

TEXT OF FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The North Atlantic Council met in Ministerial Session from 11th to 14th December, under the Chairmanship of Professor Gaetano Martino, Foreign Minister of Italy, and took decisions that will strengthen the military and non-military co-operation of the Alliance.

2. In the meeting just ended, the Ministers drew from the experience of past divergences in the policies of NATO members the confirmation of the necessity for all members to develop effective political consultation and co-operation. They reaffirmed their determination to work together in unity and friendship to achieve the aims of the Alliance and to strengthen the Alliance in all its aspects as an indispensable agency for security and peace.

3. As a major forward step in the development of NATO in the non-military field, the Council approved the recommendations of the Committee of Three in their report to the Council. In doing so, the Council approved wider and more intimate consultation among the member states on political matters. The Council also approved arrangements to aid in the settlement of disputes among member states on political matters. The Council also approved arrangements to aid in the settlement of disputes among members and adopted measures for strengthening the organization of NATO internally and for further co-operation between members in certain economic and cultural fields. The report has been released by the Committee of Three.

4. The Council reviewed the international situation, discussing frankly the problems which confront the Atlantic Alliance. In the course of this discussion Ministers, realizing that their views were in general agreement, decided that the detail should be worked out by continuous consultation in the Council in the months ahead.

5. The Atlantic Alliance is primarily concerned with the threat to the security of the NATO area. The Council discussed the threat which Soviet penetration into the Middle East would present for NATO. In view of the fact that the security, stability and well-being of this area are essential for the maintenance of world peace, the Council agreed to keep developments in this area under close and continuing observation.

6. The Council members emphasized in particular the need for rapid progress in clearing the Suez Canal in conformity with the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly of 2nd November last. The Ministers further stressed the urgent need for initiating and pressing to a conclusion negotiations through the good offices of the United Nations with a view to restoring the Canal to full and free operation. They endorsed, as the basis on which a lasting settlement should be worked out, the six principles agreed upon by the United Nations Security Council on 13th October. They also agreed on the urgent need to bring about, through the United Nations, a permanent political settlement between Israel and the Arab States, including an equitable solution of the Arab refugee problem. The need for adequate support for economic development of the area was recognized.

7. The Council Members have followed the course of events in Hungary with shock and revulsion. The brutal suppression of the heroic Hungarian people stands in stark contrast with Soviet public professions. The Council reaffirmed the conviction of its Member Governments that the United Nations should continue its efforts, through the pressure of world public