

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

MINISTERIAL MEETING, DECEMBER 1964

The following communiqué was issued at the end of the recent NATO ministerial meeting:

The North Atlantic Council met in ministerial session in Paris, December 15, 16 and 17, 1964.

2. Ministers surveyed the whole field of East-West relations. The basic causes of tension still persist, and will persist as long as it remains the aim of Communist countries to extend their system to the whole world. Ministers noted that recent developments in China and the U.S.S.R. have increased the uncertainties with which the world is faced. They reiterated their conviction that it remained essential for the Alliance to maintain and strengthen its unity.

3. Ministers also reviewed the situation in various areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They reaffirmed their interest in the stability of these areas and in the economic and social welfare of the people concerned.

4. In their discussions on the state and future progress of the Alliance, the ministers emphasized the importance of strengthening and deepening their political consultation. Recognizing the challenges that may face the Organization in the years ahead, they directed the Council in permanent session to study the state of the Alliance and the purposes and objectives commonly accepted by all members, and to keep the ministers informed.

5. The ministers reaffirmed their determination to continue their efforts to find a peaceful solution to the questions at issue between East and West. In particular, they continue to attach great importance to making progress towards meeting the legitimate aspirations of the German people to reunification on the basis of their right to self-determination. In regard to Berlin, the ministers confirmed the terms of their declaration of December 16, 1958.

6. The ministers expressed their conviction that the unity and military preparedness of the Alliance had safeguarded the peace and preserved the freedom of the West in the past. So long as general and complete disarmament under effective international control has not been achieved, any weakening of the allied defensive posture would expose the Alliance to increased pressures. The ministers, therefore, stressed the importance of maintaining the cohesion of member states in the strategic as well as the political field. Only a military structure demonstrably capable of swift and vigorous reaction to any aggression can meet the threat. To maintain such a structure, involving as it does a continuous adaptation to changing requirements, necessitates a persistent effort to improve the readiness, state of training and equipment of the forces of the Alliance. It further requires a sound