



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/31/232  
28 September 1976  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

---

Thirty-first session  
Agenda item 49

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 28 September 1976 from the Minister for Foreign  
Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics addressed  
to the Secretary-General

On the instructions of the Soviet Government, I am sending you herewith the text of the Memorandum of the Soviet Union on questions of ending the arms race and disarmament.

In view of the important place of disarmament problems in the agenda of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, I request that you have the text of this Memorandum circulated to the delegations of the States Members of the United Nations as an official document of the General Assembly on item 9 (General debate) and item 49 (General and complete disarmament).

(Signed) A. GROMYKO  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the USSR

MEMORANDUM

OF THE SOVIET UNION ON QUESTIONS OF ENDING  
THE ARMS RACE AND DISARMAMENT

Under the new historic conditions in which international détente is making itself felt to an ever-greater degree and people everywhere entertain increasing hopes for the establishment of lasting peace, the Soviet Union, guided by the foreign policy programme of the 25th Congress of the CPSU, renews its appeal to all States Members of the United Nations, to all the States of the world, to redouble their efforts towards solving the problem which is greatest in scope and significance in contemporary relations among States - the problem of ending the arms race and disarmament.

No task confronting mankind today is more urgent. "Today, this objective is more vital than ever", declared L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. "Mankind is tired of sitting upon mountains of arms, yet the arms race, spurred on by aggressive imperialist circles, is becoming more intensive."

An arms race in the nuclear age is fraught with a far more serious threat to the life of the peoples than at any time in the past. Modern weapons are thousands of times more powerful than any of those used in wars of earlier periods. The destruction of Hiroshima - the first victim of the use of nuclear weapons - lives in the memory of the peoples as a horrible tragedy. But nowadays States possess such types of these weapons and possess them in such quantities that hundreds, and even thousands, of cities like Hiroshima could be destroyed. One modern nuclear warhead has a destructive power exceeding that of all explosives used by States in the Second World War. Yet weapons of mass destruction continue to develop, absorbing the latest achievements of the scientific and technological revolution, and they are ever growing in quantity.

It is an utterly false concept which justifies the arms race by alleging that the "balance of fear" is indeed a safeguard for peace. An official report by United Nations experts, world famous scholars, admits with full justice that each new step in the development of weapons of mass destruction entails a new and still more ominous degree of uncertainty and increased danger. The arms race provides security for no one.

Another thing is also obvious. If the arms race is not stopped, it will inevitably set up a barrier to the strengthening of political détente in relations between States. This is why an increasing number of States recognize the need for supplementing political détente with efforts towards reducing military confrontation and facilitating disarmament. The States that participated in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe unanimously came out in favour of such a policy.

The arms race is inconsistent with the interests and the will of the peoples. Only the militarists and the military-industrial complex stand to gain from it. The arms race consumes the vital resources of countries and deprives the peoples of a considerable and ever-growing proportion of the wealth created by their labour.

/...

According to United Nations data, the world as a whole now spends about \$300 billion a year on armaments, i.e., \$1 million every two minutes. This considerably exceeds the entire national income of the developing countries of Asia and Africa. In the modern world, it costs on the average 60 times less to educate a child for creative endeavour than to teach a soldier the ABC's of destruction. And more and more States are being drawn into the arms race.

The continuance of the arms race hampers the solution of such urgent problems common to all mankind as the development of essentially new sources of energy, extensive exploration and use of the oceans and outer space, prevention of disastrous changes in the environment, and the eradication of disease, hunger and cultural backwardness. For all this to be done, enormous investments are needed, and it is impossible to mobilize sufficient resources without putting an end to the competition in armaments.

Thus, the problem confronting mankind today is as follows: either the arms race will be stopped and States will embark on disarmament, reducing step by step the threat of military conflict and releasing more and more material and intellectual resources for the purposes of economic and social development, or the gigantic war-preparations machine will consume an ever-greater amount of resources vitally needed by people, while the shadow of the catastrophe of war will loom larger and larger over all nations.

For any State desirous of safeguarding the security of its people and of creating the most favourable opportunities for their advancement along the road of progress, for any politician conscious of his responsibility for world developments, and for any sensible person, there can only be one alternative: to do everything that can be done to bring about disarmament and the cessation of the arms race. This is not a simple task, for in working out any measure in the field of disarmament, States have to take decisions on matters having a direct bearing on their national security and must carefully weigh the various political, strategic, technological and military factors. However, it is well known that the failure to put an end to the arms race is not due to these difficulties.

