations, some even by NATO maybe, if nations so decide. There is for me absolutely no way of telling how, in what form, when and whether at all some of these topics will be tabled at NATO.

But let me assure you, and with that I would like to conclude this short introduction, that NATO is committed to pursue further nuclear arms control measures in a prudent and graduated manner and insofar supporting the aims and objectives of the NPT. Thank you.

Otfried Nassauer

(Director of the Berlin Institute for Transatlantic Security)

Thank you very much for inviting me here to comment on NATO's options to contribute to the future of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. I would like to use this opportunity to present to you the case that there is a very urgent need for change. To my understanding the current speed and scope of making progress in NATO is inadequate. The Alliance responds too slowly and too conservatively to the changes happening in the European security environment. Thus we are probably in the process of missing some really great opportunities to conduct additional steps of nuclear disarmament and strengthen existing non-proliferation regimes. Why?

NATO is facing two big challenges during which the Alliance will have to make decisions on alternative courses of action.

First, NATO will have to decide whether it is going to further reduce the role of nuclear weapons or to widen it. This alternative became visible during the discussions on NATO's new military strategy MC 400/2 earlier this year. Within the Alliance there was a debate whether NATO should assign nuclear weapons a role in deterring and/or fighting the owners of biological or chemical weapons as well as the owners of means of delivery for weapons of mass destruction. This would imply reassigning nuclear weapons to a role against inter alia non-nuclear countries. Such a role exists in US national nuclear policy but is not known to be officially part of NATO's nuclear policy. As a result of the debate, MC 400/2 does not say anything about whether or not nuclear weapons do have such a role. The same is true for the controversial first use issue. MC 400/2 does not answer the question whether the Alliance would use nuclear weapons first. It deliberately omits the problem.

However, NATO's traditional way of behaviour is to argue that what is not explicitly excluded could become an option if necessary. So both first use as well as the deterrence use of nuclear weapons in the context of chemical or biological weapons might become NATO praxis if the Alliance judges this is necessary. The decision, however, on whether that would happen would probably be taken under time pressure and in the unfortunate environment of a concrete crisis. This is surely not the best time to decide such important questions. If NATO finally decides to include the deterrence of chemical and biological weapons in Third World countries into the role of nuclear weapons, then these weapons will again become more important for NATO's policy. In the mid- to longer term and if non-proliferation efforts fail, they will be reassigned a war fighting role.

Secondly, NATO will have to decide whether or not it wants to have an impact on the coming US Nuclear Posture Review. This review has been mandated by Congress and the next president will be bound to conduct it. I believe the Alliance's Paragraph 32 review currently underway is an excellent opportunity for NATO to prepare some constructive input and recommendations for the US national review. However, the Alliance could also opt to take a 'let's wait and see approach'. This would limit NATO's options for reacting to the decisions unilaterally made by the United States.

NATO's course of action on the future role of nuclear weapons, further reduced or widened, and on whether to provide constructive arms control and non-prolifer-

ation oriented recommendations for the US National Nuclear Posture Review, will have a great impact on the future of nuclear disarmament and the 2005 NPT Review Conference. NATO's activities will either help to develop a constructive environment for new achievements on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament by 2005 or contribute to prolonging the lasting stalemate, create new hurdles for nuclear disarmament and weaken the non-proliferation regime. If the Alliance remains passive, this too will probably strengthen the latter, more negative developments.

While what is known about NATO's current approach to the Alliance's review process is not encouraging, there are some hopeful signs as well. I would not like to exclude them from my presentation. All NATO members voted in favour of both the New Agenda Coalition resolution and the Japanese resolution on nuclear disarmament at the First Committee at the UN General Assembly. This is a first. The Japanese resolution sets a deadline for CTBT entry into force by 2003, which is a strong commitment issued by the American government and goes beyond the one issued during the NPT Review Conference.

I would now like to share some thoughts with you on concrete steps the Alliance could consider during its article 32 process in order to strengthen nuclear arms control and non-proliferation. Even though NATO is not involved in negotiating START II and START III, this is done bilaterally by Russia and the United States, NATO could conduct a number of helpful initiatives to promote such negotiations and help to make them successful.

First, NATO could support negotiating a treaty that really covers all types of nuclear weapons and thus includes substrategic weapons, tacnukes. I think the most prudent structure for a new START III treaty would be to agree one upper limit for all types of nuclear weapons, no matter whether strategic or substrategic, no matter whether they are active, inactive or hedge. This could help to create the basis for a treaty in which warhead dismantlement could for the first time be made verifiable. If a treaty covers all warheads and not just specific types of warheads, there is no need for a verification system that distinguishes reliably between the warhead types and thus eases the overall verification procedure.

Second, NATO should support an approach to such a treaty which allows the 'freedom to mix' all different types of nuclear weapons. This could make it much easier for Russia to enter a new treaty and show some flexibility on the number for the upper limit.

Third, NATO should not exclude unilateral initiatives that could help achieve a future arms control treaty

that covers tactical nuclear arsenals. Unilateral initiatives could help as confidence building measures. Transparency is one area in which NATO could opt for such an initiative.

