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DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY

Memorandum on the problem of disarmament and security, submitted to the Netherlands parliament.

Summary of policy conclusions:

On June 19, 1975, the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. M. van der Stoep, and the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Dr. P.H. Kooijmans, submitted to parliament a memorandum on the problem of disarmament and security as it presents itself today.

In order to meet requests from interested people and institutions inside and outside the country, the following pages contain the English version of the summary of policy conclusions (Chapter IV of the memorandum).

September 1975

## POLICY CONCLUSIONS

The détente between East and West, which has continued during the past few years, has had little if any effect on the arms race. While it is true that the rapprochement between the great powers, notably the Soviet Union and the United States, has greatly reduced the chances of a conflict being deliberately provoked, the continuous stock-piling of nuclear and conventional weapons means that the consequences of an accidental conflict which cannot be checked at an early stage can only be catastrophic. A conflict of this kind is not inconceivable, since there are several trouble spots in the world where fighting might break out in which, in certain circumstances, the major powers might become involved.

However much the undersigned welcome the détente and the greater sense of responsibility shown by the big powers, they are deeply disturbed at the ever-rising armaments level, and they consider it essential that the détente should be accompanied by substantial reductions in existing arms systems, especially in the nuclear sector. For any large scale use of nuclear arms would have very grave consequences for humanity as a whole. Moreover, these are the very weapons in respect of which the relative stability which has been achieved could be seriously upset by technological breakthroughs. It is therefore in respect of nuclear weapons that it is most essential that effective measures should be taken for arms control and arms reduction. This should be feasible, since the present state of equilibrium permits a considerable mutual reduction of nuclear stocks. Agreements to restrict

new developments in weaponry are also very important. For it is often the fear that the other side will achieve technological breakthroughs which spurs on a country's own efforts in weapons technology.

There are three aspects to nuclear problems which deserve special mention:

Non-proliferation

A.1. An increase in the number of countries in possession of nuclear weapons would mean a serious threat to international peace and security. If one state acquires nuclear weapons, other states feel threatened and insecure; this may induce them in turn to provide themselves with nuclear arms. Netherlands policy will therefore continue to aim at promoting that the Non-Proliferation Treaty be accepted as universally as possible. The Conference held recently to review this Treaty has opened up certain ways of bringing non-proliferation policy up to date. Although disappointment is being felt, and justifiably, at the failure of the nuclear powers to fulfil their obligations arising from the Treaty to impose restrictions on themselves, this must not be allowed to obscure the fact that it is of paramount importance for world security that there should be no increase in the number of countries possessing nuclear arms. Once the present psychological boundaries have been overstepped, it will be even more difficult, if not impossible, to control the nuclear armament process.

Therefore one of our main policy objectives is still to promote ratification of the Treaty by as

many states as possible, in particular those whose technological capacities mark them out as potential nuclear weapon states. The Netherlands will also make an active contribution to working out the details of the recommendations which were adopted at the Review Conference.

A.2. The success of the non-proliferation policy will also be considerably promoted if nuclear-weapon free zones are set up in areas where nuclear weapons have not yet been introduced. This is why the Netherlands has taken a positive stand towards the creation of nuclear-weapon free zones in the Middle East and Southern Asia. In the latter region India's nuclear test in spring 1974 is a complicating factor. Although the Indian government has stated that this nuclear test was only being held for peaceful purposes, there is, technologically speaking, no distinction between nuclear explosive devices for peaceful and for armaments purposes. If non-nuclear-weapon states carry out nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, they may therefore be undermining the non-proliferation policy. For this reason the Netherlands has vigorously contributed to it that the General Assembly of the United Nations asked several competent bodies, such as the Geneva Disarmament Committee and the International Atomic Energy Agency, to continue studying the problem of peaceful nuclear explosions.

A.3. The prevention of the proliferation of nuclear arms should also be ensured by means of effective safeguards and regulations regarding the supply of fissionable material and nuclear equipment. The undersigned are therefore pleased that, after

prolonged negotiations, a number of supplier states reached agreements last year on the subject, and they hope that these arrangements will be made more widely effective by the means recommended by the Review Conference.

A.4. It is also essential that measures should be taken internationally to prevent fissionable material falling into the hands of private persons and groups. Now that the use of nuclear energy may be expected to expand and increase in importance, owing to recent events in the energy field, it is certainly most essential that effective and timely measures should be taken to ensure the physical security of nuclear materials. The Netherlands will continue to draw attention to these problems in the relevant bodies.