The main obstacle is the resistance of the forces of imperialism. This obstacle finds its principal support in monopolistic quarters for which the arms race brings in thousands of millions of dollars in profits. Another obstacle is the cold-war policy of political parties and groups which will not abandon their foolhardy designs to resolve the historical confrontation of the two social systems by force. Also desirous of impeding the resolution of disarmament problems are those who cynically assert that mankind's future can most easily be built on radioactive ruins, who, in pursuit of the narrow objectives of their great-Power policy, which are alien to the interests of the peoples, are ready to doom even their own people to mass annihilation in another world war.

These forces would not stop at any means of deception in the attempt to complicate the question of the cessation of the arms race and to hamper the struggle of the peoples for disarmament. These include shameless slander directed at the policies of States advocating disarmament, and specious reasoning about the lust for power inherent in man and about human rights and fundamental freedoms, with the aim of covering up the most inhuman and brutal activity of all - the manufacture of weapons for the annihilation of people.

/...

However, there is not, nor can there be, any doubt about the real possibility of overcoming the opposition of the opponents of disarmament. In these, our times, the alignment of forces in international politics is not at all in their favour. The socialist States, whose social and political character rules out any kind of interest in war and armaments, are resolutely and persistently striving to bring about the cessation of the arms race. The non-aligned movement is also in favour of disarmament. Statesmen and politicians of widely differing countries throughout the world are becoming more keenly aware of the fact that in the nuclear age a military conflict is fraught with exceedingly grave consequences and that the interests of security demand the curbing of the arms race and not its further intensification. The voice of public opinion is becoming louder and more confident in demanding the early adoption of effective measures to this end.

The possibility of solving the disarmament problem has been convincingly demonstrated by the fact that in recent years certain steps of this kind have indeed been taken. Although these are but first steps and are limited in scope, they are of great importance.

These are the Soviet-United States agreements for preventing nuclear war and reducing the risk of its accidental outbreak and for the limitation of strategic arms, as well as the agreement between the Soviet Union and France on the prevention of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.

These are the measures for limiting the nuclear arms race, including the treaties on the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water; on the limitation of underground nuclear weapon tests; on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; and on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons in outer space, on celestial bodies, on the sea-bed and the ocean floor. Talks are now in progress on a long-term Soviet-United States agreement on the limitation of strategic offensive arms, and the successful completion of these talks would be a major new contribution to the consolidation of international peace and security.

These are also the international convention on the prohibition of the development and production and the destruction of stockpiles of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons, which is already in force, and the convention on the prohibition of military and any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques, the discussions on which are nearing completion.

And, finally, these are the efforts being made to ease military confrontation in different parts of the world. Of special importance in this connexion are, unquestionably, the negotiations now going on regarding the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe, the area where the most powerful groups of NATO and Warsaw Treaty armed forces are concentrated. Having recently advanced new proposals aimed at moving these negotiations forward, the participating socialist countries are now expecting reciprocal steps from their counterparts.

/...

The Soviet Union's proposal for the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations is now getting broad support. The purpose of this initiative is, through the joint effort of States, to make the principle of the non-use of force embodied in the United Nations Charter an integral part of the practical policies of States and an effective rule of international life. The use of both nuclear and conventional weapons should be completely excluded from relations between States.

Thus, at the present time new prerequisites, both political and material, for more resolute progress towards ending the arms race and towards disarmament are now taking shape. In the past, including the years preceding the Second World War and the first post-war decades, such prerequisites did not exist. They do exist now. It is the duty of all States to make the utmost use of them in the interests of international peace and security and in the interest of the peoples.

The Soviet Union is prepared, as it has been in the past, to conduct negotiations on the most radical disarmament measures, going even so far as general and complete disarmament. It is prepared, in concert with its Warsaw Treaty allies, to take steps for the reciprocal dismantling of counterbalancing military-political groupings of States or, to begin with, of their military organizations. If not all parties are prepared to set about realizing these objectives at once, they should do so gradually, step by step. What is most important is to move on from discussions on ending the arms race to practical action.

An analysis of the present world political and strategic situation, of the trends and prospects for the future and of the material and technological factors determining the nature and form of the arms race leads to the conclusion that under present conditions the main areas for co-ordinated action by States in the field of disarmament are the following.