Fourth, the Alliance should signal Moscow some understanding for the problems Russia faces when considering whether to enter a new START treaty. One of these problems probably is that the Russians honestly do not know whether they could meet the strict requirements for a reliable data exchange on tactical nuclear weapons. Possibly they do not reliably know whether they really have a complete historical record for each of their tacnukes. This problem may be the result of the speedy but also hasty process of withdrawing their nuclear weapons from the Baltics, the Southern Soviet Republics and other Warsaw Pact countries during 1990 and 1991. Things had to happen so quickly that Gorbachev even decided to ask Germany for its consent on retaining some nuclear weapons in Germany beyond reunification and well into 1991. Russia might feel unsafe about the reliability of her data. One could help to solve this in a future treaty in a flexible and easy manner by providing for several consecutive data exchanges, allowing for ever narrowing error margins, for example from a hundred to fifty to zero. This might allow the Russians to avoid one of their problems that currently limit their political will to discuss tacnukes and transparency.

Fifth, I believe that NATO should consider signaling to Russia that substrategic nuclear weapons (air-launched and sea-based) are no longer necessary in the European security environment. An indication that there is a chance to conclude a treaty which foresees the withdrawal and elimination of these weapons, might provide Russia with an incentive to enter negotiations on sub-strategic weapons. From the Russian perspective these are an add-on to America's strategic posture since they could be targeted against Russia.

Finally, NATO could also help make a treaty covering substrategic weapons more likely by indicating to Russia that NATO countries would be willing to help Russia to finance the dismantlement of tactical nuclear warheads. They are part of the common heritage of the Cold War and their elimination thus could be described as a common responsibility. Today, Russia has such a constrained defence budget, significantly less than one-third of the German, that Moscow must have financial priorities other than agreeing to additional commitments from new arms control treaties. Feeding the troops, buying clothes and providing housing is a much higher priority these days than paying for the dismantlement of nuclear weapons, instead of simply storing them for future dismantlement. I strongly believe that is a field for

Western support. NATO, an international organization, could provide it.

I would now like to look at some options for NATO other than making a new nuclear arms control treaty possible. NATO could make a substantial contribution to further reduce the role of nuclear weapons by describing it in a different way. In 1990 the Alliance described nuclear weapons as weapons of 'last resort'. This language was helpful. It made it clear that nuclear weapons had a role in deterrence but no longer in nuclear war-fighting. Today the Alliance should re-adopt the London language. In addition it should describe what 'last resort' means. The Alliance could combine the 'last resort' language with the results of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice. If NATO would describe nuclear weapons as weapons of last resort the use of which would only be considered if the very existence of an Alliance member state was at stake, this would represent clear language and a change for the better. It would clearly state that the Alliance would consider using nuclear weapons only under the specific circumstances which the ICJ did not agree to be clearly illegal.

In addition, NATO could consider issuing a negative security assurance to all non-nuclear countries in order to complement the assurances given by the nuclear weapon states. Thus the Alliance would make it clear that it no longer considers giving nuclear weapons a role against all types of weapons of mass destruction.

In another move, NATO could engage Russia over a serious review of options for joint initiatives to strengthen existing non-proliferation regimes. Under her new President, Vladimir Putin, Russia has already suggested some constructive measures to strengthen non-proliferation, e.g. a Global Control System for missiles and missile technology.

In its Paragraph 32 review, NATO as a whole should reiterate all commitments accepted by the individual member states at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, while adopting the New Agenda and Japanese Resolutions in the First Committee.

To conclude my remarks on the nuclear field, I would like to make one more proposal. Today there are a lot of different levels of involvement in NATO nuclear policy for NATO's non-nuclear states. Some countries do not allow peacetime deployment of nuclear weapons, others deploy US nuclear weapons for the use with US and/or their own Air Forces. Some countries operate units that could use US nuclear weapons in times of war. Others do not have such units.

Finally, there are the new members for whom a politically binding commitment exists, that the Alliance has

no plans, no intentions and no reasons to deploy nuclear weapons on their soil, create new or modify existing infrastructure to allow such a deployment, train pilots or conclude Programmes of Cooperation. However, independent of their involvement, all non-nuclear members of the Alliance are eligible to participate in the Alliance's nuclear planning and consultation processes.

Those non-nuclear weapon states in NATO that fully participate in NATO nuclear sharing, should consider giving up the technical capability to employ US nuclear weapons in times of war. They could do so either individually or collectively. At the same time they would continue to fully participate in the nuclear planning and consultation process. This initiative would result in all non-nuclear members to NATO having the same level of involvement in NATO nuclear affairs. NATO's new members and Canada would serve as the model. If adopted, this step could have a number of positive effects.

Bringing all non-nuclear NATO member states to the same level of involvement, i.e. the status of the new members, would immediately end the debate about the different classes of membership or security in NATO and thus strengthen cohesion. The new members would no longer feel at disadvantage. All non-nuclear member states would nevertheless have a joint interest in maintaining and strengthening the Alliance's nuclear consultations. A review of the 1992 Gleneagles political guidelines might be very helpful in that context.

