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LETTER DATED 4 DECEMBER 1961 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

I enclose herewith the Statement of the Soviet Government dated 4 December 1961 concerning negotiations on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests.

I should be glad if you would have this Statement circulated as a General Assembly document.

(Signed) V. ZORIN  
Permanent Representative of the USSR  
to the United Nations

STATEMENT OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT DATED 4 DECEMBER 1961 CONCERNING  
NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DISCONTINUANCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTS

The Soviet Government notes with satisfaction that the merit of the new Soviet proposals on the discontinuance of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons tests has been recognized by the peoples of the entire world. All those who are anxious to strengthen peace have rightly seen in these proposals a practical means for ending all types of nuclear weapons tests without delay.

In submitting its proposal to conclude an agreement on the discontinuance of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, the implementation of which would be controlled mutually by the parties using national devices for the detection of nuclear explosions, and in proposing the establishment of a moratorium on underground nuclear weapons tests, the Soviet Government trusted that these proposals would be viewed favourably by the Western nuclear Powers - the United States, the United Kingdom and France. Indeed, President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan have themselves quite recently acknowledged that national means of detection of nuclear explosions were quite adequate to ensure mutual verification of compliance by the parties with an agreement on the discontinuance of nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, and they said they were in favour of such an approach to the solution of the problem of discontinuing nuclear tests. Thus there is ground for the speedy achievement of an agreement which would deliver the nations from test explosions of nuclear weapons.

It is impossible, however, to ignore the fact that in connexion with the resumption on 28 November 1961 of the negotiations at Geneva, in the course of which the new Soviet proposals are to be examined, United States Government circles made statements to the effect that the United States intends to continue to conduct nuclear weapons tests. This was also indicated by the United States representative in the Geneva negotiations. Preparations are now openly being made for another test in New Mexico.

The United Kingdom Government, for its part, has announced that it cannot bind itself by a commitment not to make or not to support the making of further nuclear tests.

The French Government, which conducted tests at a time when attempts were being made at Geneva to agree on a prohibition of such tests, has not so far expressed its readiness to undertake not to conduct such tests.

It may well be asked what the United States and its allies are really seeking: the discontinuance of nuclear tests everywhere or the continuation of their pursuit of illusive superiority in nuclear weapons?

It is clear to everyone that the continuation of nuclear weapons tests by the Western Powers anywhere at all - underground, in the atmosphere, in outer space or under water - would strike a blow against the hopes of nations, especially now that, thanks to the new initiative of the Soviet Union, the bright road to the early conclusion of an agreement on the discontinuance of all nuclear weapons tests has been opened.

The Soviet Union is sincerely anxious to achieve an agreement with the Western Powers. It would be useless, however, to expect the other party to stand by and calmly watch the Western Powers conduct tests to perfect their nuclear weapons in an endeavour to obtain military advantages for the aggressive NATO bloc. The Soviet Government most firmly declares that if the Western Powers continue nuclear weapons tests, including underground tests, the Soviet Union will be obliged, in the interests of its security, to conduct such nuclear weapons tests as it may deem necessary to strengthen its defensive capacity.

It would be comforting to believe that common sense will none the less prevail in the leading circles of the Western Powers and that they will finally enter the path leading to a cessation of the dangerous game of nuclear testing and to the conclusion of an agreement banning such tests for all time, as proposed to the Western Powers by the Soviet Union.

The implementation of the new Soviet proposals would make possible a substantial improvement in the international situation and would create favourable conditions for the speedy solution of the main problem of the present day - the problem of general and complete disarmament. Thus, a valuable contribution would be made to the preservation and strengthening of world peace.