

that the increasing strength and unity of the North Atlantic Powers, which must be steadily reinforced, had proved to be decisive factors in maintaining peace and preventing aggression. Nevertheless, the threat to the Western world remains and member countries must be ready to face a continuance of this threat over a long period. The Atlantic community must therefore be prepared to keep in being over a period of years forces and weapons which will be a major factor in deterring aggression and in contributing to the effective security of the NATO area, and which member countries can afford while at the same time maintaining and strengthening their economic and social structures. Improvements must continually be sought in the quality of NATO forces and to ensure that they have equipment which is always up-to-date so that, in the event of attack, they can act as a shield behind which the full strength of the member countries can be rapidly mobilized.

Within the continuously developing framework of the Atlantic community the institution of the European Defence Community including a German contribution, remains an essential objective for the reinforcement of the defensive strength of the Alliance.

4. The Council considered the Report on the Annual Review for 1953 which records the progress in the NATO defence effort, particularly during the past year. At its meeting in December 1952, the Council laid emphasis on the development of the effectiveness of the forces. In this respect notable progress has been made. Large quantities of new equipment have been provided to the forces. This has enabled, in particular, many new support units to be built up. The goals established for the current year have been completely met for the land forces and to a substantial extent for the naval and air forces.

5. On the basis of recommendations made in the Report, the Council adopted firm force goals for 1954, provisional goals for 1955, and planning goals for 1956. The force goals agreed upon for 1954 envisage some increase in the numerical strength of existing NATO forces and a very substantial improvement in their quality and effectiveness.

6. It was agreed that special attention should be given to the continuing provision of modern weapons of the latest types to support the NATO defence system.

The Council noted with satisfaction the intention of the President of the United States of America to ask Congress for authority to provide information on nuclear weapons to NATO Commanders for purposes of NATO military planning.

7. The Council recognized that a long-term defence system as now envisaged raises important military and financial problems. With respect to the military problems the Council invited the Military Committee to continue its re-assessment of the most effective pattern of military forces, for this long term, both active and reserve, due regard being paid to the results of studies of the effect of new weapons. The Council will be kept informed of the progress of this work and a report will be submitted to it in due course. The Council will also keep under review the very considerable financial effort still required to continue the present build-up, to maintain NATO forces at an adequate level of readiness and to replace obsolescent weapons.

8. The Council heard statements by Admiral Sir John Edelsten, Commander-in-Chief Channel, Admiral L. D. McCormick, Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, and General Alfred M. Gruenther, Supreme Allied Com-