Taking this initiative NATO's non-nuclear member states could make two substantial contributions of their own to non-proliferation and disarmament. They would ease negotiating a START III treaty that includes tac-nukes and they would help NATO to be no longer accused of violating either the spirit or the letter of articles I and II of the NPT. The technical capability of non-nuclear NATO states to use US nuclear weapons in times of war, not the consultation aspect of NATO nuclear sharing, is causing these suspicions. Thank you very much for your attention.

Discussion

Victor Korshkunov

(Russian Embassy)

I would like to say a bit from a historical perspective about NATO. NATO was in the first place organised as a counterbalance for the expansion of the Soviets after the Second World War. The second reason that is rarely mentioned was to have under control Germany as a powerful force in Europe. This second reason remained after the Soviets disappeared. So this second half of the main task of the NATO, to ensure US influence in Europe, still remains and that is maybe why we have so many questions between the Russians and the European countries about the main task of the NATO and why it still remains and is still expanding, which the Russians cannot understand.

The Americans see military force and especially nuclear arms as the cornerstone of their influence in Europe and it is really so because the Europeans can never reach the American level of technology in the nuclear sphere, let alone in conventional weapons. Nevertheless, Europeans are trying to do their best in this field. But nuclear weapons are still out of the question and the Americans will be leading there. That is why we expect they will never give up such provisions in nuclear doctrine as the first use of nuclear weapons etc.

So, from this point of view, asking the Russians why they are not reducing their military arsenal, conventional or tactical nuclear forces or just strategic forces, does not give a complete picture of the question in comparison with NATO, because the USA is a leading force in this block. The Russians are reducing their weapons, we have ratified START II, we ratified CTBT in comparison with the USA. We are proposing to reduce the nuclear strategic arsenal through START III to below 1,000 warheads. On this we have a contradiction from the USA, because it says it can only go on with this reduction if the Russians agree with the deployment of National Missile Defense in the USA. So it is clear that the Americans do not want to lose their leadership in the nuclear sphere. That is why they are trying to complicate all these questions instead of simply reducing them.

Mr. Van Waning

(Former member of the Dutch parliament, former nuclear strategist of the Ministry of Defence, now deputy chairman of the National Association for Foreign Affairs.)

A remark first on the role of NATO's nuclear weapons. In my time it was to prevent war and whenever NGO's said you should have a no first use declaration. NATO retorted we have a no first attack declaration

so that is even more important than not using nuclear weapons first. This also involved NATO nuclear weapons for deterring biological and chemical weapons, I seem to recall, although maybe not formally.

The question is on NATO's nuclear stance and a possible nuclear stance in European security and defence. What do both gentlemen think about that? At the moment we still have the United States' nuclear guarantee. Do you envisage an autonomous European security and defence identity with or without its own nuclear deterrence?

Senator de Zulueta

(Member of the Italian Senate Foreign Affairs Committee)

A question was put to us, parliamentarians present at this meeting, by Mr. Sköld. I do not think he had any answer so far, so I would like to try to answer. He asked what we were going to do on the two priorities which were underlined today on the implementation of the commitments which have been made, both with the vote on the UN resolution and the NATO Ministerial Meeting in April this year. I think the answer is we are going to try and carry on doing what we have been doing up till now and try and be more effective.

I would like to take a page from Mr. Savidge's book and our first priority is to actually put these questions on the agenda in order that there is a thorough debate, preferably before the December NATO meeting. It is not that simple to renew a sense of urgency both in the public opinion and therefore in the parliamentarians who reflect these concerns and I think Mr. Savidge's strategy seems to have been effective so I am going to try and copy it. When I say we will try to carry on doing what we have done up till now, the first thing is the challenge of transparency. This is of growing urgency and the mode in which these questions were debated ten years ago is no longer adequate and does not satisfy democratic imperatives and the need to inform public opinion. Therefore we have got to try and put transparency on a different level from the past and this is also part of those confidence and security building measures. It is how the Alliance intends to work and it is also how the Alliance should explain itself.

On the question, for example, of an area which is still shrouded in considerable ambiguity and roughly described as nuclear sharing. This source of ambiguity will prove ever more a problem in pushing forward the non-proliferation agenda. As an Italian parliamentarian I have run up against this obstacle of getting information, the obstacle and apparent contradiction of data being publicly available but not being officially sanctioned by our governments. One of the reasons for this resistance

is not, as Mr. Koster says, bureaucratic resistance, it is political. And it is more on the European end than in the United States. This is my impression up till now. Italy is, as anyone who has read the reports from Congress knows, one of the countries which has tactical NATO nukes stored. How many at any point in time is of course always open to question. Nevertheless, we are one of the countries that are participating, as the Netherlands is. Now the reason that our government is reluctant to discuss this at great length is not just because of the fifties and sixties binding bilateral agreement but also because in the NATO expense sharing scheme of things Italy provides bases and nuclear storage facilities which, in the bookkeeping of NATO accounts, is a substantial contribution. So it enables my country to be a nuclear power at a very low cost. I think our defence budget and the size of defence budgets are very important political considerations and this is one of the blocking factors in more transparency and more public debate on this issue.

