

II. Conventional Forces in Europe*

RECOMMENDATIONS

BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Bar Association urges early agreement between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries and Warsaw Pact countries to reduce levels of conventional arms in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the American Bar Association supports the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations to reduce levels of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in Europe from current levels to parity.

REPORT

Although years of negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) failed to produce a conventional arms control agreement, recent events have been more auspicious.

In May 1986, NATO foreign ministers meeting in Halifax called for strengthened security and stability in the whole of Europe at lower levels of conventional forces. The next month, the Warsaw Pact issued its Budapest Appeal which called for conventional force cuts from the "Atlantic to the Urals," a much broader area than the MBFR zone.

The MBFR negotiations failed in large part because the United States and the Soviet Union could not agree on the extent of Soviet superiority in conventional arms. Recent developments have demonstrated a narrowing of that disagreement.

In March 1989, members of the North Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Pact began expanded negotiations to reduce conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE).

The Western proposal, which has become the basis for negotiations, calls for establishment of equal NATO-Warsaw Pact ceilings on key types of equipment that can be used for aggressive purposes. Beyond eliminating key Warsaw Pact military advantages, the Western approach to CFE would reduce the capability to initiate surprise attacks and large-scale offensive actions or to use military forces for political intimidation.

In a May 11, 1989 Moscow meeting with Secretary Baker, Soviet President Gorbachev presented specific numerical ceilings indicating willingness to accept greater reductions than ever before. These figures were formally tabled just before the NATO summit.

President Bush concluded that the specific Warsaw Pact proposals reflected tacit Eastern acceptance of the Western concept and framework for CFE, and

*This Recommendation and Report was adopted by the House of Delegates in November 1989. The Recommendation and Report was prepared by the Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament. Chairman Thomas Graham was the initiator of the Recommendation and Report.