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PUBLICATION BY MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE

NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE OF THE DOCUMENT

"CONVENTIONAL FORCES IN EUROPE: THE FACTS"

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Perrin Beatty, today released for distribution in Canada a collective statistical assessment by the member states of the North Atlantic Alliance concerning the strengths of the armed forces in Europe belonging to the countries of the North Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The document has also been made public at the Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) in Vienna and at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Entitled "Conventional Forces in Europe: The Facts",* this assessment clearly points to an imbalance in conventional weapons systems in Europe, which gives the East a capability for surprise attack and large-scale offensive action. It was this imbalance which was highlighted by the Heads of State and Government of the members of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels in March, 1988 and which makes all the more urgent the initiation of new negotiations on conventional arms control within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

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It is hoped that this contribution to military transparency on the part of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance will prompt the countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization similarly to provide figures for their forces. Such a gesture would be a positive move and could facilitate the early stages of new negotiations, in which Canada intends to participate actively .

* You may obtain a copy of this assessment by telephoning Ottawa at (613) 995-1874.

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