



1110 BRUXELLES

41.00.40
TEL. : 41.44.00
41.44.90

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From: Secretary General

REACTIONS OF NON-NATO EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS
TO THE ROME DOCUMENTS

Attached is a summary prepared by the Political Division of reactions of non-NATO European governments to the Rome Communiqué and Declaration.

2. A further compilation of reactions will be made as Delegations provide data.

(Signed) Manlio BROSIO

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I. INTRODUCTORY SUMMARY

This chronicle compiles reactions of non-NATO European governments to the two documents issued at the end of the NATO Ministerial Meeting held in Rome the 26th-27th May. It has been prepared by the International Secretariat on the basis of information provided by Delegations and covers the period 29th May-16th June. Thus, it predates the appearance of documents issued by the Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Budapest on 21st-22nd June.

The first opinions expressed were made by the various foreign ministry officials who accepted the two Rome Documents transmitted, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the Communiqué, by Italian diplomatic representatives to all other interested parties, including the neutral and non-aligned governments. Other preliminary comments were made by ministry officials and diplomatic representatives to the diplomatic representatives of NATO governments in the field and in the national ministries after the Documents had been delivered. Reactions given by mid-June by Warsaw Pact government officials appear to have been formed after consultation within the Bloc. This report also contains a section giving the views of Ambassador Enckell on the CES idea.

Initially, Warsaw Pact governments were mixed in their attitudes, but by mid-June this had polarized more toward the negative than the positive. The USSR reaction remained negative from the beginning. Hungary wavered between the two poles but quickly adopted a negative view. Poland's first response was described as "cordial and encouraging" but two weeks later had become one of opposition. Czechoslovakia and Rumania seemed positive in their reactions, with the latter apparently becoming more so by 23rd June. Bulgaria apparently had almost no reaction. The Secretariat has no information regarding the attitude of the German Democratic Republic, but one may presume that it is negative. All six Pact states expressed interest in continuing the dialogue and indicated they would respond more officially at a later date.

Except for Rumania, most Pact governments indicated their impression that NATO was setting up preconditions by its references to progress in on-going talks, and cited paragraphs 8, 15 and 16(a) of the Communiqué. Most also criticized what they said was NATO's apparent insistence on maintaining a bloc-to-bloc approach.

As regards MBFR, the USSR objected to its inclusion in a CES agenda. Poland was initially less negative, but eventually shifted toward the Soviet view. In general, the East European view, excepting Rumania, is:

MBFR is a complex matter which should not be treated as an agenda item for a conference on European security and should not be tied to a CES. The NATO approach is a bloc-to-bloc one and is therefore not acceptable. Discussion of MBFR might be possible, but only in a limited manner and with limited participation, provided it also included nuclear weapons. But it would still remain a difficult subject.

Of the neutral states, both Austria and Switzerland asked whether neutrals would be invited to participate in talks on MBFR. Sweden expressed fear that the East would reject this subject as discriminatory, but that that was no reason for not proposing it. The Swedish spokesman also wondered whether including nuclear arms might not enable the Pact governments to accept the proposal. The initial Yugoslav view seemed positive on the question.

II. WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES

Soviet Union

Vice-Minister Kozyrev on 1st June, in response to the Italian Ambassador's delivery of the Documents, expressed interest in continuing the dialogue. He asked whether a multi-lateral consultation of a technical character would examine the possibility of convening a security conference or would be a probing to explore the possibility of establishing a permanent organ. As regards a conference and MBFR, Kozyrev said a conference could help to create favourable conditions for a discussion on MBFR. Kozyrev repeated known Soviet statements on this subject and said that the Rome meeting had changed nothing from previous Ministerial Meetings and that MBFR itself could not be made an agenda item of a conference because of the nature and complexities of the question. (The Italian Ambassador felt that Kozyrev's reaction was not entirely negative.)

Kozyrev on 2nd June told the British Ambassador that MBFR did not concern all European countries and asked whether progress on MBFR and in on-going talks were preconditions for calling a conference. He also enquired about the proposal for a Standing Commission. It was Kozyrev's view that NATO seemed to be making many preconditions whereas the Soviet approach was that a successful conference on a limited agenda might facilitate the solution of other problems. The inclusion of MBFR, he felt, was mere propaganda since this problem was complex and its implications went beyond the European context. Kozyrev, requesting the Ambassador to return on 9th June, then asked:

- (a) why had the NATO countries suggested that bilateral talks begin now when, in fact, such contacts had begun more than one year ago following the Budapest Appeal?

- (b) what kind of forum did the British Government have in mind for discussing MBFR if this subject were not considered at a security conference?
- (c) could a conference be convoked before considering MBFR if it were to be discussed in another forum separate from the conference?

