

### **Characteristics of Nuclear Forces**

1. All of the members of the Alliance have committed themselves, as states party to the NPT, to nuclear disarmament. The fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war. Until such time as the disarmament commitments of the NPT are achieved, the Allies' nuclear forces will continue to fulfil an essential, deterrent role.
  
2. In keeping with the Allies commitment under Article VI of the NPT, reaffirmed in 1995 in "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament", adopted by the states Party to the NPT, including all members of the Alliance, while the Alliance continues to maintain a strategy of deterrence it will do so at the minimum level sufficient to preserve peace and stability and seek to reduce that level whenever possible.
  
3. The Alliance's nuclear forces are weapons of last resort. Therefore, the Alliance will base nuclear weapons only on the territories of the nuclear armed Allies. Furthermore, the Alliance pledges never to be the first to use nuclear weapons in an armed conflict.