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NOTE VERBALE DATED 14 JUNE 1961 FROM THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

The Permanent Mission of the USSR to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and has the honour to enclose herewith the text of a Memorandum on the question of the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests which was handed by Mr. N.S. Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, to Mr. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, on 4 June 1961.

The Permanent Mission asks that the text of this Memorandum should be published as an official United Nations document and circulated to the delegations of all States Members of the United Nations.

MEMORANDUM ON THE QUESTION OF THE DISCONTINUANCE OF ATOMIC
AND HYDROGEN WEAPONS TESTS, HANDED BY MR. N.S. KHRUSHCHEV,
CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE USSR, TO
MR. KENNEDY, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ON
4 JUNE 1961

The Soviet Government deems it necessary to present its considerations on the question of the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests. As is known, the negotiations between the representatives of the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom at Geneva have been proceeding for more than two and a half years. However, great difficulties still remain in the way of the conclusion of an agreement.

The Soviet Union, for its part, has done and is doing everything possible to reach agreement as quickly as possible with the United States and the United Kingdom on a treaty for the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests. In order to remove obstacles to such agreement, the Soviet Union, as is known, made substantial concessions to the Western partners in the negotiations by accepting a number of their proposals.

The Soviet Government's position in the Geneva negotiations is simple and clear. The Soviet Union wants nuclear weapons tests of all kinds to be discontinued everywhere and for all time. But the Soviet Government cannot and never will agree to the treaty on the discontinuance of tests becoming a scrap of paper permitting further experiments with nuclear weapons to be carried out with the object of improving them and of developing new means of mass destruction. There can be no exceptions to the treaty: all kinds of nuclear weapons tests must be prohibited - in the air, under water, underground and in outer space.

The question of a moratorium. As is known, the Soviet Government agreed to the United States proposal that the treaty should temporarily exclude from the prohibition underground nuclear weapons tests below a certain threshold magnitude. Now we must reach agreement on a moratorium on underground nuclear explosions temporarily not covered by the treaty. The agreement on the moratorium must, of course, be such that no State would be able to violate it arbitrarily and resume experimental explosions of nuclear bombs. Having regard to this, the Soviet Government is firmly convinced that the expiration of the moratorium on which agreement would be reached among the parties concerned should not automatically release States from the obligation not to carry out underground nuclear explosions.

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The question of control. The Soviet Union, like the United States, considers that strict international control should be established over the discontinuance of tests. It is perfectly obvious, however, that this control can be effective only if it is based on the mutual agreement of the parties, and not on a desire to use the machinery of control in order to impose the will of one group of States on another group.

The Soviet Government has examined all aspects of the problem of how to ensure the equality of rights of the sides in the implementation of control and has reached the firm conclusion that the staffing of the control organs must be based on the equal representation of the sides. It is precisely in accordance with this principle that the Soviet Union proposes that agreement should be reached on the composition of the chief executive organ - the administrative council.

The refusal to accept the proposal to establish an administrative council consisting of three equal representatives, one from each of the principal groups of States - the socialist States, the States members of Western military blocs and the neutralist States - is justified by the allegation that the Soviet Union is endeavouring to obtain some kind of special rights in the control organization. This assertion, of course, is wholly unfounded. What is the real idea behind the Soviet Union proposal? It is precisely to exclude the possibility that one of the sides may obtain some special advantages or may prejudice the security of one or other group of States. We wish to ensure the real, not the formal, equality of the sides in the implementation of the treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests.

A control commission on which all the principal groups of States are represented will be able to take sound, just decisions that will take into account the interests of all States. However, it is not enough to take such decisions. It is essential to ensure that they are carried out impartially. Yet impartiality cannot be guaranteed if the execution of the decisions is entrusted to one man alone.

In the history of modern international relations many instances are known when one person, under the influence of some group of States or acting for its benefit, did not carry out correctly the decisions agreed upon. This, of course, was to the advantage of the one group of States whose interests this man was furthering, and was detrimental to other States. For it is well known that there are neutral States but there are not nor can there be any neutral persons.

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The agreement on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests directly affects the security interests of States, and the United States Government will undoubtedly agree that in settling questions of this kind the utmost caution must be observed. In present circumstances, when the world is divided into military blocs, when large armies are maintained and when the threat of atomic conflict continues to hang over the world, it is inadmissible that questions affecting the security interests of States and the fate of nations should depend on the decision of one man.

Moreover, the appointment of a single person to carry out agreed decisions on control can be regarded as dictatorship, as the desire to impose one's will on others. Indeed, the Western Powers can hardly be expected to agree that the person appointed should be from one of the socialist countries. They are much more likely to propose a person from one of the neutral countries for the post. But is there any guarantee that even such a person would adopt a neutral, impartial position with regard to the socialist countries? We cannot agree to such an approach. The Soviet Union cannot permit dictatorship from any side. We want the same conditions for all and we shall never agree to being placed in an unequal position.

We are confident that the United States Government shares the view that any international agreement must contain safeguards against malicious and unjustified acts against a State party to the agreement. This is the inalienable and legitimate right of every State, every Government. In proposing the institution of a collegial executive organ comprising equal representatives of the three groups of States, the Soviet Union is prompted by the desire to guarantee to States the exercise of this very right.

Opposing the Soviet proposal on the composition of the administrative council the United States and United Kingdom representatives at the Geneva conference allege that it is tantamount to establishing a "veto" in the matter of inspection. Such allegations, however, can only be regarded as a continuation of the old line of distorting the position of the USSR on questions of control.

