

**NATO MEETING OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
ROME 7-8 NOVEMBER 1991**

Intervention by Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway

Mr. Chairman,

Today, we are embarking upon a new era for NATO. We are launching a new partnership with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Our new Strategic Concept opens a whole new chapter in the Alliance's history: we are greatly reducing our dependence on nuclear weapons. We now have a unique opportunity to improve our security by an extended use of political means.

The threat we faced previously is gone. The current transition period entails new risks and uncertainties. We must guard against these risks and create new political and economic lines of defence.

We are moving towards common security and a new comprehensive security concept which comprises political, economic, social and environmental aspects.

If our cooperative framework can serve to influence the policies of the new democracies. If we can help them move faster to establish the structures which are the hallmarks of our own more mature democracies, then we will also have taken a significant step towards strengthening our own security.

With democracy also gaining ground where its roots are anchored on the thinnest soil, we can have a vision of a new role for Europe linked together in a common destiny with the United States and Canada.

The new policies of the Alliance must be supported by greater interdependence. We must enhance the economic interdependence between our countries and support the transition to market economies with a social dimension in the Central and Eastern European countries. The EC and the new European Economic Area of nineteen Western European countries will increasingly be a centre of gravity. It is likely that the EC and the EEA will attract more countries in steadily widening and deepening European cooperation. This trend will enhance our security.

The current work on a European Energy Charter, in which our North American allies are so naturally and necessarily involved, should also be seen in this broader security perspective.

It is in this setting of great opportunities for freedom and democracy that this historic Summit meeting can and must take bold decisions. Nothing less will do. The collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union represents a tremendous step forward. Our values have again prevailed.

We must take advantage of these opportunities. President Bush has done precisely that by launching his new initiative for nuclear arms reductions. We strongly welcome this initiative. President Bush will recall that I mentioned the SNF issues to him a few days before he announced his initiative. I thank you, Mr. President, for prompt delivery and for evoking such a favourable Soviet response.

When implemented the result will be the removal of weapons-systems which for many years have been of particular concern to Norway such as the SNF systems close to our common border with Russia and the naval based systems.

Today, our challenge is to formulate NATO's vision of its own future and our collective response to the new situation. The task is twofold: to provide the stability essential to peaceful change, and to do what we can to ensure that this process of change takes a direction which is in accordance with our common values.

This is nothing less than the building of a new European order. We are constantly being reminded that this process is not immune to setbacks. But we do have one decisive advantage compared with previous periods: the existence of strong Atlantic and European institutions. They must form the basis for our new security architecture.

NATO is our most important instrument in this respect. The leaders of Central and Eastern Europe have given us a clear, unambiguous message; they look to NATO for advice and assistance; they look to NATO as a model for the shaping of their own defence and security policies.

This is a challenge to which we must now respond, not hesitantly or halfway. But resolutely and wholeheartedly.

Norway firmly supports the establishment of a new framework for bringing the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe into a regular, well-defined process of consultation and cooperation with the Alliance. This must be our main message. The new democracies are welcome to a wider cooperation and to come closer to institutions to which we belong.

At the same time, we must maintain the solidity of our own Alliance cooperation. If we fail on this fundamental point, our ability to act as a vehicle for change will be impaired. Our strength as a pillar of stability will be reduced. That will not be in anyone's interests - East or West. In periods of uncertainty and instability the quality of our own cooperation

is of crucial importance.

The new framework can, as a point of departure, focus on areas where NATO has specific knowledge and valuable experience, which would be useful to the new democracies in their current, difficult period of transition.

We are creating a structure of conventional forces which is lighter and more flexible and which possess the mobility required to meet challenges that differ from those of the post-war period.

We are adapting our instruments of collective defence to the new situation, not abandoning them. The new strategic concept reaffirms our determination to maintain the integrated military structure and to prevent the renationalisation of defence policies. And it reaffirms the crucial importance of our transatlantic links. We will continue to need the presence of North American forces and equipment on European territory. The fact that the European countries are coming closer to each other is no reason for the countries on either side of the Atlantic to drift apart.

