December 10, 1979
Major points from the discussions in Brussels, Rome, London, Washington, Bonn

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Summary:
An outline of key points made in each of several meetings over a one week period. Includes the following: the Netherlands and Belgium will try to decide as late and as simultaneously as possible on TNF modernization; Italy will try to help the Dutch influence FRG and U.S. positions; U.K. is committed to helping Dutch cabinet remain intact; FRG does not oppose the Dutch move to delay their decision but also believes Netherlands should not try to block NATO decision-making.

Credits:
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Original Language:
Dutch

Contents:

- English Translation
Very Secret

MP
Me²
concerns  Major points from the discussions in Brussels, Rome, London, Washington, Bonn

Brussels 4-12-’79³
- Provisional Belgian view: paired decision⁴ but postpone its implementation by 6 months.
- In agreement with provisional Dutch approach: stay as closely as possible to IDD, but nuanced.
- Watch out for negative mutual influence. Therefore Neth. and Belgium decide as late as possible and simultaneously. MP’s keep in constant contact.

Rome 6-12-’79⁵
- Italian view: in accordance with IDD (90% certain: Senate still needs to decide)
- Reactions to provisional Dutch position:
  * Provided FRG agrees, should not expect any cooling from Italy toward Neth.
  * Willing to pay price to prevent Dutch distancing from NATO.
  * Decoupling of NATO decision not acceptable.
  * Neth. reservation regarding deployment acceptable (provided also for FRG).
- Italy will plead our case with FRG and US.

London 6-12-’79⁶
- English [sic] view: entirely in accordance with IDD
- Reactions to provisional Dutch position:
  * If NATO can modernize, no objection against later decision on Dutch share depending on what SU does.
  * Decoupling of NATO decision unacceptable.
  * NATO one line as much as possible, otherwise victory for Moscow.
- Presentation Dutch policy can probably be improved
- Willing to defend Neth. if it is not capable to do so itself.
- Entire detailed critique (by Carrington et al) wiped off the table by Thatcher: the Dutch cabinet must survive this crisis!

¹ By Van Agt’s top adviser, J. P. M. H. Merckelbach. No date.
² MP: Prime Minister; Me: J.P.M.H. Merckelbach, top adviser prime minister.
³ See document 8.
⁴ A reference to the two tracks of the NATO decision: deployment and arms control.
⁵ See document 9.
⁶ See document 10.
If Neth. govt., because of the position of the 2nd Chamber, feels compelled to postpone its decision until Dec. ’81, it should make no further commentary on the nature and the scope of the LRTNF modernization program.
- US assumes that the number of GLCMs possibly to be deployed in Neth. will also remain open for the time being.
- Reference to the relationship between LRTNF and Salt II is, in light of Dutch position, superfluous and for US undesirable.
- Dutch proposals regarding cancellation of current nuclear tasks\(^8\) are in principle acceptable for US, also separate from Neth. position regarding LRTNF. A few problems with the timing are solvable.
- Reconfirmation full commitment US govt. to disarmament in Europe, both nuclear and conventional.

FRG view: in accordance with IDD. One line with US, without wanting to continue as US vanguard in Europe.
- Neth. cannot and should not block decisionmaking in NATO.
- No objection to Dutch reservation: deployment decision in Dec. ’81 depending on periodic NATO evaluations (not reappraisal\(^9\)! ) of the state of the disarmament talks.
- Cancellation current nuclear tasks to be shelved for 2 years.
- FRG does not criticize Dutch position.
- Belgians better, if necessary, make the same reservation as Neth., (at least not a reservation that mentions a 6 month period).
- Danes had better speak last. Their reservation should be buried somewhere in the record.

\(^2\)See documents 11-13.

\(^8\)Reference to Dutch desire to cancel certain, but not all, nuclear tasks performed by its military.

\(^9\)No memorandum of conversation found in the TNF file of the Van Agt papers.

\(^10\)In English.