1. Cessation of the nuclear arms race, reduction and subsequent elimination of nuclear weapons

In a situation in which nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind, complete nuclear disarmament becomes the most important measure.

The Soviet Union has always favoured the banning of nuclear weapons and their exclusion from the arsenals of States. It worked for this when nuclear weapons had just appeared. At that time the stockpiles of such weapons were not large and it was relatively easier to agree on their prohibition and elimination. Now that nuclear weapons have grown into a huge complex of types and systems of means of destruction, diverse in purpose, capacity and ways of delivering nuclear charges to the target, the problem of eliminating them has become much more difficult. But it can be solved in the present situation as well.

The first thing necessary for this purpose is to stop the arms race, that is, to stop manufacturing nuclear weapons, equipping the armed forces of States with them, developing and constructing new models and types of such weapons. At the same time, or immediately after that, reductions in the stockpiles of nuclear weapons should commence, with the transfer of nuclear materials thus released to peaceful sectors of the economy. The ultimate goal of the reduction should be the complete elimination of all types of nuclear weapons - strategic and tactical, offensive and defensive. Along with the reduction of stockpiles of nuclear charges, warheads and bombs, there should be a reduction of their means of delivery.

Naturally, simultaneously with nuclear disarmament, measures should be taken for the limitation and reduction of the armed forces of States and armaments of conventional types, which also pose a considerable threat to the world's peoples.

It is evident that nuclear disarmament can be achieved only if all States possessing nuclear weapons take part in it. It is inconceivable that some nuclear Powers should be moving ahead towards eliminating their nuclear weapons while others are stockpiling and perfecting them. Therefore all nuclear Powers should participate in nuclear disarmament negotiations. As for the Soviet Union, it is prepared, as has been already stated by the Soviet side, to sit down at any time at the negotiating table together with all the other nuclear Powers for a comprehensive discussion of the nuclear disarmament problem in its full scope and for a joint elaboration of concrete ways of its practical solution. The Soviet Union has no objection to non-nuclear Powers also taking part in such negotiations, since all countries and all the peoples of the world are interested in nuclear disarmament.

## 2. Prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests

An important issue, on the solution of which the cessation of the arms race largely depends, is the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests. This problem should be tackled without waiting for the outcome of negotiations on complete nuclear disarmament.

The prohibition of all tests of nuclear weapons will put an end to their qualitative improvement and prevent the emergence of new types of such weapons. The Moscow Treaty banning nuclear-weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water and the treaty between the USSR and the United States on the limitation of underground tests have only partially solved this problem. Furthermore, two nuclear Powers out of five have not acceded to the Moscow Treaty, and one of them, China, still continues to carry out nuclear test explosions in the atmosphere.

The time has now come to bring the task of stopping nuclear-weapon tests to a conclusion. Conditions are quite ripe for that, in particular as a result of the signing between the USSR and the United States of a treaty on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, establishing such a procedure for carrying out peaceful explosions as will preclude their use for perfecting nuclear weapons.

As is known, in 1975 the Soviet Union proposed the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, that is, a treaty prohibiting the conduct of nuclear test explosions in all environments and by all States. The draft of such a treaty was submitted by the Soviet Union to the United Nations at that time, and a year has already passed since the General Assembly declared itself in favour of holding concrete negotiations to reach agreement on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. However, owing to the negative stand taken by some nuclear Powers, such negotiations have not started. It is necessary to begin them promptly.

It is a known fact that the question of stopping underground nuclear tests was complicated by certain States which artificially exaggerated the problem of supervision. It was persistently alleged, in particular, that it was impossible without on-site inspections to tell natural seismic phenomena (earthquakes) from similar phenomena caused by underground nuclear explosions, and that therefore, it was impossible to verify whether States were complying with their obligations with regard to the prohibition of underground nuclear-weapon tests. Most experts never accepted that view, believing that national technical means and the international exchange of seismic data were sufficient to verify compliance with a treaty banning underground nuclear-weapon tests. With the development of technology for detecting and identifying seismic phenomena, this view now enjoys practically unanimous support among scientists. However, even now some States suggest providing for the possibility of on-site inspection of actual circumstances if there is doubt as to compliance with obligations to stop underground nuclear tests.