At London on 1st June, Ambassador Smirnovsky, who did not appear well-briefed, adopted an attitude of cautious inquiry, saying, however, that he agreed with Izvestiya's comment that the Communiqué was a definite step forward. He criticised inclusion of MBFR as a subject to be discussed on the grounds that this was a bloc-to-bloc approach. Furthermore, he saw no reason why elaborate preparations were necessary since a "troika" (Poland, Finland and Belgium) was already working on conference preparations. Smirnovsky also objected that, by making further progress towards multilateral talks dependent on progress in current talks on Germany and related subjects, NATO was setting preconditions and giving a veto to the Federal Republic of Germany.

At The Hague on 2nd June, Soviet Ambassador Lavrov, speaking personally, said he considered the Communiqué to be a step backward since it gave the impression of wanting to delay the conference idea rather than begin preparations for it. Lavrov was even more negative toward MBFR. The Declaration on it constituted a move towards a bloc-to-bloc approach which did not promote security in Europe.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Foreign Minister on 30th May asked the Italian Ambassador only whether the MBFR proposal would also cover the Mediterranean region. On 1st June, Mr. Bashev told the newly-arrived British Ambassador that Bulgaria would be ready to discuss the documents either in Sofia or London.

Czechoslovakia

In a 2-hour conversation on 1st June with the Italian Ambassador, Foreign Minister Marko insisted on the necessity of a conference, beginning even with an agenda of minor importance because by starting with less difficult questions the participants could hope to move on to more important ones. He observed the paragraph 8 of the Communiqué seemed to pose a precondition since it calls for progress in the Federal Republic's on-going bilateral talks with the three Pact States. (The Ambassador believed Marko's general tone was clearly positive.)

On 2nd June Marko told the British Ambassador he was not yet able to give considered views. He urged the importance of conducting bilateral exchanges on a confidential basis and of avoiding propaganda. (The Ambassador received the impression that Czechoslovakia would be happy if her allies decided that the documents, or at least the Communiqué, provided material for exchanges of view.)

PO/70/316Hungary

A Hungarian Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs on receiving the Documents on 1st June, showed interest and said his Ministry would recommend to the Pact allies that they engage in discussions on MBFR, even if only in a limited manner.

Foreign Minister Peter, according to a Reuter's dispatch of 3rd June, is reported to have said: "We are very much interested in the decisions of Rome and we are ready to make new proposals to improve the situation in the world at large".

On that same day Mr. Puja, First Deputy Foreign Minister, told the British Ambassador that, in his view, the procedures envisaged in the Communiqué would require far too long a time to set up a conference. While the May Document represented some improvement on last December's, it still contained too many barriers to progress and laid down preconditions for holding a conference, as seen in paragraph 15 which specifies that there first had to be progress in the talks on Germany and Berlin.

Furthermore, he continued, NATO still wishes to impose controls on relations between the socialist states themselves, as clearly seen in paragraph 16(a). Principles governing relations between socialist countries were different from those governing relations between socialist and capitalist countries, as repeatedly underlined in all recent declarations of the socialist states.

Puja felt NATO's approach had not changed and continued to insist that the most difficult problems be tackled first, whereas the Pact believed discussions should first begin with questions of which the solution seemed likely to prove the easiest. (See also the Section on the views of Ambassador Enckell.)

Poland

A Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs had no immediate comment to make when he received the Documents transmitted by the Italian Ambassador on 1st June. Vice-Minister Willmann on that date, however, told the British Chargé that the Polish Government had not decided as of then what its attitude to NATO's proposal should be. Speaking personally, he felt certain the Polish response would be positive. He also said Poland would welcome the bilateral exchanges proposed by the Communiqué and, speaking of the MBFR proposal, noted Polish interest in regional disarmament, recalling earlier Polish initiatives in this sphere, and added that this subject was included in the Polish draft of a treaty which it was hoped the Warsaw Pact states would introduce at an eventual conference. (The British Chargé felt Willmann's response was remarkably cordial and apparently encouraging.)

The Polish Ambassador at London on 3rd June, in a discussion with Mr. Stewart, offered his personal comments. He thought NATO's Rome position represented an advance and there was now a basis on which discussions could be started. He saw, however, three shortcomings:

- (a) the timetable envisaged was too slow;
- (b) Mr. Stewart's statements about progress in talks underway sounded like preconditions;
- (c) the inclusion of MBFR was bound to create difficulties.

The Ambassador's main objection to MBFR was that it would give a bloc-to-bloc approach to negotiations. He added that Poland gave priority to nuclear disarmament questions and said that if sub-paragraph 3(c) of the Declaration was intended to cover nuclear weapons, this might make discussion of MBFR easier from the Polish point of view, though it would still be difficult.

