

Source Material: Extracts from NATO Document no. MC 14/2 (1957)

The Strategic Concept

[...] **24.** Our chief objective is to prevent war by creating an effective deterrent to aggression. The principal elements of the deterrent are adequate nuclear and other ready forces and the manifest determination to retaliate against any aggressor with all the forces at our disposal, including nuclear weapons, which the defense of NATO would require.

25. In preparation for a general war, should one be forced upon us,

a. We must first ensure the ability to carry out an instant and devastating nuclear counter-offensive by all available means and develop the capability to absorb and survive the enemy's onslaught.

b. Concurrently and closely related to the attainment of this aim, we must develop our ability to use our land, sea and air forces for defense of the territories and sea areas of NATO as far forward as possible to maintain the integrity of the NATO area, counting on the use of nuclear weapons from the outset. [...]

Source: NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969. Edited by Dr. Gregory W. Pedlow, Chief, Historical Office, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, in collaboration with NATO International Staff Central Archives. (available online: <http://www.nato.int/docu/stratdoc/eng/a570523a.pdf>)