The other thing that I think we must work hard on is to maintain the system of treaties which is the guarantee of nuclear non-proliferation so we have to try and ensure that there is no challenge to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in its original form and to put the NPT in the inner context of the family of treaties and in this respect the debate on the nuclear missile shield is very important. I think it is very important that the House of Commons brought it into the open and made such explicit recommendations and I think it would have been good if other parliaments in Europe had followed suit. I think the way to do it is that we actually continue our commitment to what is a system of treaties and to pushing this system forward. That is my attempt to answer Mr. Sköld's question.

Hans Lammerant

(Representative of the Belgian NGO Forum voor Vredesactie)

I have a question for Mr. Krueger concerning the Non-Proliferation Treaty and nuclear sharing. With the debate around the NPT Review Conference in the Dutch parliament as well as the Belgian parliament there came up a contradiction concerning the interpretation of the NPT by different governments. The Dutch minister of foreign affairs stated that the NPT was valid in wartime and that Dutch pilots were under NATO command for wartime operations, meaning that no nuclear weapons are transferred (which would violate the NPT), while the Belgian minister of foreign affairs said the NPT was not valid in wartime, hence Belgian pilots could take control of the nuclear weapons. After this discussion he also gave a more extensive explanation which

in my view allows Iraq to carry out its nuclear program because it was in a state of war all this time. My question is what is the NATO interpretation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty? How does NATO qualify the NPT and nuclear sharing?

Mr. Krueger

There were indeed so many questions that it gives me a choice as to which I want to answer and which not. First of all I heard from several speakers including Otfried Nassauer the sense of urgency, that there is a window of opportunity here and the present speed of NATO is not adequate. That is one of the relatively few points where I would disagree with Otfried. I have tried to explain in my introduction that NATO has indeed changed quite substantially and in some cases dramatically. This has to be seen over time and I think that NATO has not stopped doing that now.

What we tend to do when looking at issues like that is that we tend to see the present situation. There is no progress, there is nothing going on. I think a lot is going on and I am quite confident and quite hopeful that START, CTBT and the FMCT treaties will all be brought to a conclusion and will be implemented.

Another point which I found very interesting is this constant reference to transparency and that is indeed a very crucial point which, especially in the context of confidence and security building measures, we have been trying and will continue trying to take up with the Russians. Confidence and security building measures are especially necessary and useful when we can agree on them with the Russians.

Transparency is also very interesting when organisations like yours in meetings and conferences like these invite people like Ted Whiteside and myself, and I hope I am allowed to speak for him as well. Because that is also helping transparency. NATO has for much too long a time been too secretive about these things and has not come forward and explained its position.

Another question I would like to respond to is the question on the European role of ESDI, the European forces. Could we ever see those under let us say a European nuclear umbrella? I would be tempted to respond to that in a very personal manner. First of all, I think the European process of a common defence and a common foreign and security policy is a very long-term one. Perhaps by that time we will think about nuclear weapons in a totally different way than we do today. So I would not necessarily see the role for nuclear weapons and nuclear forces that we have today in the same context. But to answer your question more specifically: I think even the French would agree that these forces, as long as we have a nuclear role, as a deterrent against war, make

only sense under the American nuclear umbrella and nobody really, I think, would consider replacing that with a French and British nuclear umbrella. Even the two countries concerned would not support that and I think the Europeans would not want that.

Nuclear sharing was one of the other major points brought up. I think nuclear sharing is not making Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany and the others nuclear powers at low cost. I think that encapsulating the sense of risk and burden sharing is what NATO is all about. The idea is to have the risk for nuclear deterrence not only resting with the nuclear powers but resting with a much larger number of NATO member states. Not only those states on whose territory US nuclear weapons are stationed contribute to that. The entire community of NATO does that. All NATO members do that, they all subscribe to this kind of policy.

Therefore, just in passing, I would like to dampen the hopes of those who think that this review process would end in a major revision or a dramatic review of NATO's nuclear policy. I would say definitely not now, because NATO governments, NATO heads of state and governments have, not even two years ago, agreed to this Strategic Concept and its nuclear elements and I think they are not prepared and willing to put that on the table again. So I am saying when we talk about a revision of NATO nuclear policy that again would be a long-term prospect.

Mr. Nassauer

First point on Russia. I think Russia is in the process of, rhetorically, widening the role of nuclear weapons and de facto trying to keep enough conventional forces to keep the country together. This means that the capability of the conventional forces to fight conflicts in the Caucasus or in Central Asia might be more important than keeping the strategic balance numberwise with the United States, from the current government's point of view. If you do so you automatically have to adopt a first use policy. That is the logic of thinking that way. So if that is the main course of action in Russia there are two things to consider.

First: how to proceed with NATO enlargement. Let me present an alternative. I think the next round of NATO enlargement should, if possible give NATO-Russia relations a pause to recover. Another round of alienation similar to the first, but with a strong debate in Russia, is not productive. The best thing NATO could do would be to limit the next round of enlargement to the south-east, to the Balkans, where NATO has engaged to create stability and NATO membership must be in the perspective of that stability and I think that is more important than trying to get the first former CIS

country or the first former part of the Soviet territory into NATO. It could also help to really develop NATO-Russia cooperation in a much more productive manner than in the past.

