

fields as political consultation. Defence improvements and force modernization programmes have also continued, together with work on defence planning, infrastructures, communications, crisis management procedures and similar tasks.

Increasingly significant has been the question of modernization of NATO's short-range nuclear forces (SNF). Over the past decade, successive NATO decisions have led to quantitative reductions in the Alliance's theatre nuclear capabilities. Not only have about 2400 short-range systems been eliminated, but, under the 1987 INF Treaty, a significant portion of NATO's medium-range capabilities as well. The desire to maintain a credible deterrent against Warsaw Pact forces, however, led to an Allied consensus that such reductions proceed in tandem with a commitment to modernize NATO's remaining short-range nuclear systems. This principle was asserted in 1983 at a meeting of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group in Montebello, Canada, and has been reaffirmed ever since in successive NATO communiqués. Modernization plans include replacing 88 Lance missiles currently deployed in Europe with an improved version. The question of follow-on systems will be dealt with by the Alliance in 1992.

Allied enthusiasm for modernization has varied, however. The United States and Britain have strongly endorsed such plans, contending that modernization of SNF is necessary to offset Warsaw Pact preponderance in conventional forces and thus to ensure a credible NATO deterrent. Other Allies, particularly West Germany, have expressed unease with such plans on the grounds that an overwhelming proportion of the weapons involved are stationed on their territory and thus place their homelands at risk.

In April 1989, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl called for a postponement of a final decision on deployment of a follow-on to the Lance missile until after the West German elections in 1990, together with immediate negotiations on SNF. The United States and Britain, both favouring an early commitment to modernization and preferring to leave questions of SNF negotiation for the indefinite future, opposed the proposal. The Allied impasse was exacerbated by Moscow's arms control initiatives. On 12 May 1989, in an effort to increase momentum towards the removal of all theatre nuclear systems, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze announced the unilateral withdrawal of 500 short-range nuclear warheads from Eastern Europe.

In the weeks that followed, inter-allied bargaining resulted in some movement toward a compromise. By the beginning of the NATO Summit in Brussels, on 29 to 30 May 1989, Washington had acquiesced to Bonn's desire to postpone a final decision on the deployment of a follow-on to Lance, and had also put forth a plan to begin discussions with Moscow on short-range nuclear systems. However, questions of when negotiations would commence, the extent of the reductions envisaged, and when the Alliance would reaffirm the need for developing a follow-on to Lance, remained unresolved.²

On 29 May 1989, the opening day of the Summit, US President George Bush presented a four-point plan calling for a first agreement on force reductions at the talks on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) within six months to a year, and complete implementation of such an accord by 1993. Allied compromise on SNF soon followed. Contained in a report adopted by the NATO Heads of Government, the consensus position asserted a willingness to hold negotiations with Moscow for "partial"

² "Compromise on Missiles Heads Off NATO Rift." *Arms Control Today*, vol. 19 no. 5 (June-July 1989), p. 22.