The Soviet Union is convinced that no particular difficulties should arise in elaborating such a compromise basis for an agreement as would ensure a voluntary framework for taking decisions relating to on-site ascertaining of relevant circumstances and, at the same time, impart confidence to all parties to the treaty that the obligations are complied with. The Soviet Union stands ready to participate in a search for a universally acceptable understanding on this basis.

3. Consolidation of the régime of non-proliferation  
of nuclear weapons

It is quite clear that the threat of nuclear war would immeasurably increase if other States which at present do not possess nuclear weapons were to become involved in the process of developing and stockpiling such weapons. It is not difficult to imagine the consequences that would be brought about by the development of a situation in which the arsenals of parties in conflict in one region or another included nuclear weapons as well.

Hence the effective prevention of a further spread of nuclear weapons is essential. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to which about 100 States have become parties, has achieved a great deal in this regard. The obligation to renounce the proliferation of nuclear weapons is now a rule of international law.

It must, however, be taken into account that not all nuclear Powers have yet become parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Some non-nuclear States which are capable, in view of their industrial and technological level, of developing nuclear weapons of their own are also refusing to become parties to it. It is important, therefore, to make the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons genuinely universal. The Soviet Union supports all the decisions adopted in this respect by the United Nations.

In the interests of consolidating the régime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons it is also necessary to take actions of another kind. It is well known that in the process of their operation nuclear power plants produce and accumulate as a "by-product" a fissionable material - plutonium - which can be used for manufacturing nuclear weapons. With the development of international trade in nuclear materials, equipment and technology, possibilities of this kind will increase, including those of the States which have not assumed obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is obvious that the States which supply nuclear materials, equipment and technology bear special responsibility in this connexion. Strict safeguards are needed to prevent international co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy from becoming a channel for spreading nuclear weapons. This is not a question of commerce but a question of policy, a question of international security.

The Soviet Union is also firmly in favour of perfecting in every possible way the system of supervision over nuclear installations and materials that is exercised by the International Atomic Energy Agency. It is ready to co-operate with all interested States to this end.



#### 4. Prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons

Following the conclusion of the convention banning bacteriological weapons, the task of completely prohibiting and eliminating another dangerous category of weapons of mass destruction - chemical weapons - has become especially pressing. The use of such weapons as far back as the years of the First World War caused grave suffering and mass deaths. Since that time, however, chemical warfare technology has made great strides. New types of chemical weapons threatening people with still more agonizing death have been developed. Radical improvements have also been made in the means of delivery of chemical weapons, which can now be used not only in combat areas, that is, against the armed forces of the other side, but also against the civilian population in vital centres of States.

The Soviet Union, together with many other countries, has long proposed that agreement should be reached on the prohibition and elimination of all chemical means of warfare. This problem should be solved radically and by a single action, as was the case with bacteriological weapons. However, the negotiations on this subject, which have already been going on for several years, still fail to offer prospects of such a comprehensive solution. A question that arises in this connexion concerns the possibility of starting with agreement on the prohibition and elimination of the most dangerous, lethal types of chemical weapons. The Soviet Union is ready to seek such a solution as well. A substantial contribution to this end could be the implementation of the Soviet-United States accord on a joint initiative to conclude a convention on the most dangerous, lethal chemical means of warfare.

Supervision of compliance with the prohibition of chemical weapons should be based on national means. In this respect there exists a positive precedent in the convention banning bacteriological weapons. At the same time, the Soviet Union is ready to examine the possibility of using additional supervision procedures and, in particular, to discuss methods of verifying the destruction of stockpiles of chemical weapons which are to be excluded from the arsenals of States.

There is not, and there cannot be, any reason for delay on the question of banning chemical weapons. What is needed is a demonstration of the political will and desire to reach generally acceptable agreement.

#### 5. Prohibition of the development of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction

Scientific and technological progress poses the pressing problem of preventing the emergence of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. New types of weapons may appear even in the foreseeable future and may become commensurate in destructive capability with nuclear, chemical or bacteriological weapons, or even surpass them.

At present there are no limitations whatsoever on the use of science for such purposes. This means that the most unexpected developments, whose consequences cannot be foreseen, may occur at any time. The danger is great, and it is necessary to find means to avert it.

/...

It was precisely these considerations that guided the Soviet Union when it proposed in 1975 the conclusion of an international agreement which would prevent the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. As is known, negotiations in this matter are already under way, which is a positive factor. In the course of the negotiations it has become desirable to specify the object of the prohibition, that is, define new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction.