I now come back to the comment on no first use in the seventies when the answer was always 'no first attack'. If you look at the same question from a Russian perspective this has lost a lot of credibility after Kosovo. This argument is no longer a good argument, even with humanitarian justifications.

My final point concerns the function of nuclear sharing. Indeed yes, NATO has always argued that NATO nuclear sharing is the three R's: shared risk, roles and responsibilities. However after the end of the Cold War this does not necessarily have to be so. European countries much earlier faced the threat of biological, chemical or, via proliferation, nuclear attack. A situation of confrontation with Russia as the big nuclear power is not imaginable. So I think if the Europeans say they are willing to share the risk without nuclear sharing the function of nuclear sharing can be fulfilled in the post Cold War world.

Concluding remarks

Mr. Jan Hoekema

It is impossible to summarise all the substantive points. It was a very broad field which we debated about this afternoon and I think I would like in these few minutes to put the emphasis on the process. The process is really important. What was lacking to some extent, I think, was the synergy of the different actors from different angles with different responsibilities coming together. This is quite a unique meeting where a number of international NGO's have brought together an interesting mix of officials from NATO, non-governmental organisations, members of parliament. Quite a mixed bag but I think a very interesting crowd. I think this process should be continued.

Very briefly, I see six categories of issues I think need to be maintained on the agenda.

First: non-proliferation, which has a wider perspective than just arms control. Israel was mentioned, for example, India, Pakistan.

Secondly: arms control and military policies. This ranges from NMD to nuclear arms reductions; it is the very broad field of classical arms control.

Thirdly, the CSBM's, confidence and security building measures, are very interesting. This is also a broad field, including transparency etc.

The fourth issue is, I think, a very vital one: Alliance policies. NATO policies of course are to be reviewed and controlled by parliament. I will come to the role of that, but an international debate on NATO and Alliance policy has been lacking there. This is also true for the paragraph 32 process and other issues like no first use. It is important to have this international debate and we all look forward to this with expectations, but moderate expectations. I listened to Mr. Krueger very carefully on the outcome of the paragraph 32 process. It is not a revision, it is a review. It will not be the end of the story and it is important to keep the public eye on this.

Fifth point is the parliamentary debate and parliamentary control. We are dealing here essentially with intergovernmental policies and those are policies which are difficult to control, unlike the European Parliament for instance, which has control over the Brussels policies which are not intergovernmental. Here we have different responsibilities. National parliaments, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly which was mentioned by some and I see some familiar faces from the Assembly, and I think PGA has a role in this respect and there are maybe other parliamentary bodies. I was very much touched by the interesting remarks by Mr. Savidge at the beginning of this afternoon on the All-Party Group. I think this is

an example worth looking at, in trying to get these discussions to other parliaments. In the Netherlands parliament, and I have some hesitation in making this remark without our colleagues being present, this is very much a monopoly by a handful of parliamentarians from a small group of parties and I would like to see the debate broadened to all major parties. Maybe that will also be applicable to other parliaments. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NPA) certainly has a role to play. In two weeks' time we have the Berlin session and I am the general rapporteur of the NPA Security Committee so I will certainly have a try in getting arms control and NPT matters on the NPA's agenda, which is very important because it involves the US Congress and those are very essential players in this whole discussion.

Sixth, last but not least, the indispensable role of NGO's in this debate. It seems to me that they have always been very active in this field. So even without these meetings they will continue to do their very useful work.

So these six issues should remain, left or right, one way or another, on the international agenda. This sort of coalition between NGO's, officials and members of parliament is worth having another round in the future, either in the Netherlands, or in Belgium. I am very pleased with the very strong Belgian presence here and with the renewed debate in Belgium on these issues. Maybe we will meet somewhere next spring or autumn. Finally, I should thank very much the three main organisers: the IPPNW, I have already mentioned my colleague and friend Bert Koenders, the PENN, Mr. Karel Koster, who has been very active as always on this issue, and, last but not least, the PGA.

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An Uneasy Alliance: NATO Nuclear Doctrine and the NPT*

Introduction: Clear Responsibilities, Ambiguous Commitments

There is a peculiar ambiguity in the NATO defence doctrine. Sixteen of the nineteen member states of NATO are defined as being 'non-nuclear-weapon states' in the NPT. At the same time they belong to an alliance which regards nuclear deterrence as a key part of its military doctrine. This contradiction has long exerted a negative influence over attempts by the international community to take serious steps towards nuclear disarmament. Criticism of the 1998 Indian and Pakistan nuclear tests by the NATO non-nuclear-weapon states highlighted the obvious contradiction between relying on a nuclear deterrent on the one hand, and, on the other, condemning its adoption by any other state.

The ambiguity came to the fore at the NATO summit held in April 1999 in Washington D.C. In the Strategic Concept adopted at the summit, paragraphs 62 and 63 maintain that:

'62. The fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war. They will continue to fulfil an essential role by ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies' response to military aggression. They demonstrate that aggression of any kind is not a rational option. The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.

