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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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February 20, 1984

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION  
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 126

MUTUAL AND BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS (C)

Following the National Security Council meeting of January 13, 1984, and having considered agency views provided in response to NSDD-122, I have decided on the following policy concerning the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) negotiations. (C)

At the forthcoming Trilateral consultations with the FRG and the UK, the US will propose a new MBFR initiative as follows:

- In order to achieve progress in the negotiations, we are prepared, in exchange for new flexibility on the part of the East in meeting our verification concerns, to drop our requirement for a prior formal agreement on data by seeking only an exchange of data sufficient to fall within a range of US data estimates and by requiring data only on combat and combat support forces prior to treaty signature. To assure that our concerns are fully met, we would seek agreement on an appropriately enhanced NATO verification package.
- In presenting this initiative, we are prepared to indicate to the Soviet Union that if the East responds positively to our new initiative and thereby sustains the momentum of the negotiations, we will be prepared to demonstrate further flexibility. (S)

In presenting this position at the Trilateral consultations, we should indicate that we require substantial improvement in the verification arrangements, laying out our specific concerns, and we should indicate that we are working these issues in Washington and will be looking to further Alliance consultations on these issues in the weeks ahead. (S)

Our basic approach in the MBFR negotiations should be to demonstrate flexibility compatible with our security requirements in response to Soviet movement. It is also important that the MBFR negotiations in Vienna remain the focus of arms reductions efforts involving conventional forces. (S)

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As we present our new initiative, we should concurrently develop our verification, data and other provisions with substantial precision so that if the Soviet Union does respond positively in concrete terms, we will be in a position to show additional flexibility compatible with our objectives. Specific tasking will follow. (S)

*Ronald Reagan*

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