By mid-June Vice-Minister Willmann seemed to have become less encouraging in his view of the Communiqué than he had been on 1st June. He informed the Danish Ambassador on the 16th that the Rome Communiqué in several instances seemed to represent steps backward as compared with impressions he had gained in recent visits to Western capitals. He saw France's inability to associate itself with MBFR as a sign of dissidence within the Alliance, which meant to him that there could not be an early CES. As for MBFR, he opposed its inclusion as a conference agenda item because it assumed a bloc-to-bloc approach. Willmann believed that the subject ought to be postponed until NPT had been ratified and SALT produced results.

The Vice-Minister also criticized the Communiqué for what he saw as preconditions in NATO's view that progress must be attained in Germany's bilateral talks and in Four Power talks on Berlin. He rejected the proposals for preparation for a conference by a "troika", a Group of Ten or a preparatory conference involving all interested countries.

As regards paragraph 16(b), Willmann did not disagree with its aims, but felt that the possibility of a "brain drain" to Poland should such freedom be permitted in his country would render this proposal unacceptable. However, Poland could agree to expanding the second item of the Prague Proposal to include cultural co-operation and environmental problems cited in 16(b).

Rumania

A Rumanian Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs on 30th May expressed to the Italian Ambassador his appreciation for the delivery of the Documents and showed particular attention to those passages which deal with the independence, sovereignty and the integrity of all states.

On 3rd June, First Deputy Foreign Minister Macuvescu told the British Ambassador that he could not then give any official indication of Rumania's attitude. Speaking personally, he accepted the Communiqué as a positive move forward. He said the problems were complicated, with those of origin more recent than the Second World War in some respects even more difficult than the older ones. Nevertheless, Rumania was optimistic about eventual agreement. The process would be long and a conference was not an end in itself but only a means to assure greater security to all countries in Europe and agreement on measures which would effectively prevent a resort to forces for any reason or from any quarter. Security in Europe, he continued, concerned all European states as well as the United States and Canada, whose forces and interests in Europe made their inclusion essential. Macuvescu felt there would have to be a series of conferences and some form of permanent machinery might be helpful. The Rumanians were open-minded on the latter points and thought it should soon be possible to move from bilateral discussions to a multilateral meeting, but did not wish to set a date for this.

Any such meeting must be open to any country wishing to take part and Rumania could not accept that anyone else should speak on her behalf. Macuvescu said the Communiqué coincided with Rumania's view that a multilateral meeting must not be on a bloc-to-bloc basis. While Rumania would naturally consult with its Pact allies, it would go into a meeting as an independent country prepared, as in the past, to express an individual point of view.

Rumania hoped that an unrestricted preparatory meeting would lead to the first of a series of conferences but it did not ask other states to commit themselves to this and would consider other suitable fora for negotiations.

As regards a code of good conduct, Rumania believes this must provide safeguards for all European states from any threat of attack from any quarter and should not be limited to relations between blocs.

On 9th June, Mr. Stewart covered the same ground with the Rumanian Ambassador in London.

As regards MBFR, Premier Maurer is reported by AP and Reuter to have said at a press conference on 23rd June during his visit to Bonn that he personally would like to see a CES discuss troop reductions in Europe. However, he felt all participants would have to agree on the agenda since it would be "impolite" for any one nation to insist on subjects others might not want to discuss.

III. NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

Austria

The Austrian Vice-Minister who received the Documents on 29th May asked whether neutrals would be asked to take part in discussion on MBFR.

Mr. Platzer, Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry on 3rd June told the British Chargé that the Prague Agenda was too meagre and that Austria did not like the "troika" idea. He agreed that these ideas coincided closely with NATO's Rome proposals. He welcomed caution in going forward by stages since a premature, ill-prepared conference would do more harm than good. Austria had no objection to the idea of a permanent body and would be willing to co-operate and play its full part.

On MBFR, and speaking personally, Platzer thought it was worthwhile pursuing this objective, but it would be difficult to reach agreement and it therefore might be better to concentrate on easier questions initially.

Finland

The Foreign Minister accepted the two Documents on 1st June. He said Finland would continue its contacts with all interested Governments and that concrete progress could be achieved only if there were an understanding for a conference among all these governments.

At London on 3rd June the Finnish Ambassador told Mr. Stewart that he thought there was a general feeling that a conference should be well-prepared and not convened hurriedly before there was a reasonable expectation of success. He confirmed Mr. Stewart's observation on the Soviet Ambassador's statement regarding the "troika", i.e. that the three-country preparatory body is not a fact since the "troika" idea had been dropped some months ago (an impression Belgian officials gained from talks at Moscow 20th-22nd May).

Spain

The Foreign Minister received NATO's Communiqué and Declaration on 30th May. He said he would study the Documents.

Sweden

The Swedish Ambassador at London on 2nd June told Mr. Stewart that Sweden had always supported the idea of a conference, provided it was well-prepared, had a reasonable chance of success and that the provisions of the UN Charter were fully taken into account. The Swedish Government believed the two pacts ought to find a compromise to settle the obvious differences between them.