63. A credible Alliance nuclear posture and the demonstration of Alliance solidarity and common commitment to war prevention continue to require widespread participation by European Allies involved in collective defence planning in nuclear roles, in peacetime basing of nuclear forces on their territory and in command, control and consultation arrangements. Nuclear forces based in Europe and committed to NATO provide an essential political and military link between the European and the North American members of the Alliance. The Alliance will therefore maintain adequate nuclear forces in Europe. These forces need to have the necessary characteristics and appropriate flexibility and survivability, to be perceived as a credible and effective element of the Allies' strategy in preventing war. They will be main-

tained at the minimum level sufficient to preserve peace and stability.¹

At the same time, the summit communiqué was released, in which an opening was created for an evaluation of NATO nuclear policy:

'32. Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation will continue to play a major role in the achievement of the Alliance's security objectives. NATO has a long-standing commitment in this area. Allied forces, both conventional and nuclear, have been significantly reduced since the end of the Cold War as part of the changed security environment. All Allies are States Parties to the central treaties related to disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, and are committed to the full implementation of these treaties. NATO is a defensive Alliance seeking to enhance security and stability at the minimum level of forces consistent with the requirements for the full range of Alliance missions. As part of its broad approach to security, NATO actively supports arms control and disarmament, both conventional and nuclear, and pursues its approach against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means. In the light of overall strategic developments and the reduced salience of nuclear weapons, the Alliance will consider options for confidence and security building measures, verification, non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament. The Council in Permanent Session will propose a process to Ministers in December for considering such options. The responsible NATO bodies would accomplish this. We support deepening consultations with Russia in these and other areas in the Permanent Joint Council as well as with Ukraine in the NATO-Ukraine Commission and with other Partners in the EAPC [Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council].²

There is, thus, a clear dissonance between reassertion and reform of nuclear strategy within the Alliance. Opposition to existing policy was first formulated publicly by the German and Canadian foreign ministers in the second half of 1998. Fischer argued for a 'no-first use' clause to be included in NATO's new Strategic Concept, while Axworthy called for 'new initiatives' and 'new thinking' to resolve the 'evident tension between what NATO allies say about proliferation and what we do about disarmament.'³ Although the new Concept did not go as far as either Minister urged, the communiqué language quoted above highlighted at least a degree of hesitation and reflectiveness in NATO circles over its nuclear posture.

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By Karel Koster

NATO's Nuclear Infrastructure & Arrangements

NATO not only underwrites a nuclear strategy: it also has access to the wherewithal to implement it. The British and French ballistic missile submarine fleets 'contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies'. Four US Navy Trident submarines are assigned to the NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and, most significantly, the aircraft of six member states are equipped to deliver air-launched free-falling nuclear bombs. Of especial political importance is the status of these bombs and the weapons systems used to deliver them. While the French, British and US submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) are under the respective national control of the nuclear-weapons states, the gravity bombs made available to the NATO planners have a status all their own. The 180 nuclear bombs⁴ stored at 15 airfields in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey and the UK are in fact American, while designated for use not only by US Air Force aircraft, but also by the air forces of these six allied NATO states. It is this particular status which lies at the root of much discussion concerning the NATO nuclear 'umbrella' and the Alliance's collective obligation under the NPT. The fact is that these bombs are available for use in case NATO as a whole should go to war. In such an eventuality, the bombs would be dropped on their targets by aircraft flown by NATO pilots, in accordance with plans and using tactics developed by NATO staff. In view of this clear involvement of the non-nuclear weapons member states of the Atlantic Alliance, two key questions arise:

- Under which conditions will the NATO nuclear weapons be used?
- Is such use in accordance with the NPT and other international commitments signed by the NATO member states?

NATO First Use

According to well informed sources, a revised version of a classified NATO document (MC 400/2) describing the Alliance's military doctrine – the translation of the Strategic Concept into operational terms – apparently retains the possibility that nuclear weapons could be used against states armed with biological or chemical weapons, even if they have signed the NPT. At the Florence ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council on May 16, 2000 this document was unanimously adopted after the Military Committee had agreed to it on February 7.⁵ That is, NATO doctrine allows the North Atlantic Council to advise its members to use nuclear

weapons against states using, threatening to use, or even simply possessing weapons of mass destruction. Luke Hill, Brussels correspondent of the US-based Defense News, quotes one NATO official as stating that nuclear weapons 'are our only weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear weapons could constitute, in case there is a threat against NATO or any member through (weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical), the only deterrent we have.'⁶ Such a policy bears a not altogether coincidental similarity to that adopted in 1996 by the US, which allows for nuclear strikes against states or even 'actors' using or preparing to use weapons of mass destruction against US targets.⁷

NPT Obligations

According to paragraphs I and II of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, nuclear weapons technology may not be transferred or received by the signatories.⁸ So if the procedure followed in wartime actually transferred nuclear weapons to the 'sharing' state, it would be illegal. Officials of the states concerned counter this reasoning in a number of ways.

