

**February 25, 1989**

**Letter from United States Mission to NATO to  
Permanent Representative of Italy Francesco P.  
Fulci with two attachments on 'US Position on SNF'  
and 'Status of US-FRG Discussions on SNF'**

**Citation:**

"Letter from United States Mission to NATO to Permanent Representative of Italy Francesco P. Fulci with two attachments on 'US Position on SNF' and 'Status of US-FRG Discussions on SNF'", February 25, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Istituto Luigi Sturzo, Archivio Giulio Andreotti, NATO Series, Box 174, Subseries 1, Folder 095.  
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**Summary:**

The US permanent representative to NATO, Alton Keel, sends his Italian counterpart Fulci two brief documents about NATO's short-range nuclear forces.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

UNITED STATES MISSION  
TO THE  
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION  
(USNATO)  
Brussels

May 25, 1989

His Excellency Francesco P. Fulci  
The Permanent Representative of Italy  
on the North Atlantic Council  
NATO

Dear Paolo:

As I promised yesterday, attached are the two papers we  
discussed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Al', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Alton G. Keel, Jr.  
Permanent Representative

Attachment: as stated

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SECRETU.S. Position on SNF

1. The Alliance reaffirms its position that for the foreseeable future there is no alternative to the Alliance's strategy for the prevention of war, which is a strategy of deterrence based upon an appropriate mix of adequate and effective nuclear and conventional forces which will continue to be kept up to date where necessary. Where nuclear forces are concerned, land-, sea-, and air-based systems are necessary in Europe.

2. In view of the huge superiority of the Warsaw Pact in terms of short-range nuclear missiles, the Alliance calls upon the Soviet Union to reduce unilaterally its short-range missile systems to current NATO levels.

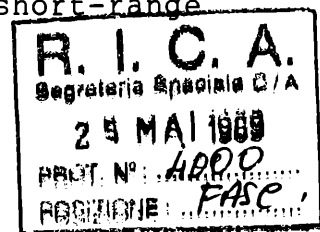
3. The Alliance reaffirms that at the negotiations on conventional stability it pursues the objectives of:

- the establishment of a secure and stable balance of conventional forces at lower levels;
- the elimination of disparities prejudicial to stability and security, and;
- the elimination as a matter of high priority of the capability for launching surprise attack and for initiating large-scale offensive action.

4. In keeping with its arms control objectives formulated in Reykjavik in 1987 and reaffirmed in Brussels in 1988, the Alliance states that its highest priority in negotiations with the East is reaching an agreement on conventional force reductions which would achieve the objectives above.

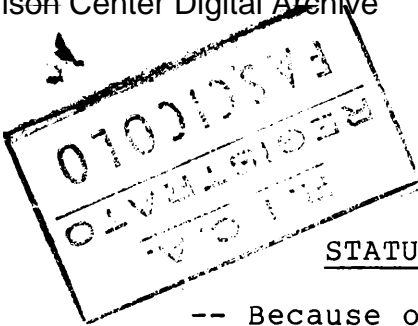
Following tangible implementation of such an agreement, the United States, in consultation with its Allies, is prepared to enter into negotiations to reduce American and Soviet land-based nuclear missile forces of shorter range to equal and verifiable levels below the present level of American land-based nuclear missile forces -- excluding a zero option for these missile forces. The members of the Alliance proceed on the understanding that any negotiated reductions in these nuclear missile forces will not begin until after the full implementation of the results achieved in the negotiations on conventional forces.

5. As regards these nuclear missile forces, their level and characteristics must be such that they can perform their deterrent role in a credible way across the required spectrum of ranges, taking into account the threat -- both conventional and nuclear -- with which the Alliance is faced. In 1992, the Alliance will decide in the light of security developments on the introduction of a follow-on system for the Lance missile into the Alliance and hence its production and deployment. The Alliance affirms the development of a follow-on system for the Lance short-range missile.

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SECRETSTATUS OF U.S.-FRG DISCUSSIONS ON SNF

-- Because of the importance of the upcoming Summit and the SNF issue, Secretary Baker wanted our NATO Allies to be aware of the latest results of our most recent exchanges with the FRG.

-- As you know, the U.S. has shown a great deal of flexibility to take account of German political concerns. We have sought to deal with our differences quietly and confidentially, as requested by Chancellor Kohl in January.

-- Given German political concerns about the timing of an SNF modernization decision and the German electoral process, we have agreed to put off important modernization decisions. In view of the strong German public parliamentary interest in SNF arms control negotiations, we have also stated our willingness to affirm now a commitment to future SNF negotiations. We now need to see similar flexibility from the Germans.

-- We have just completed an exchange of positions on SNF with the FRG, which began with Defense Minister Stoltenberg's visit last week.

-- On May 22, we received the FRG's reply to our counterproposal. The German reply largely reiterated the position reflected in the paper which Stoltenberg gave us last week. Therefore, important differences remain.

-- Reaching agreement before the Summit almost certainly will require a broader Alliance effort. We hope all of you will be able to contribute to this effort.

-- At this stage, the U.S. sees some points of convergence: that NATO's priority is on conventional force reductions; that NATO should make a commitment in principle to future negotiations on SNF missiles; and that implementation of any negotiated reductions in SNF missiles should await full implementation of a CFE agreement.

-- In this connection, the most recent FRG statement of its position included the useful suggestion to include a paragraph reiterating the March, 1988 Summit Declaration language on Alliance objectives in the conventional force negotiations.

-- We believe inclusion of this language would give emphasis to NATO's negotiating priority -- progress in conventional arms control in Europe. Thus, we have agreed to incorporate it in our text.

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-- The principle and critical difference seems to be the conditions under which SNF negotiations would commence. The U.S. believes that SNF negotiations should begin only after tangible implementation of an agreement on conventional force reductions. Also, we believe that the Comprehensive Concept must clearly rule out any "third zero" for these missile forces.

-- Moreover, although we are prepared to agree to defer an Alliance modernization decision on SNF missile forces, we believe NATO should affirm support for U.S. research and development on a follow-on to Lance. This is important for American public and Congressional support.

-- We wish to reiterate points that are of cardinal importance to the U.S.:

- o There must be no third zero in these land-based missile systems.
- o Negotiations on SNF should not begin before tangible implementation on a CFE agreement.
- o Any negotiated reductions in SNF missile forces should not begin until completion of reductions mandated by a CFE agreement. This is important to ensure that the threat is reduced before our deterrent is reduced.

-- We will be circulating the text of a U.S. position paper which contains these points. The paper is not being tabled formally but only provided to you and in capitals so that Allies are aware of our position.

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