It may be recalled in this connexion that as far back as May 1959, when explaining its proposal on the fixing of inspection quotas, the Soviet Government emphasized that the dispatch of on-site inspection teams within the limits of the

agreed quotas must be carried out at the request of the side interested in the inspection, without any vote in the control commission or in any other organ. All that is needed are readings of control-post instruments - which are objective - indicating that in some region of the country in question an event has occurred that could be suspected of being a nuclear explosion. If such objective readings exist, then under the Soviet proposal neither the control commission nor any other organ of the control organization can prevent compliance with the request for an inspection. Consequently, no obstacles to inspection, to which the United States representatives refer when speaking of the so-called "veto", can be created by the administrative council.

There are, of course, other questions on which the executive organ will have to take decisions, and many of them will inevitably arise in the course of implementing the treaty on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests. A situation in which unilateral decisions were taken and conditions for arbitrary action were created cannot be tolerated. If there is a single administrator, the danger of arbitrary action is increased manifold. The possibility of arbitrary action and of unilateral decisions is altogether excluded if the structure of the executive organ proposed by the Soviet Government is accepted. It can thus be seen that the question of the "veto" is made up out of whole cloth.

The Soviet Government is convinced that the adoption of the Soviet Union proposal on the membership of the administrative council would remove one of the major obstacles to the conclusion of an agreed treaty.

There is a further question on which disagreement exists at present. That is the question of the size of the inspection quota. The Soviet Government hopes that the United States Government will also display a realistic approach to the question of the number of on-site inspections. Our proposal that three inspections a year should be carried out in the territory of each of the following: the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom, provides adequate safeguards against any violation of the treaty on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests. The demand for an excessive number of inspections, on which the United States and the United Kingdom are insisting, inevitably prompts the thought that the concern that is being shown is by no means concern for the establishment of effective control. In assessing the position of States on matters of inspection, it is,

of course, impossible to discount the circumstance that while military alignments of States still exist in the world inspection can be used for intelligence purposes.

That is the position with regard to the negotiations on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests.

We have set forth with the utmost frankness our ideas on how to overcome the difficulties that have arisen. Our position provides an excellent foundation for the conclusion in the very near future of a treaty on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests.

At the same time, objectively appraising the situation that has arisen on the problem of prohibiting nuclear tests, we must acknowledge that the participants in the Geneva negotiations seem to be finding it difficult to agree on the discontinuance of these tests. In that case, would it not be better for our countries to begin with the principal, the cardinal question - the question of general and complete disarmament? In this connexion we welcome President Kennedy's statement in his latest message to Congress to the effect that the conclusion of a treaty on the effective prohibition of nuclear tests would be an important first step towards disarmament. By all means, let us solve both problems together, as being inter-dependent; this will also eliminate the main obstacle which the Western Powers now see in the Soviet proposal for the establishment of an administrative council of three members.

As is known, the Soviet Government has emphasized repeatedly that if the Western Powers will accept the proposal for general and complete disarmament, the Soviet Government, for its part, is prepared unconditionally to accept any proposals of the Western Powers with regard to control. The Soviet Government again confirms its readiness to do so and agrees in that event to sign a document that would include the Western Powers' proposals on the discontinuance of nuclear tests.

We shall be able to take this step because in the conditions of general and complete disarmament the question of the security of States will be on a different plane: there will be no armies and no threat of an attack by one State on another.

When all States have disarmed and do not possess means of attacking other States, then conditions will really have been created in which every country will have proper guarantees of its security. No State will have the possibility of secretly creating armed forces which would threaten any other State or group of States. In these conditions we are ready to accept any control proposed by the Western Powers.

At the present time, however, when an armaments race is proceeding in the world and antagonistic military alignments exist, we are compelled to retain our armed forces in the interests of the security of our country and of our allies. If States maintain armed forces, no control can be separated from intelligence. Control will not be associated with intelligence only when armed forces have been eliminated and weapons destroyed. The, indeed, universal control will be necessary to ensure that no State or group of States is able secretly to manufacture weapons or arm itself in preparation for aggression against other States. Strict and effective control to prevent the arming of States cannot be avoided. At the same time it must be recognized that under present conditions control does nothing to guarantee that no country will be exposed to attack from another country, since arms and armed forces are not only being maintained but are being increased and strengthened, especially in the sphere of nuclear weapons, as the President of the United States has himself admitted. The discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests does not mean the cessation of the manufacture and stockpiling of such weapons and the threat of war is not diminished. In such conditions every State is justified in suspecting that the intention is to set up intelligence organs in the guise of control.

If general and complete disarmament is carried out, States will retain only agreed limited contingents of militia or police necessary for the maintenance of internal order and the personal protection of citizens. These forces cannot create a threat of attack on other countries. In case of need these contingents can be used by the Security Council if some State in spite of everything undertakes aggressive acts. All the principal groups of States must, of course, be represented equally in the command of such international forces; that is to say, the command must be truly international.

The Soviet Government is profoundly convinced that in our time the most realistic path to the solution of the disarmament problem is the path of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. This has been acknowledged by the majority of States in the world, as was borne out both by the resolution adopted at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly and by the debate on disarmament questions at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly.

The Soviet Government expresses the hope that the United States Government will take into consideration the ideas set forth in this Memorandum and, for its part, will contribute to the solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament, including the problem of achieving the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests for all time.
