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E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NSC/Southern to Smith D9/06/2002
By WR Date 6/21/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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April 16, 1973

National Security Decision Memorandum 211

TO: Secretary of State
Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT: Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR)

The President has approved the attached paper setting forth the approach of the United States to Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Central Europe. It should be provided to the Allies before the end of this month. The supporting annexes called for in the paper should also be made available to the Allies by that time.

The objective of our consultations with the Allies should be to get them to focus on the outcome the Alliance should seek for MBFR before turning to the tactical problem of developing an Allied position for the negotiations in the fall. U.S. representatives should bear in mind that our analysis makes clear that indigenous reductions are disadvantageous to NATO and that stationed reductions including U.S./Soviet reductions are more advantageous.

Once the views of the Allies are available on the outcomes that would be acceptable, we will consider these views and provide the Allies with our preferences regarding the initial approach to be taken in the negotiations, including concrete proposals on reductions that should be developed jointly by the Allies.

United States representatives should make clear to the Allies the importance of reaching agreement on concrete reduction proposals before the negotiations begin in the fall. This does not necessarily

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imply that such proposals would be made at an early point in the negotiations. However, it is necessary in order to ensure that Allied negotiating tactics and presentations on substantive MBFR issues are consistent with the proposals the Allies will eventually advance.

The President wishes to emphasize the importance of an Allied commitment to further improvements in Allied forces in connection with MBFR. The Secretary of Defense should prepare a presentation on a program for U.S. and Allied force improvements to be delivered at the upcoming NATO Defense Ministers meeting. A draft of this presentation should be made available for review by May 15, 1973,


Henry A. Kissinger

Copies to:

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director, Central Intelligence
Acting Director, ACDA