According to one line of argument, an exception for paragraphs I and II was created when the treaty was being negotiated in 1968, based on the contention that the prohibitions were designed to define normal peacetime practice and would not apply to conditions of general war. Such a line was followed, for example, by the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Louis Michel on May 11 this year. Asked in Parliament about the legality of NATO attacking states armed with WMD, he replied that the NPT 'does not apply in time of war. According to the Vienna Convention arms-related treaties or treaties with such implications are suspended in time of war.'⁹ Amazingly, however, Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Jozias van Aartsen, when asked the same question in June, took issue with his Belgian colleague: 'I disagree with this statement. There has also been an exchange of opinions about this with Belgium at civil servant level. In the opinion of the Government there is no question of a violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, not even in time of war.'¹⁰ Dutch diplomats at the NPT Review Conference also insisted both that the NPT would remain valid in time of war, and that Articles I and II would not be violated by NATO during any conflict, as there would be no question of transferring control of the nuclear weapons to the sharer states. The pilot, plane and nuclear device would be under the command of SACEUR, who, not unimportantly, is always an American. By means of this structure, there would be no transfer to another entity at all: neither NATO nor the NATO allied pilot would control the bomb.

Negative Security Assurances

This somewhat convoluted logic is also applied to the 'negative security assurances' given to NPT members. When the Treaty was extended indefinitely in 1995, this was a question of vital importance. The member states, in exchange for repudiating in perpetuity any intention to develop nuclear weapons, demanded that the nuclear weapons states would guarantee that they would never attack them with these weapons. In UN Security Council resolution 984 (1995), such guarantees were apparently given. However, official documents published by the Russian and US Governments call the pledges into question. On January 10, 2000 the Russian Federation officially reaffirmed the 'first strike' option it had first adopted in 1993.¹¹ The US, in the 1996 Joint Chiefs document referred to above, stated that 'offensive operations against enemy WMD and their delivery systems should be undertaken once hostilities become inevitable or commence'. Of course, NATO nuclear doctrine is not the same as that of the US. Historically, however, US nuclear doctrine has tended to be adopted by NATO. After all, the 'shared' nuclear weapons are American. Furthermore, NATO itself did not officially adopt the negative security assurances given in resolution 984. This was explained by van Aartsen as follows:

'There is no question of a contradiction between the relevant NATO policy and the negative security assurances (NSAs) provided by the nuclear-weapons states. This is because decisions about the use of nuclear weapons are the responsibility of the nuclear-weapons states and not NATO. The nuclear-weapons states are committed to the NSAs which they have themselves given.'¹² Van Aartsen also stated that the NPT does not prohibit the use of nuclear weapons against states armed with biological and chemical weapons.¹³

Criticism of NATO Nuclear Policy

Such reasoning has a distinctly evasive and theological air, a quality which has not gone unremarked on by NPT states. In a working paper presented at the 1998 NPT Preparatory Committee (PrepCom), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), representing 113 States Parties, called on the nuclear-weapon states 'to refrain from nuclear sharing with nuclear weapons States, non-nuclear weapons states and States not party to the Treaty for military purposes under any kind of security arrangements.'¹⁴ At the 1999 PrepCom, Egypt explicitly attacked NATO nuclear 'sharing' procedures: 'Neither Article I nor Article II suffer any exceptions. Notwithstanding the clear and unambiguous nature of articles I & II of the NPT, NATO's so-called "nuclear sharing"

arrangements and its concepts regarding nuclear deterrence ... raise significant doubts over the extent of compliance of some NATO members with the provisions of both these articles ...'¹⁵

A widely shared concern has been that NATO expansion will increase the number of states involved in the Alliance's nuclear structure. As South Africa argued at the 1997 PrepCom: 'The planned expansion of NATO would entail an increase in the number of non-nuclear weapon states which participate in nuclear training ... [and] which [would] have an element of nuclear deterrence in their defence policies.'¹⁶ Although no nuclear weapons are stationed on the territory of Poland, Hungary or the Czech republic, they, like all NATO member states except France, are involved in the planning arrangements for the use of the nuclear weapons in time of war. Neither has NATO given cast iron guarantees not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new member states, stressing only that it has no plans to do so.

This increasing stream of criticism from within the NPT now appears to be influencing the political debate in a number of NATO countries and Parliaments. Indeed, although some states are far more vocal than others in raising difficult issues, the NATO nuclear review signalled in paragraph 32 of the 1999 summit communiqué reflects a generally deepening divide between the NATO nuclear-weapon states and the non-nuclear membership.

Annual votes at the United Nations on the resolutions of the New Agenda Coalition, which call for more definite steps towards nuclear disarmament and stress that 'each article of the NPT is binding on the respective States Parties at all times and in all circumstances', also confirm this tendency. In the 1999 vote, for example, the US, UK, France, Poland and Hungary voted against the resolution, while the rest of NATO abstained.¹⁷ Meanwhile, at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, the NATO Five group (Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway) tabled a proposition (February 2, 1999) 'to set an ad hoc working group committee to study ways and means of establishing an exchange of information and views within the Conference on endeavours towards nuclear disarmament'.¹⁸

Shifts in NATO Policy: How Far, How Fast?

The question now is, can the cautious criticism voiced in a number of forums by a small number of NATO states be transformed into a more substantial process? Clearly, there is a strong tendency within NATO to downgrade the importance of the procedure agreed on at the Washington Summit. Walter Slocombe, US Under Secretary

of Defence for Policy, said in a press conference on June 8, 2000: 'There is no plan for a comprehensive review of NATO nuclear policy.'¹⁹ Interestingly, though, the NATO Foreign Ministers' communiqué issued in Florence in May this year refers to 'a comprehensive and integrated review'.²⁰ However, informal statements by Dutch diplomats suggest that the process may be limited to transparency and confidence building measures. In itself this would be a positive development, but in terms of addressing the basic contradiction between NATO nuclear policy and commitments under the NPT, such a narrow reform agenda is clearly inadequate.

