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Nsc/Soubers to Smith 09/06/2002

By          Date 02/13/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

October 2, 1971  
(Revised Page 1)

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National Security Decision Memorandum 134

TO:                   The Secretary of State  
                          The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT:            Policy Guidance on Mutual and  
                          Balanced Force Reductions

The President has reviewed the results of the Verification Panel meeting of September 30, 1971, and the memoranda prepared by the Under Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. He wishes the following guidance to be followed at the meeting of the Deputy Foreign Minister in Brussels and in all other consultations and discussions with our NATO allies on the subject of Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR).

1. General Approach to MBFR

We seriously seek to achieve a more stable military balance in Europe at lower levels of forces. Therefore, the U.S. endorses the Alliance's exploration with the Warsaw Pact of the framework for possible mutual force limitations and reductions. In this regard it is critical that our Allies understand that further improvements in NATO's conventional forces are integral to successful MBFR negotiations as well as the U.S. commitment to maintain its forces in Europe.

The U.S. has not yet arrived at a preferred approach to mutual reductions. For this reason, our approach shall be to hold open for consideration alternative approaches ranging from limited symmetrical reductions to more comprehensive reductions including a variety of forms as well as more elaborate verification provisions and collateral constraints. Our objective shall be for an Alliance consensus on negotiations to arise out of a careful and systematic consideration of the full range of possible approaches to MBFR.

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2. The U. S. Position for Explorations

The U. S. position on the specific framework for explorations shall be as follows:

-- At this time, the United States has the following order of preference with respect to the area of reductions: (1) the Rapacki Area, (2) the NATO Guidelines Area plus Hungary, and (3) the NATO Guidelines Area. These preferences are without prejudice to possible force reductions or limitations that may involve other areas.

-- The United States favors initial emphasis on the reduction of Soviet and American (or stationed forces) in size and timing. Indigenous force reductions should, however, not be excluded from reduction.

-- The United States would prefer not to exclude particular types of forces from consideration, though it recognizes that as long as the focus is on the Center Region, naval forces should not be considered.

-- We are unable at this time to indicate preferences on the size and type of reductions; the broad categories of Options being considered within the U. S. government, however, may be described to our Allies to illustrate the direction and scope of our current preparations. It should be made clear, however, that our considerations shall not be limited to these options nor should they be interpreted as representing the preferred U. S. approach to MBFR.

-- At this time, we cannot exclude the need for inspection, since this decision would depend on the type and size of reductions.

-- We should indicate to our Allies our interest in a more thorough evaluation of the German phased approach to MBFR, and our disposition to consider this general concept favorably.

On the issue of the relationship of mutual force reductions to a European Security Conference, U. S. officials should indicate that we believe these two issues should not be linked at this time, especially in any exploratory discussion of MBFR with Warsaw Pact countries. Moreover, we cannot agree to any preliminary or exploratory multilateral talks on a European Conference, at least until the Berlin agreements come into force and until we have gained a better understanding of what a Conference might achieve in terms of U. S. interests.

3. Further Preparations

In preparation for further consultations, it will be necessary to accelerate our formulation of specific MBFR options and a thorough assessment of their implications. In particular,

-- The formulation of a full range of specific options shall be completed by October 8, 1971. In this regard, it will be necessary to consider again the design of appropriate asymmetrical and/or mixed package options.

-- The assessments of the military implications of these nuclear and conventional options shall be completed by October 15, 1971. In regard to nuclear options, a special effort will have to be made to assess a variety of nuclear doctrines, the forces required in Europe, and the MBFR options consistent with them.

-- The general assessments of collateral constraints and the verification measures required as well as their application to specific options should be completed by October 22, 1971.

These preparations shall be carried out by the agencies responsible under the overall direction of the Verification Panel. Following their completion, an overall assessment of the options shall be completed by early November prior to its consideration by the President in a NSC meeting in preparation for the December Ministerial meetings in NATO.

  
Henry A. Kissinger

cc: The Attorney General  
The Director, Arms Control and  
Disarmament Agency  
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
The Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
The Secretary of the Treasury