Thus the Non-Proliferation Treaty continues to be one of the touchstones of Netherlands disarmament policy. Though it is understandable that a number of countries should feel that the treaty's provisions are discriminatory, international security would be seriously jeopardised if the number of nuclear-weapon states increased; therefore this discriminatory element has to be accepted as the lesser evil.

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that the discriminatory effect of the NPT will be the more keenly felt, the longer the nuclear-weapon states delay in fulfilling their treaty obligations to reduce their nuclear arsenals. In this respect it is regrettable that China and France do not participate in the disarmament negotiations, but

it is no less regrettable that the results of the strategic arms limitation talks between the Soviet Union and the United States do not come up to expectations.

Curbing the  
qualitative  
arms race

B.1. It is necessary to curb and put an end to the qualitative arms race, notably between the two major nuclear powers, not only in order to strengthen the non-proliferation policy, but also to preserve international security. As we have already observed, a technological breakthrough could upset the equilibrium that has been achieved, whereas the present state of equivalence seems to be the best guarantee at the moment against the outbreak of a nuclear war. At the same time and subsequently, talks could be held about balanced reductions of the existing nuclear weapons arsenals, so that the equilibrium could function at a lower level.

In the opinion of the undersigned, a complete ban on all nuclear tests would be an important contribution towards curbing the qualitative arms race. Hitherto the obstacles to such a complete nuclear test ban have been the lack of agreement as to whether on-site inspection should be permitted, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> the fact that it does not look as if all nuclear-weapon powers - at any rate initially - would accept such a ban (notably China and France, which did not participate in the 1963 partial nuclear test ban treaty either). However, as the Netherlands has

pointed out several times during disarmament discussions, these objections do not compare with the dangers of continuing the qualitative arms race. This is all the more so now that the increasing perfection of national detection capacities has sharply reduced the chances of evasion of the ban going unnoticed if on-site inspection were not allowed. The Netherlands will therefore continue to press for the conclusion as soon as possible of an arrangement banning all nuclear tests.

B.2. Such a ban should preferably include nuclear tests which are allegedly for peaceful purposes, as long as it has not been demonstrated that such tests can have a useful economic function. Past optimistic expectations on this subject have not been fulfilled during recent years.

If so-called peaceful nuclear tests were not included in a comprehensive test ban, verification of such a ban would become much more difficult, unless on-site inspection were permitted each time. As no distinction is possible between explosive devices for military and for peaceful purposes, another consequence would be that some knowledge might be acquired which could be used for armaments purposes. If it proves impossible to include peaceful nuclear explosions in a comprehensive test ban, there should be strict safeguards to prevent proliferation creeping in under the guise of peaceful



nuclear explosions

ing back  
role of  
lear arms

C.1. More generally, the undersigned believe that the role of nuclear arms should be pushed back wherever possible, in order to avoid military conflict developing into a nuclear war. Pushing back the role of nuclear arms, it should be observed, is not only a matter of reducing the numbers of nuclear weapons, but equally, if not more, a matter of creating conditions in the international community which will reduce the likelihood of conflicts breaking out, particularly conflicts which may assume nuclear proportions. Such conditions can be promoted by increasing mutual trust, consolidating relations, and achieving greater interdependence, resulting in concrete agreements. For example, it can be said that the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States of 22 June 1973 confirmed and set a seal upon their realisation that the massive use of nuclear arms in a conflict between the two world powers could only lead to mutual annihilation, and that consequently the role of nuclear arms in their relations with each other has been reduced. It is equally obvious, however, that such an agreement does not remove the tensions which could cause these arms to be actually used. Policy should therefore aim at removing the causes of tensions and disputes and at taking confidence-building measures, but equally at achieving agreements on arms control and arms limitation, because this is the way to remove disparities in power which are felt to be threatening.

a. For these reasons the greatest possible importance should be attached to the success of the Mutual Balanced Forces Reductions negotiations in Vienna. If these negotiations should result in general conventional parity being accepted by both sides,

that alone would already reduce the risk of early use of nuclear weapons.

b. At the same time the Netherlands believe that tactical nuclear arms should be included as soon as possible in the negotiations, because a quantitative reduction in nuclear arms can also be an important contribution to create normal relations within Europe. Another reason why it is so important that the MBFR negotiations should be successful is that in that case for the first time in history, groups of countries which have long regarded each other as potential enemies will have exchanged undertakings as regards the size of their armed forces, albeit only for a limited area.