Weighing up the current debate and its subtexts, it is debatable whether the undoubted differences of opinion within the Alliance are as yet sufficiently strong to result in a major shift in policy. Taken at face value, there is certainly some good-will in the Alliance towards making serious moves in the direction of the final document of the NPT Review Conference. In fact, the Florence communiqué explicitly supports the 'positive outcome' of that Conference. That outcome, it should be noted, included an 'unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI', an unprecedentedly clear declaration of intent backed by a programme of clearly defined intermediate policy objectives. These include a commitment to apply the 'principle of irreversibility' to 'nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures,' and the following steps 'by all the nuclear-weapon states leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

- Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon states to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally.
- Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon states with regard to the nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to Article VI and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament.
- The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process.
- Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems.
- A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.

- The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the nuclear-weapon states in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.²¹

In terms of the limited review apparently underway, the principle of irreversibility would prevent the taking back into NATO service of the hundreds of American tactical nuclear weapons removed from Europe during the last decade. Transparency measures, meanwhile, are particularly popular with officials from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who presumably see no reason for continuing to deny the existence of the free-fall bombs on Dutch soil. The official 'non-confirm/non-deny' policy on the presence of the nuclear bombs has taken on a rather ridiculous air in the face of open references to the weapons by Parliamentarians, including those of governing parties. Anti-nuclear activists have also collected and published an impressive amount of supporting documentation. NATO transparency on such weapons, it is hoped, may encourage similar openness on the part of Russia with regard to the location of its many thousands of tactical nuclear weapons.

The enthusiasm of NATO Governments for the removal of the free-fall bombs, however, is somewhat doubtful. Although in the Netherlands, for example, two of the three governing parties are for a negotiated withdrawal, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his predecessor have repeatedly stated that the nuclear weapons form an essential transatlantic link, vital for the very existence of NATO. It is not altogether impossible that while US strategists and perhaps a new US administration would have little problem in removing the bombs, many European NATO Governments would balk at the wider political implications of such a move.

This wariness, however, may change in the light of recent developments in the direction of a European security and defence policy. Such a basic, long-term shift has become ever more visible, even in traditionally Atlanticist Dutch foreign policy, and similar movement in the policies of other member states may have significant consequences for Alliance nuclear policy. In the intermediate term, this might result in a withdrawal of US sub-strategic nuclear weapons from the territory of European NATO member states, although it is questionable whether that would be an altogether favourable development. The recent musings of French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, in the Italian daily *Repubblica*, on a future European nuclear deterrent based on the French and British nuclear forces, are a salutary reminder that even the end of a NATO nuclear policy would not necessarily mean the end of the presence of nuclear weapons in Europe.²² The ultimate step might well be a European nuclear deterrent.

Notwithstanding risks and limitations, the current pro-reform disposition of a small number of NATO states should be encouraged by all parties interested in even small steps towards nuclear disarmament. The coming months will see the annual debate on nuclear disarmament at the UN First Committee and General Assembly, where the New Agenda Coalition will surely again take a lead in carrying the process forward. In NATO itself, the review process will give national Parliaments the opportunity to debate Alliance and Governmental claims about progress along this path. Parliamentary involvement is vital to avert the danger that the process will be smothered in bureaucratic manoeuvres.

Conclusion

At all levels of the debate over the Alliance's nuclear weapons and policy, the commitments made by all the NATO states at the NPT Review Conference will assume an obvious and central importance. But it is developments in US and Russian nuclear policy which will form the defining backdrop. Looming over all discussions is the US NMD programme. In their comments on this plan, NATO countries have been keen to emphasise the importance of maintaining the ABM Treaty or else amending it only with Russian approval.²³ As this is, in terms of the ABM Treaty, essentially a bilateral affair between the US and Russia, any compromise will probably be accepted by the Alliance. Any agreement allowing NMD deployment, however, will almost certainly result in an Asian nuclear arms race as China expands its strategic forces to counter the US shield and is followed by India and Pakistan. If the US goes ahead without Russian agreement – as seems probable should the Republicans win back the White House in November's Presidential elections – then a nuclear arms race with Russia is also likely. Either way, the world will not become a safer place, and the general international push to radicalise disarmament efforts will receive a grievous blow.

In the absence of any popular mass movement against nuclear weapons, it has become increasingly clear that only pressure from within NATO may persuade the Alliance's three nuclear-weapons states that international arms control is not only a viable option but ultimately safer and more rational than any attempt to impose unilateralist policies against proliferation on the rest of the world. To encourage this approach, it would be useful if the five NATO states which have shown themselves prepared to move faster in other contexts – Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Norway – were to follow the example of Canada's increasingly vocal and forthright stance in favour of nuclear reform. A strong, broad

pro-reform voice will provide the best opportunity for serious steps to be taken to counter a possible renewal of the nuclear arms race.

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