

The mandate proposed by the NATO members would see the new negotiation take place in the framework of the CSCE process between the 23 members of the two Alliances, retaining autonomy as to its agenda, timetable, rules of procedure, working methods, and other organizational modalities.

The negotiation would cover the conventional forces of participants based on land within the territory of the participating states in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. Particular emphasis would be given initially to those forces directly related to the achievement of the objectives defined in the mandate. Nuclear weapons would be excluded, as would naval forces and chemical weapons.

The Western text constitutes a complete mandate for the negotiation. In this it differs significantly from the Eastern non-paper circulated on June 22, which merely indicated possible elements for a mandate.

The text reflects the determination of Allied governments to pursue vigorously the initiatives taken at Halifax and Brussels in 1986, as elaborated in the Reykjavik Communiqué of June this year, aimed at achieving a comprehensive, stable and verifiable balance of conventional forces at lower levels.

The circulation of the draft mandate was accompanied by a statement on the exchange of information and verification by Canada's Ambassador in Vienna. In that statement, the Ambassador stressed that timely exchanges of appropriately detailed information on forces and equipment subjected to an arms control agreement is essential to the operation of an effective verification régime. He also emphasized the importance of a system of verification measures which can effectively confirm compliance by all parties to an eventual agreement with obligations undertaken. He noted that on-site inspections as of right are a necessary part of an effective verification régime.