

has shown that there is, as yet, no common interpretation of these principles. The fundamental problems in Europe can be solved only on the basis of these principles and any real and lasting improvement of East-West relations presupposes respect for them without any conditions or reservations.

3. At their meeting in Washington in April 1969, Ministers had expressed the intention of their governments to explore with the Soviet Union and the other countries of Eastern Europe which concrete issues best lend themselves to fruitful negotiation and an early resolution. To this end, the Council has been engaged in a detailed study of various issues for exploration and possible negotiation. Ministers recognized that procedure merited closer examination and, accordingly, requested the Council in Permanent Session to report to the next Ministerial Meeting.

4. Ministers considered that, in an era of negotiation, it should be possible, by means of discussion of specific and well-defined subjects, progressively to reduce tensions. This would in itself facilitate discussion of the more fundamental questions.

Arms Control and Disarmament

5. Ministers again expressed the interest of the Alliance in arms control and disarmament and recalled the Declaration on mutual and balanced force reductions adopted at Reykjavik in 1968 and reaffirmed in Washington in 1969. The Members of the Alliance have noted that up to now this suggestion has led to no result. The Allies, nevertheless, have continued, and will continue, their studies in order to prepare a realistic basis for active exploration at an early date and thereby establish whether it could serve as a starting point for fruitful negotiations. They requested that a report of the Council in Permanent Session on the preparation of models for mutual and balanced force reductions be submitted as soon as possible.

6. Ministers of countries participating in NATO's integrated defence programme consider that the studies on mutual and balanced reductions have progressed sufficiently to permit the establishment of certain criteria which, in their view, such reductions should meet. Significant reductions under adequate verification and control would be envisaged under any agreement on mutual and balanced force reductions, which should also be consistent with the vital security interests of all parties. This would be another concrete step in advancing "along the road of ending the arms race and of general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament".

7. These Ministers directed that further studies should be given to measures which could accompany or follow agreement on mutual and balanced force reductions. Such measures could include advance notification of military movements and manoeuvres, exchange of observers at military manoeuvres and possibly the establishment of observation posts. Examination of the techniques and methods of inspection should also be further developed.