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N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

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18th July 1990

CORRIGENDUM to
VERBATIM RECORD
C-VR(90)36
PART I

Corrigendum to C-VR(90)36, Part I dated 5th July 1990

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Please replace the statement of Mr. GONZALEZ, by the attached text.

NATO,
1110 Brussels



C-VR(90)36
PART 1

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Mr. GONZALEZ

This meeting is the focus of particular attention in Europe as well as beyond our continent. We must respond to this expectation with a message that bolsters confidence and meets hope, with imagination and political courage. This Summit should signal the end of 50 years of confrontation and the beginning of a new era of co-operation in Europe, doubtless preserving our security.

In the Summit we had one year ago, our goal was the search for a balance at the lowest possible level. Today, in the wake of the democratic revolution in the East, which has been favoured by Perestroïka, this resolution is not enough. We foresee now the true possibility of constructing a new framework for security based on co-operation.

The military structures imposed by the "cold war" lag behind the political events on our continent. The radical changes that have taken place are undermining in part the credibility of these structures. We must draw the consequences of those revolutionary changes, with a view to the future.

The overcoming of the division of Europe and particularly of Germany; the gradual recovery by Central and Eastern European States of their sovereignty and freedom are now providing the basis for the achievement of the lasting peaceful order that the Alliance has advocated since 1949.

Simultaneously, the military threat which the Warsaw Pact represented is fading, with a resulting increase of security and stability in Europe. This process will be strengthened after the conclusion of an agreement in Vienna on conventional forces, which we hope will be reached very soon. Taking shape is the vision of an undivided continent where military forces only exist to prevent war and to ensure self-defence, and thus should they be perceived.

In this context, all European countries, including the Soviet Union, together with the United States and Canada, must contribute to a new peaceful order. For it to be lasting, we must all work together. No one should be, or feel itself excluded or marginalised; all legitimate interests should be taken into account. This is the only way in which the new framework will be stable and lasting.

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In view of these changes, we have decided to review our strategy. New concepts are called for, such as sufficient defence; proportionate response; minimal nuclear deterrence; abandonment of forward defence. Nevertheless, we must ask ourselves if this is really enough.

Will the Atlantic Alliance meet the needs - and adjust to them - of a new peaceful order in Europe by just reviewing its strategy, changing its military deployment and reducing its forces; an Alliance which, whatever its defensive nature, was born and developed in the "cold war" and its aftermath of confrontation?

I believe that, while the Warsaw Pact has entered into a process of dismantlement, the Atlantic Alliance should enter a dynamic of recomposition which means, of course, a profound transformation.

We must avoid that the new structures emerging in Europe be perceived by the Soviet Union as something increasing Soviet feelings of isolation, when these structures should play an important stabilising rôle. The Soviet Union is going to continue to be an imposing continental mass, but I think we should not penalise her for this; nor should this be a reason to perpetuate our present defensive structures without an adequate adjustment.

It is up to the CSCE to create the new framework for stability and progress in which the European countries find their place. For lack of a pan-European security structure, the CSCE must fill this void, with the proper mechanism which for that purpose must be decided upon by common accord. Who else, but the CSCE, will create the objective conditions ensuring peace and stability in Europe and guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all those countries? This goal will only be attained through a deepened and consolidated democracy, the respect of human rights, mutual confidence and the well-being of their peoples.

In our recent Dublin declaration, eleven of the sixteen countries here present agreed that in a time when Europe is trying to overcome its divisions, CSCE is the necessary framework for stability, for an increased co-operation in Europe and also for the deepening of the reforms already under way. We have also stressed the overall nature of the CSCE process and the link which exists between the peoples and governments of Europe, the United States and Canada.

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If the CSCE cannot replace NATO, it is also true that NATO, alone, cannot assume the rôle of guarantor of the stability on the entire continent. The remaining European countries will continue to see NATO as a military alliance. NATO must evolve and look back to its origins, to its original conception, that of a defensive Alliance of free and democratic nations on both sides of the Atlantic, which is adapting to the new European reality.

We also have to reflect upon the necessity to give the Washington Treaty its full significance. We must ask ourselves, in this context, if the structures which were created after 1949 - and which were the proper response to specific security conditions - are still in force and still compatible with a radically different Europe.

We will be shortsighted if we do not anticipate today what presumably looks like is going to happen. The foreseeable reduction of the military presence of the United States and Canada in Europe - which still will be indispensable - and our own European vocation, impose upon us, Europeans, the task of strengthening the pillar of a transformed Alliance on this side of the Atlantic, thus assuming greater quotas of responsibilities and efforts. In this scene the European Community has a decisive rôle, by giving herself a common foreign and security policy and becoming a privileged interlocutor, in all fields, of our North American allies.

The transatlantic dialogue should be improved. Political consultations within the Alliance can and should be improved. However, we must be on guard so that no one will perceive these consultations as projecting a threat. We should not forget that NATO is a formidable military machine and that it is seen as such. Its responsibilities are clearly defined. We have to deepen our consultations within this framework and, in this spirit, transmit tranquility and security.

In the same way that the process of German unification has been a catalyser for an accelerated European construction, the new challenges on our Continent should help us shape a new European pattern, with a transatlantic dialogue which responds to the new situation, one which has evolved from confrontation to balance and which should tend towards co-operation.

I think it is our German friends who have said that it has always been futile to put a straightjacket on history. Let us not fall into making this attempt, which is anyway doomed to failure. On the contrary, let us face with courage and determination a new chapter in our common history, which should be marked surely by open-mindedness, flexibility and innovation.

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