Norway attaches the utmost importance to ensuring that our policies continue to be guided by the principles of solidarity and strategic unity. They must continue to be fully reflected in our consultations and in the operational tools we develop to serve our collective defence.

We fully subscribe to the new Strategic Concept. We will do our share in ensuring its implementation, and we will do so in the knowledge that security and stability can only be achieved if defence measures are complemented by political, and economic efforts.

The Norwegian Government supports the idea of a stronger European security pillar. However, one fundamental condition should be respected; Such a pillar cannot be confined to a restricted number of European allies. A European security perspective will not be complete unless Norway is adequately included in the process. The pillar must embrace us all. Flexibility will be important as a means of allowing each one of us to play our role. Over time our roles may change. So, openness will be required.

The Alliance is not and cannot be a spectator in the development of the European defence identity. It must be an active participant - along with the European Community and the Western European Union.

A European identity should be firmly linked to our common Alliance. Our transatlantic consultations must continue to be guided by the maximum of openness between all 16 partners. For what is NATO if not the intimate relationship between the two principal centres of democracy and freedom, between the two regions of the world with the greatest global outreach and sense of global responsibility.

The efforts of our various organisations will overlap to a certain extent. This is inevitable and even desirable, both in this and in other contexts. In our future European house the doors between the various rooms should not be locked and bolted. Of course, wasteful duplication of efforts should be avoided. We shall avoid confusing and undermining the consistency of our policies.

The task we have set ourselves is an ambitious one: to strengthen our Alliance and the European identity. This is not an impossible task. Nor is it the inevitable outcome of the process now underway. A balance will have to be struck which enables us to succeed in both those respects.

We all belong to a wider European framework. In London, the Alliance took important initiatives to strengthen the CSCE process. These initiatives have already been implemented. They have tied us all more firmly together.

Nevertheless, we are faced with risk of conflict and new divisions. The protracted crisis in Yugoslavia is a tragic illustration of the kind of emergency and instability that may threaten European security in the future. It is totally unacceptable that the armed conflict continues in defiance of the untiring efforts of the European Community to resolve the conflict, supported by the CSCE. The situation is of great concern to the Alliance.

Those Yugoslav leaders who envisage a future for themselves in European politics must bear in mind that they will be required to meet certain standards if they wish to participate in European cooperation. No political objectives can justify what is now going on.

Mr. Chairman,

We have witnessed a number of positive, historic events in the Soviet Union. We strongly welcome those developments. At the same time important issues remain unresolved, not least with regard to the exercise of authority and the division of responsibilities. This is reflected in both bilateral and in multilateral contexts. It preoccupies all of us with regard to control of nuclear weapons.

Soon we hope to see 700 million people in Europe alone enjoying democracy and common economic market conditions. In order to support the current transitions and the integration of the Soviet Union and the republics in the world economy, we urgently need economic and democratic lifelines between the Union, the Republics, and the old democratic world.

Some leaders in Central and Eastern Europe seem to have too high hopes as regards the ability of the West to solve their problems. But even if the lion's share of the solutions must be provided by the countries in transition themselves, we must be prepared

to become more involved even if we risk failure in some of our endeavours.

We are already giving considerable support to the countries in transition. We must be prepared to increase our efforts. This will call for both coordinated action and continued bilateral cooperation. In Europe are aware that recovery operations take time. But at least we had something to recover in Europe after the war. Many of our neighbours in Central and Eastern Europe are not that fortunate.

We the NATO countries can not wait for those in transition to get their own houses in order. We must work ardently to generate new optimism in these countries in transition. This would be a major contribution also to our common security.

Before concluding, I would also, like chancellor Kohl, like to pay tribute to president Bush and secretary Baker for their efforts in convening the Middle East Conference in Madrid. In doing this, they have contributed significantly to new stability in that troubled region, and indeed in the world at large.