The Soviet Union is ready to propose an approach which would include among new types of weapons of mass destruction any types of weapons based on qualitatively new principles of action - according to the method of use and the targets to be attacked or the nature of their impact. Some examples are ray weapons capable of affecting blood and intracellular plasma, infrasound weapons designed to damage internal organs and affect human behaviour, or genetic weapons whose use would affect the mechanism of heredity. If we take into account the fact that the forward march of science never stops, it is not difficult to realize that possibilities for the development of even more dangerous types of weapons may emerge in the future.

New systems of weapons of mass destruction should not be developed either for new types of such weapons or for those types of weapons which are based on scientific principles already in use but whose characteristics can be made even more dangerous by introducing new technical elements of combat or support means. In this context, aero-space systems of nuclear weapons using transport space ships as a basis may serve as an example.

The question of the prohibition of the development of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction is an important and timely one; it embraces an essential aspect of the whole problem of disarmament and prevention of war. Negotiations on this question should be given top priority.

#### 6. Reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments

Nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction unquestionably pose the greatest threat to mankind. But can anyone forget how many millions of human lives have been lost as a result of the use of so-called conventional armaments? Even in the period since the Second World War the destructive power of these weapons has increased manyfold. A modern tank is a weapon many times more deadly than a tank of the 1940s. The same is true of artillery, small arms and, of course, aircraft.

The military conflicts which have taken place in various parts of the world in recent years have shown the tragic consequences for people of the use of new models of conventional weapons and the vast destruction of material values which they cause.

Thus, past experience confronts States with the task of taking practical measures to reduce the number of aircraft, artillery, tanks and other modern types of conventional armaments as well as armed forces equipped with those weapons. Since the Second World War, the Soviet Union has repeatedly made concrete proposals in this regard. It has cited specific figures for ceilings on the strength of the armed forces of major States and has expressed willingness to conduct negotiations on the matter both within the framework of a programme of general complete disarmament and as a separate measure covering major States. These proposals have not been accepted. Even now, however, the Soviet Union is prepared to conduct negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and armaments. Given a desire for this on the part of all States possessing powerful armed forces, such negotiations could lead to positive results and to constructive agreements.

Similarly, the Soviet Union considers it desirable that new efforts should be made at the international level to bring about the elimination of all military bases in foreign territory and the withdrawal of foreign troops from such territory. The United Nations has, in many of its forums, expressed itself in very definite terms in favour of a solution to this problem both on a global scale and in relation to individual continents. However, no progress has been made in this regard - a fact which cannot but cause concern. The Soviet Union is, as before, prepared to co-operate actively and constructively in solving this problem.

#### 7. Zones of peace in the Indian Ocean and other regions

In recent years, States in various parts of the world have been ever more insistent in raising the question of carrying out regional measures of military détente and have particularly stressed that Powers which do not belong to a given region should not build up their armed forces or establish military bases there.

Thus, the coastal States of the Indian Ocean are expressing concern at the fact that some States which are geographically very remote from the region are expanding their military bases there and increasing their military presence. Regarding such actions as a threat to their independence and security, these countries are putting forward the idea of transforming the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. The Soviet Union regards this proposal with understanding.

Obviously, the key question here is to ensure that there are no foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean, that bases which have been established there are dismantled and that no new bases are established. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it never has and does not now intend to build military bases in the Indian Ocean.

In resolving the question of foreign military bases along these lines, the Soviet Union would be prepared to join with other Powers in seeking ways to reduce on a reciprocal basis the military activities of non-coastal States in the Indian Ocean and in the regions directly adjacent to it. Naturally, measures of this kind must take fully into account the generally recognized rules of international

law regarding freedom of navigation on the high seas and the need for commercial stops at the ports of coastal States as well as for research. This question is of great importance to the Soviet Union, since virtually the only sea route navigable all the year round which links the European part of the USSR with the Soviet Far East passes through the Indian Ocean.

The coastal States of the Indian Ocean are in favour of holding an international conference to discuss practical measures for transforming the region into a zone of peace. The Soviet Union would be prepared to consider the question of its attitude towards the convening of such a conference in the light of the considerations set out above.

The Mediterranean is another region where military tensions, particularly in connexion with the Middle East conflict, have at times reached dangerous proportions. With a view to reducing these tensions, the Soviet Union proposed to the United States some time ago that an agreement should be reached on the withdrawal from the Mediterranean of Soviet and United States ships and submarines carrying nuclear weapons. This proposal still holds good, and it is in the interests of all States whose security in one way or another depends on the situation in the Mediterranean to work for its implementation.

