

His Excellency
Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen
Secretary General to the
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NATO Headquarters
Brussels

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Excellency,

In the Strasbourg Declaration on Alliance Security, Heads of State and Government have stated that while deterrence remains a core element of our overall strategy, NATO will continue to play its part in reinforcing arms control and promoting nuclear and conventional disarmament in accordance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, as well as non-proliferation efforts.

The international agenda in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation will converge in the spring of 2010. START follow on negotiations are ongoing and the US Nuclear Posture Review is expected to be published soon. We welcome the US initiative for a nuclear security summit in April 2010. The NPT review conference in May is a crucial milestone for strengthening the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

We hope we will see further achievements in the area of disarmament and arms control, i.a. the ratification of the CTBT, a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and the inclusion of sub-strategic nuclear weapons in subsequent steps towards nuclear disarmament.

Credible deterrence on the one hand and arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation on the other, must be seen as integral elements of a comprehensive policy. NATO will have to continue to pursue that policy in a balanced and mutually reinforcing way, as has been proven successful in the past.

Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation are higher on the international agenda than they have been in many years. We welcome the initiatives taken by President Obama to strive towards substantial reductions in strategic armaments, and to move towards reducing the role of nuclear weapons and seek peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that also in NATO we should discuss what we can do to move closer to this overall political objective.

Our meeting in Tallinn, which takes place on the eve of the NPT Review Conference, provides us with an opportunity to open a comprehensive discussion on these issues and to produce guidance for the process on the new Strategic Concept. Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway therefore propose that you include the topic of NATO's nuclear policy in our evolving security environment in the agenda for that meeting.

We approach this discussion from a realistic point of view. Our future policy requires the full support of all Allies. NATO is in the process of defining its direction in an evolving security environment. We consider our initiative as a contribution to this discussion. This is an opportunity we should not miss.



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