

1964**Note on the Views of the Dutch Government on
Disarmament****Citation:**

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Summary:

The Dutch government supports a general and complete disarmament agreement under international control, but such agreement should not disturb the balance of power.

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Ministry of External Affairs

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Mr. Luns, the foreign Minister, said that important as disarmament might be or the abolition of war as a means of foreign policy did not automatically mean peace. Political contrasts might become sharper when weapons were abolished.

2. He pointed out that the Western aim was a world in which nations and peoples could live and cooperate in peace and freedom and in which war will be eliminated as an instrument of national policy. To realize this aim general and complete disarmament under efficient international control will be necessary. He stressed that the urgency of reaching an agreement on general and complete disarmament should not however jeopardize efforts to reach agreement on restricted disarmament measures. But such agreements were acceptable only if they did not disturb the existing balance of power or violate or prejudice the possibilities to solve important political problems, as Germany and Berlin. The Western countries have thus far rejected proposals of a regional disarmament in Europe because they were contrary to the principle that the establishment of denuclearized zones should not disturb the balance of power.

3. The Foreign Minister said that the Dutch Government were prepared to investigate "in a positive spirit" the possibilities of an exchange of fixed observation posts on both sides of the demarcation line in Europe as a part of a "thinning out" of armed forces. Holland would welcome a controlled denuclearization of Africa and Latin America. It had, however, "serious reservations" as to a non-aggression treaty between the powers of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, because such a treaty would help to formalize the division of Germany. "Important progress" in the solution of the German problem and genuine disarmament would have to be made before a non-aggression treaty could be of any actual importance. The Dutch Government was however prepared to consider the possibility of making reciprocal non-aggression declarations.

4. The Dutch Government, which has always strongly supported a general and complete disarmament agreement, trusted that the Geneva Disarmament Conference would make "constant, though possibly slow" progress to that end.