The problem of military détente has great immediacy for the Middle East. The Soviet Union has repeatedly expressed itself in favour of halting the arms race in the Middle East within the framework of a comprehensive political settlement of the Middle East conflict.

In various parts of the world, interested States are putting forward proposals for the establishment of denuclearized zones. That reflects their desire for effective limitation of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and for a lessening of the threat of nuclear war. The Soviet Union supports such proposals. It is prepared to co-operate in their implementation, having regard, of course, to what is possible in any given region where it is proposed to establish a denuclearized zone. It is important that such zones should actually be free of nuclear weapons and that the relevant agreements should contain no loop-holes and should be fully consistent with the generally recognized rules of international law.

#### 8. Reduction of military budgets

One promising approach to halting the arms race and to disarmament is the reduction of the military budgets of States. The resources thus released could be utilized for the economic and social progress of peoples and for accelerating the rate of economic growth, ensuring employment, developing new sources of energy, solving the food problem, combating disease and building new schools and universities.

The Soviet Union has repeatedly put forward proposals for reducing military budgets and has, by its actions, set an example in that regard. Several years ago,

/...

it proposed that agreement should be reached on the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the United Nations Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries. This proposal was approved by the United Nations General Assembly, but so far it has not been implemented because of opposition by those States which are stubbornly pursuing a policy of increasing military expenditure.

The Soviet Union is prepared to take a flexible position regarding the specific figure with which a reduction of military budgets would begin. A figure greater or smaller than 10 per cent could be agreed upon as a first step for 1977. What is important, however, is that this question should as soon as possible become the subject of businesslike negotiations between the States concerned. The present steady growth of military expenditure by many States can and must give way to the practice of systematically reducing that expenditure.

9. Negotiations on halting the arms race and on disarmament are being conducted in various forms: on a bilateral basis, particularly where States with the greatest military and war industry potential are concerned; within particular groups of States directly concerned, including negotiations at the regional level; in special bodies set up to discuss the disarmament problem as a whole or individual aspects of it and composed of States representing the major political groupings and geographical areas of the present-day world. Each year, questions relating to disarmament are given a prominent place in the work of the United Nations General Assembly.

On the whole, these various types of negotiations and discussions have proved their usefulness. They will unquestionably be used in the future as well. At the same time, the achievement of radical changes in dealing with the problem of disarmament, which affects the interests of all States without exception, requires consideration of it in the broadest and most authoritative possible international forum.

Such a forum must, first of all, be truly universal, and all States must be represented in it; secondly, it must provide an opportunity for examining the whole range of disarmament questions with the necessary expertise, with due regard for all circumstances and in the necessary detail; thirdly, it must be given the power to take effective decisions.

These prerequisites would be met by convening a World Disarmament Conference, and the Soviet Union continues to believe that such a conference should be held.

A special session of the United Nations General Assembly could also be an appropriate forum for discussing disarmament questions in all their scope, for deciding through joint efforts on the ways and means of resolving them and for working out a long-term programme of practical measures. In order to ensure that its results amount to something more than decisions containing general provisions in favour of disarmament of the kind with which the archives of the United Nations are already overflowing, such a special session of the General Assembly and the manner in which it is organized must not be routine in nature. It should be a very

particular kind of session. It should be prepared, organized and held in such a way as to ensure a break-through in solving the problems of disarmament. All its work should fully reflect the high responsibility of all States in the world and, in particular, of the major Powers which possess the most powerful armaments and armed forces.

The holding of a special session of the General Assembly should not, of course, push aside the question of a World Disarmament Conference.

The Soviet Union conceives of the convening of such a session as an interim stage which should, by its decisions, prepare the way for a broad and far-reaching review of the problem of disarmament at the World Conference. The session should not be burdened with strict time limitations or with the procedure normally followed at General Assembly sessions, including special sessions.

\* \* \*

Those are the views which the Soviet Union deems it necessary to bring to the attention of all States Members of the United Nations and of all States in the world. The Soviet Union hopes that these views, which are inspired by concern for peace and the security of peoples, by a desire to further mankind's advance along the path towards halting the arms race and towards disarmament, will be carefully considered by all States and will be helpful in achieving practical results in dealing with this historic task that faces mankind.

-----