

2nd March, 1967.

DRAFT TEXT OF AN OPENING STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL  
AT THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL GROUP ON THE FUTURE TASKS  
OF THE ALLIANCE ON MONDAY 6th MARCH, 1967 AT 10 A.M.

You may wish to say:

WELCOME

I do not intend to hold up your discussions with a long introductory statement. Nor do I intend to say anything on the substance of the exercise we are about to undertake. My own thoughts on that subject have been given in PO/67/133, although of course, I may have more to say about this in the future.

Accordingly I shall confine my remarks to the field of procedure. It seems to me that we should do our best to reach a decision today on two points in particular: (a) the list of subjects to be studied and (b) the manner in which this study will be organised.

As regards the subjects to be studied, I may recall the four subjects mentioned in PO/67/89 ( (1) Soviet foreign policy; (2) East-West relations, European security and the German problem; (3) Western Europe and its relations with overseas members of the Alliance; (4) regions outside the NATO area), to which we might perhaps add another issue called "the consultative process in NATO and its relationship with the commitment of members". The various papers before you may suggest to you further modifications or additions to this list. In any event, it seems to me that this is the first decision required to be made.

Having reached agreement on this list of subjects, we should, I feel, decide how these studies must be organised. For my part I would like to make the following suggestions as a contribution to your discussions on this point.

The four or five subjects to be studied and analysed should, each of them, be taken in succession by our Group as a whole. In saying this I do not, of course, exclude that at a later stage, under the pressure of time, the institution of sub-groups may have to be considered. For the moment however, I myself am inclined to be in favour of having the Special Group, as a whole, study in succession the questions which the list will comprise.

Each Delegation is, of course, entitled to contribute papers on each of these questions. In fact, such national papers would form the basis of the Group's discussion. When the general discussion is concluded, the International Secretariat, I would suggest, might be instructed to write a final paper which, needless to say, would be presented to the Group for discussion and approval.

If Delegations should like to introduce the system of national rapporteurs, I certainly would have no objections. May I point out, however, that in that case Delegations will have to decide who is going to report on what; and I would like to assume that even where a national rapporteur is appointed, other Delegations would still have the right to submit papers on all subjects to the full Group.

[I need hardly emphasise that at all stages in this exercise, and whatever the procedures we may finally adopt, the right for any minority in this Group to express its opinion, not only in discussion, but also in the written final documents, is, of course, uncontested.]

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These are some of the procedural ideas which I venture to put before you by way of introduction to the discussion. While, of course, it is my hope that today's meeting will reach all necessary decisions in the field of procedure, it goes without saying that questions of substance are in no way excluded from the discussion. This being so, may I ask who is willing to lead off?

VC/LMR.