

The US and Great Britain were opposed to entering into immediate negotiations on SNF reductions. In addition, the US was opposed to the final goal of complete elimination of SNF. Great Britain and France were also wary of pursuing the elimination of SNF, because they were concerned about how this might affect their own nuclear forces.

NATO had previously committed itself to modernizing its SNF forces as part of its decision to withdraw a number of older tactical nuclear weapons. The dual-track decision of 1979 included a decision to remove 1000 short-range warheads from the NATO arsenal. At Montebello in October 1983 it was determined that a further 1400 SNF be removed by 1988. As part of these changes NATO's remaining short-range forces were to be modernized.

At the centre of the modernization question is the Lance missile, with a range of 110 kilometres. NATO has approximately 144 Lance missiles which were first deployed in West Germany in 1972. Since the Lance will remain effective until 1995, a final decision on its successor need not be made until 1991 or 1992. The West German position was that no commitment needed to be made until that time. The US wanted a decision sooner, at least in part because the US Congress needed to allocate funds for the initial stages in the development of a replacement.

A Comprehensive Concept

These questions came to a head at a NATO summit meeting at the end of May 1989 in Brussels. After considerable debate and negotiation a final communiqué was adopted which outlined a "Comprehensive Concept of Arms Control and Disarmament." The communiqué stated that SNF or "sub-strategic" forces were vital to NATO deterrence strategy above and beyond the role they played in countering similar Warsaw Pact weapons. Indeed it was stated that these NATO weapons ensure "...that there are no circumstances in which a potential aggressor might discount nuclear retaliation in response to his military action." According to the document, no alternative to this strategy of deterrence based on a mix of nuclear and conventional forces was possible in the "foreseeable future."

NATO decided that negotiations on short-range forces could begin once the implementation of an agreement on conventional force reductions and stability had begun. These negotiations would seek "*partial* reduction" (emphasis in original) of US and Soviet short-range, land-based missile forces to equal levels. A decision on a follow-on system to the Lance missile would be made in 1992; the Alliance expressed support for continued US funding of this alternative.

CONCLUSION

As the first US-Soviet Union bilateral agreement on reducing nuclear arms since the conclusion of the SALT II Treaty in 1979, the INF Treaty has provided an impetus to the arms control process. It is a successful treaty involving verification measures beyond NTM, and the implementation process has proceeded relatively smoothly. By the end of 1989 all shorter-range INF missiles will have been eliminated, and within another eighteen months all other INF missiles will be gone.

The removal of these nuclear missiles from Europe, in conjunction with the prospect of reducing conventional forces, has had important implications for NATO. The ensuing debate included a discussion of the role of nuclear weapons in Europe. NATO reaffirmed its position that a deterrent based on a mix of conventional and nuclear forces was needed. Negotiations on short-range nuclear forces will be started after the process of implementing a conventional arms agreement has begun.

Finally, although the INF Treaty has affected only four to five percent of the total of both superpower arsenals, it has demonstrated that arms control can work, and that the Soviet Union is serious about accepting on-site verification measures. The early 1980s were characterized by accusations of non-compliance with existing treaties, and acrimonious debate about the value of arms control. Reaffirming the effectiveness of arms control is perhaps the most important achievement of the INF Treaty.

NOTES

1. Numbers are from the US Department of Defense and the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as quoted in the *Arms Control Reporter* 1989, p. 403.B.734.
2. *NATO Communiqué*, 30 May 1989, paragraph 44.

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