

# Draft reply by the United Kingdom delegation to WEU Assembly Recommendation 360 on SALT and the British and French nuclear forces (London, 21 January 1981)


**Caption:** On 17 December 1980, the Western European Union (WEU) Council agrees that the United Kingdom delegation should draft a reply to WEU Assembly Recommendation 360. The first draft text prepared by the UK delegation, issued on 21 January 1981, reaffirms the WEU Council’s beliefs that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation’s (NATO) defence and arms control policies should operate complementarily. The strategic balance between the USSR and the United States is central to the security of the Alliance. The draft reply also highlights the deterrent role that British and French nuclear forces could play.

**Source:** The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Foreign Office, Western Department and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Western European Department: Registered Files (R and WR Series). WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION. Western European Union Assembly recommendation 360: Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT) and the British and French nuclear forces. 01/01/1981-31/12/1981, FCO 33/5237 (Former Reference Dep: WRU 83/1).

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**URL:**  
[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft\\_reply\\_by\\_the\\_united\\_kingdom\\_delegation\\_to\\_weu\\_assembly\\_recommendation\\_360\\_on\\_salt\\_and\\_the\\_british\\_and\\_french\\_nuclear\\_forces\\_london\\_21\\_january\\_1981-en-7a5c5f8d-1dd8-4994-8fa2-f67652481982.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft_reply_by_the_united_kingdom_delegation_to_weu_assembly_recommendation_360_on_salt_and_the_british_and_french_nuclear_forces_london_21_january_1981-en-7a5c5f8d-1dd8-4994-8fa2-f67652481982.html)

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01- 233 5545

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22 JAN 1981		
Your reference WLM 083		
Our reference		
Date 21 January 1981		

Herr G J Schlaich  
Western European Union  
9 Grosvenor Place  
LONDON SW1X 7HC

Date 21 January 1981

Please find attached a draft reply to Assembly Recommendation 360 as prepared by the UK delegation. The draft reply to Recommendation 355 will follow shortly.

J A Sarginson (Miss)  
Western European Department



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Reference..... PA 807211

Mr Janerin  
Defence Dept

Miss Sarginson WEU  
Dear Ann, I am sorry for missing your deadline. It is just possible that this answer may need updating if President Reagan makes an early statement on his SALT policy.

Ann

WEU: RECOMMENDATION 360

1. The WEU Council agreed on 17 December that the UK should prepare the first draft reply to Assembly recommendation 360 on 'SALT and the British and French Nuclear forces'. I attach a copy.
2. I should be very grateful if you would prepare a draft reply which must be unclassified and as far as possible, acceptable to the seven member states of the WEU.
3. I should be grateful if the draft reply could reach me by 16 January at the latest. Thank you.

Jane Ann Sarginson

J A Sarginson (Miss)  
Western European Department  
(W66 233 5545)

17 December 1980

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DRAFT REPLY TO WEU ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDATION 360:  
AS PREPARED BY THE UK DELEGATION

1. The Council fully support the idea that arms control and defence policies of the Alliance should complement each other in our efforts to maintain peace and enhance our security. NATO has long recognised the importance of maintaining deterrence through adequate military strength and cohesion, whilst at the same time pursuing effective balanced and verifiable measures of arms control and disarmament. The decision to modernise the Alliance's Long Range Theatre Nuclear Forces whilst offering in parallel to open talks with the Soviet Union on arms control involving theatre nuclear forces is an important example of this approach.
2. The Council consider that assuring the strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union is central to the security of the Alliance. The Alliance has made it clear that it supports further negotiations and remains deeply committed to the SALT process as a way of achieving realistic mutual limitations on United States and Soviet strategic nuclear forces that will help enhance Western security and preserve East-West stability.
3. The Council has noted that the recent meeting of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group recalled the Ottawa Declaration by Heads of Government in 1974 which recognised that the British and French nuclear forces were 'capable of playing a deterrent role of their own, contributing to the overall strengthening of the deterrence of the Alliance'. The allies agree on the continuing importance of improving the effectiveness of the full spectrum of allied forces, ie conventional, theatre nuclear and strategic and of maintaining the essential linkage between these elements of the NATO triad.
4. The Council agree that the NATO governments should continue to look for ways, both within NATO and between governments and national parliaments, of consulting effectively on security matters including the inter-relationship between defence and arms control policies.