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CONCLUSION OF A WORLD TREATY ON THE NON-USE OF FORCE  
IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Letter dated 22 June 1977 from the Permanent Representative of  
the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the United Nations  
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from Mr. G. G. Shevel, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, on the question of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as an official General Assembly document under item 37 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) V. M. MARTYNEENKO  
Permanent Representative of the  
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic  
to the United Nations

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ANNEX

Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the question of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations

The Ukrainian SSR has the following observations to make in connexion with General Assembly resolution 31/9 on the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

At the last session of the General Assembly, the Ukrainian SSR strongly supported the proposal by the Soviet Union for the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, which was favourably received throughout the world, and joined in sponsoring a resolution inviting States to examine further the Soviet draft treaty and to express their views on the subject.

Further study of the draft treaty and of the views expressed by States during the discussions at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly have strengthened the Ukrainian SSR in its conviction that the conclusion of such a treaty is necessary and urgent.

Recent international events also argue in favour of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. Hotbeds of tension still exist in the world, and new ones appear from time to time because of the fact that some States deviate in their policies from observance of the generally recognized rules of international law and of the United Nations Charter. The continuing arms race is fraught with serious danger for the future of mankind and creates the material basis for the use of force for purposes of aggression.

At the same time, an improvement in the international situation has now become apparent; a real possibility of preventing a new world war has emerged, and the threat of the outbreak of such a war has already greatly abated even though the peoples of the world still face a stubborn struggle to solve the problem of completely delivering mankind from the danger of war.

One of the most important ways of attacking this problem is to transform the principle of the non-use of force into an immutable law of international relations. This is precisely what is provided for by the draft world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations submitted by the Soviet Union. The basic thrust of the draft treaty is that all parties thereto should strictly observe the obligation not to use in their mutual relations, or in their international relations in general, force or the threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Observance of this obligation will help to strengthen the principles of the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States, non-interference in internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes and will also assist in curbing the arms race.

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The draft treaty calls for States to renounce the use of weapons of all kinds, including nuclear weapons, and therefore represents a step towards a solution of the problem of disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

Nothing in the treaty affects the rights and obligations of States under the United Nations Charter or treaties and agreements previously concluded by them. Furthermore, it does not restrict the right of States to individual and collective self-defence, established in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, or the inalienable right of colonial peoples to fight for their freedom and independence using any means they may require for the purpose.

The Ukrainian SSR therefore believes that it is essential to take practical action without delay, at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, to elaborate and conclude a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations and thus transform the principle of the non-use of force into a treaty obligation. Action to give this principle further concrete expression in a treaty would be completely in keeping with the current practice of expanding the broad principles and norms of the United Nations Charter and embodying them in international treaties, conventions and agreements.

The Ukrainian SSR is accordingly prepared to join with other States in working out an agreed text for the above-mentioned treaty.

Now as in the past, the Ukrainian people, which this year is marking the sixtieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, is in favour of eliminating the use of force from international practice, resolving all international disputes by peaceful means and saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war and is opposed to aggression. More than 30 years ago, during the Second World War, it experienced all the horrors of fascist aggression - more than 4.5 million members of the civilian population perished and some 10 million inhabitants were left homeless.

The Ukrainian SSR believes that the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would help to strengthen confidence between States, would be an important part of the effort to broaden international co-operation in the interests of all States, large and small, developed and developing, and would help to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations, to consolidate a truly lasting and just peace on earth and to bring about the complete elimination of wars and armed conflicts from international affairs.

(Signed) G. G. SHEVEL  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Ukrainian SSR