Mr. Wachmeister, Political Director of the Foreign Ministry, on 5th June indicated to the British Ambassador that Sweden agreed to the three-stage approach envisaged in the Rome Documents. Sweden thinks the first stage is probably almost played out. It thinks Helsinki seems to be a good site for the second stage where the Finnish Foreign Minister could invite Ambassadors and the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic to talk "over a cup of tea".

Wachmeister considered NATO formulations superior to those of the Pact as regards the points found in paragraphs 16(a) and (b). He feared, though, that MBFR would be rejected by the East as discriminatory and wondered whether NATO could not expand the proposal to include nuclear weapons. He agreed that fear of a Soviet refusal was no reason for not proposing the item but he felt inclusion of nuclear arms might provide the means to sell MBFR to the Pact governments.

Wachmeister said his comments were only preliminary and a more definite indication of Sweden's views would be given later.

Switzerland

The Federal Political Counselor accepted the Documents on 1st June and was particularly interested in knowing whether NATO meant to invite neutral states to participate in exploratory talks on MBFR.

Yugoslavia

At Belgrade on 29th May, a Vice-Minister told the Italian Ambassador that he was very interested but would withhold comment until after his Authorities had studied the Documents. This attitude was publicly stated by Dragoljub Vujica, the Ministry's press spokesman, who informed the press on that day that the Ministry would not be able to make any comments until it had studied the two Documents.

Vice-Minister Vratusa, in Copenhagen on the same day reacted favourably to information given by his Danish luncheon hosts about the Communiqué and Declaration. He felt NATO had moved forward by expanding the two points proposed by the Prague Declaration, and welcomed NATO's initiative and its inclusion of the neutral and non-aligned European states. Vratusa also agreed on the importance of the Federal Republic's bilateral talks with the three Warsaw Pact states while expressing satisfaction that their outcome was not made a precondition for beginning multilateral talks. In this regard, the Vice-Minister stressed the importance of the German-Soviet talks, but obliquely suggested the inner-German talks were of lesser importance.

On 2nd June the Chargé d'Affaires at London told the Head of Western Organization Department F.C.O., that his own reaction had been that the documents represented a constructive and positive move forward in continuation of the dialogue.

Reaction in Washington

By mid-June, discussions with Soviet and East European diplomatic representatives had not drawn significant reactions. The representatives limited themselves to asking questions and soliciting clarification of various points.

IV. VIEWS OF AMBASSADOR ENCKELL

Ambassador Enckell met with Under Secretary de Ranitz in The Hague on 15th June to discuss the possibilities for convening a CES. The Dutch impression of that conversation is that Mr. Enckell is not totally convinced that a CES is feasible and that he is carrying out his task with some scepticism.

While in the countries had had visited there seems to be a consensus on the desirability of finding a solution to European problems, there is no consensus that a solution can be found by means of a CES. Enckell said it is clear that the time is not yet ripe for such a meeting and if a CES were convened now, it would doubtless be a failure.

The Finnish diplomat believed that informal bilateral soundings seem to be the best method for reaching progress as regards preparation for a meeting. However, in his view, current proposals are unrealistic. The "troika" idea cannot be used since the group could not obtain a mandate from the other states to represent them. The Rumanian proposal for a conference of ambassadors is too similar to a real conference and would also produce unsurmountable procedural problems. As for the Danish idea of having European parliamentarians become involved in preparatory meetings, that is equally unrealistic. The Dutch proposal that a limited group concern itself with preparations is also non-representative and therefore unacceptable.

Enckell believes that all concerned should put emphasis on the concept of "security" rather than on the idea of a "conference" as such. Therefore, he prefers that nothing hamper the progress potential of the current on-going negotiations.

Having recently conferred with Hungarian officials, Enckell said their reactions to the Rome Communiqué were negative. The Magyars looked on it as a step backwards since its paragraph 8 was viewed as a precondition for convening a conference. His impression is that Foreign Minister Peter thinks that the Alliance has not grasped the feeling that a CES is something which directly concerns Western Europe. In Peter's view, East European countries will continue to exist without a CES, and their initiative for a conference stems from a sincere desire to improve the political climate in Europe.

In concluding, Enckell emphasised that his primary task is to promote understanding among all governments concerned with Europe. For this objective, it is necessary that governments be unanimous in acceptance of developments through all stages of the process leading to a CES. To date, the only point in common is that all governments concerned with security in Europe must participate in a conference.

As for the Finnish Government, it wishes to avoid the creation of time pressure and has no formal position with regard to plans for preparing a CES. The Government's view is that it is better to have a well-prepared conference at a later date than to have an early but poorly-prepared meeting.