

Reply by the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 324 on the limitation of strategic arms (London, 21 March 1979)

Caption: On 21 March 1979, the Secretary-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the reply from the WEU Council to Assembly Recommendation 324 on the limitation of strategic arms. The Council reaffirms its resolve to seek further improvement in East/West relations and believes that specific arms control and disarmament measures would contribute significantly to the quest for security and stability. In this context, the Council supports the negotiations for a second SALT agreement (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) and notes that the United States is keeping the North Atlantic Council informed of the progress of negotiations. Nevertheless, the WEU member countries have noted with concern the steady build-up of the Warsaw Pact forces. Consequently, to ensure deterrence and defence in Western Europe, they are continuing to support the modernisation and strengthening of allied capabilities.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General's note. Assembly Recommendation 324. London: 21.03.1979. C (79) 54. 2 p. Archives nationales de Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954-1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1977, 01/05/1977-30/03/1979. File 202.413.24. Volume 1/1.

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URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/reply_by_the_weu_council_to_assembly_recommendation_324_on_the_limitation_of_strategic_arms_london_21_march_1979-en-1b777928-2aa3-40e7-904e-83e3b2ed0a20.html



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WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

W.E.U. UNCLASSIFIED

C (79) 54

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21st March, 1979

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Assembly Recommendation 324

(C (78) 154)

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the Council's reply to Assembly Recommendation 324.

This reply, adopted by the Council at their meeting on 21st March, 1979, has been forwarded to the Assembly (CR (79) 3, V, 3).



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London, S.W.1.

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Reply to Recommendation 324
on the limitation of strategic arms

1. The member governments have recently reaffirmed their resolve to seek further improvement in East/West relations and their continued commitment to a policy of détente as the best means of promoting stable and mutually beneficial relationships between governments and better and more frequent contacts between individuals. Concrete, balanced and verifiable arms control and disarmament measures would in their view contribute significantly to this search for security, stability and peace.

2. In this context a SALT II Agreement which contributes to strategic stability, maintains deterrence and responds to the security interests and concerns of the North Atlantic Alliance is considered to be in the common interest. Member governments have recently welcomed the progress made in the negotiations, and have expressed support for American efforts to bring them to a successful conclusion.

3. SALT bears directly on the interest of member governments because of the role of American strategic forces in the "NATO Triad" of conventional forces, theatre nuclear forces and strategic nuclear forces, which provide a spectrum of military capabilities enabling NATO to meet aggression at any level with an appropriate response, while also making it impossible for an aggressor to calculate in advance the nature of the response his attack will provoke, or how the conflict may develop thereafter.

4. Conscious of this direct interest, the Americans have kept the North Atlantic Council informed of the progress of the negotiations and, in particular, there have been regular discussions on issues of special interest to member governments of W.E.U.

5. Notwithstanding repeated eastern assurances that their aim is not to seek military superiority, member governments have continued to note with concern the steady build-up of Warsaw Pact forces and armaments, both conventional and nuclear. In the face of these developments, it remains the view of member governments that there is a need to devote the resources necessary to modernise and strengthen allied capabilities to the extent required for deterrence and defence.