C.2. Besides these policies, all of which imply already a reduction of the role of nuclear weapons, there should be the closest possible vigilance to prevent any developments that could result in increasing the significance of nuclear weapons or accentuating their role in ensuring security. This means in concrete terms:

a. The formation of a West European nuclear force must be regarded as a serious disturbance of the political and military equilibrium which has been achieved. There must be continual checks to make sure that certain developments or measures cannot intensify a movement towards the formation of such a force.

b. If replacement or modernisation of the existing arsenal of tactical nuclear weapons is being considered, the greatest care must be taken to ensure that this does not result in a greater nuclear potential, or in added significance of nuclear weapons in maintaining security. In particular the modernisation process must not result in the

dividing line between nuclear and conventional weapons becoming blurred.

Therefore the miniaturisation, as it is called, of nuclear arms is rejected.

- c. The highly structured deterrent system should be restricted to the area to which it now applies. There should therefore be no extension of the treaty area of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation nor should any additional tasks be entrusted to it, if this should ever be considered in the future. Certainly it cannot be denied that the strategic balance between the two major nuclear powers also makes itself felt in other areas where their interests conflict, but if the spheres of action of the two alliances were extended, this would only make it the more difficult to find a solution for the present problems in these areas.
- d. Policy should continue to aim at détente between East and West by means of arrangements and agreements which may result in common interests being consolidated, trust being restored and differences solved in a peaceful and harmonious way. At the moment the negotiations of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe are particularly important for the achievement of these objectives.

Notably, these talks should ensure that the recognition of the diversity of the political and socio-economic systems in the European countries does not mean that they are doomed to be divided. For if this were so we could never do more than freeze the status quo, without, by doing so, removing the deeper reasons for distrust and lack of understanding. In this

context it is essential to make it clear that it is not our intention to upset the present relations, since this would seriously threaten our own security.

This is why the Government is especially concerned that the rapprochement between East and West should not only be apparent from improved relations between governments, but also from more contact between the peoples. She is convinced that existing differences in the various systems do not rule out such contact, but that a new security structure needs this better understanding if it is to be viable and proof against unexpected setbacks. For one must try to cultivate such relationships that military confrontation can be gradually reduced, and to achieve a security structure which requires a minimum of armed force, because it has other means of settling disputes and conflicts of interests. This is only feasible in a climate of mutual trust between governments and peoples.

This approach, together with successful MBFR talks for achieving general conventional parity, will lay the foundations for a European security structure, whose final shape cannot be predicted at the moment but which could move towards a balanced level of conventional armed forces based on mutual agreement; while nuclear arms, if they cannot be completely abolished, could serve as a guarantee that the other side would not use them nevertheless at some time or another. In this context it could also be considered whether agreements could be made about no-first-use of nuclear arms and about the establishment of certain areas within which these arms may not be stored. It is obvious, that we are only just setting out on the road which must lead finally to

the security structure described above. The present stability, which should not be underestimated, requires us to consider carefully each further step to ascertain that it will not irresponsibly jeopardise this stability. Dissatisfaction with the means by which this stability is maintained compels us, however, to search energetically and persistently for ways and means of establishing security on a different basis.

ms trade; law  
armed con-  
licts

D. Our understandable anxiety as to the nature of the present security structure in Europe must not be allowed to detract from our efforts to combat the factors that threaten world security. Here too it should be recognised that the concept of security cannot be split up into sections, but that a distinct improvement in world economic security, for instance, which will be the subject of various discussions in the coming months, would fundamentally promote political security by removing some major causes of tension. More specifically from the point of view of disarmament, there are also a number of problem areas here with which the undersigned are particularly concerned.

1. Our policy will continue to look for openings for curbing the international arms trade. As explained in this memorandum, it is practically impossible as yet to obtain the cooperation of the major producer and receiver countries for this purpose. Nevertheless, the Netherlands should take every care within the means at its disposal to prevent armaments industry in the developed world from coming to depend for its survival on its sales potential in other countries,

particularly in the Third World countries, as this would make the armaments industry an autonomous factor in escalating the international arms trade.

2. The development of new weapons - including new conventional weapons - should be continually reviewed in the light of the present rules and criteria of the law applicable in armed conflicts. Our policy will therefore continue to aim at the observance and where necessary the adjustment of these criteria, as is being done at present by the Diplomatic Conference on Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts which is being held in Geneva under the auspices of the Swiss Government. So long as the evil of war cannot be banished, efforts should be made to keep the human suffering involved to a minimum.