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LETTER DATED 24 AUGUST 1987 FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIALIST REPUBLIC ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE

On behalf of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Socialist Republic of Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and of my own country, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, I have the honour to forward herewith a joint memorandum of the Socialist countries entitled "Disarmament for development" and to ask you kindly to have it circulated as a document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

(Signed) Štefan MURIN
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

Annex

DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

Memorandum submitted by the delegations of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Polish People's Republic, the Socialist Republic of Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

INTRODUCTION

1. Having reached historically unprecedented frontiers of industrial, scientific and cultural progress, humankind is now faced with extremely grave dangers which call into question its very survival. The critical level of the destructive power of modern weapons and the qualitatively new dimension of modern civilization with its complex and fragile network of socio-economic structures and vitally important communications have laid bare the untenable nature of national security concepts, based on deterrence through weapons. Security has become global, running the whole gamut of military, political, economic, ecological and humanitarian problems. In a situation of global interdependence, the world's security is being undermined not only by the arms race but also by unsettled regional conflicts, underdevelopment, non-equivalent exchanges and a heavy burden of indebtedness, ignorance and cultivation of the enemy image.
2. Scores of thousands of nuclear warheads which are capable of annihilating the world 12 times over, billions of weapons of all kinds and million-strong armies - all this can touch off bloody and devastating confrontations. At the same time, the arms race is a process which is constantly militarizing the economies of major States, bleeding white the countries that try to improve their economic performance, and pushing developing nations into a ruinous vortex by forcing them to spend an increasing amount of money for arms purchases. Military expenditures have long been growing faster than the world gross product. In 1986, \$1 trillion was spent in the world on military purposes, and that at a time when 50 million people die of hunger every year and the total amount of debt of the developing countries is now close to the annual level of world military spending.
3. The arms race means reduced allocations for social needs; it is a factor in soaring inflation, unemployment and lower standards of living. The consequences of military spending have a tangible effect on the living conditions in the developed countries, but they are particularly painful for the developing nations which are constantly lagging farther behind. In the meantime, the level of official aid to those countries is 25 times lower than that of world military spending.

4. Militarization has long been in flagrant contradiction with the requirements of social and economic progress of the world as a whole and with the need to solve global problems such as the elimination of hunger and disease, protection of the environment, the supply of energy and the relief of the debt burden. The arms race and development have become locked in irreconcilable competition for this planet's material and human resources and the intellectual potential of our civilization.

I. THE CONCEPT OF DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

5. The march of history has confronted mankind with the fundamental issue of disarmament and development. Disarmament can play a unique role in the world economy and provide a basis for accelerated development of countries of all social systems. There is no other reserve of such magnitude and real potential on this planet, as great and real as the one in question.

6. Recognition of the relationship between disarmament and development has become a testimony to, and a yardstick of, realism in one's approach to international problems of the end of the twentieth century. The demilitarization of human society, in close connection with the promotion of development, would also facilitate the restructuring of international relations on a just and equitable basis and the strengthening of the economic security of and confidence among all States. It would become a powerful factor in promoting predictability in international relations, in facilitating their democratization and in discarding obsolete stereotypes of isolation and confrontation. Both disarmament and development represent mutually complementary material foundations of a future comprehensive system of international peace and security.

7. The Socialist countries strongly believe that there exists an intrinsic relationship between disarmament and development. They view the concept of "disarmament for development" as an expression of a new political thinking which rejects militarism and focuses on global co-operation and mutual assistance in this integral and interdependent world. They propose peaceful alternatives to military programmes, namely co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy rather than competition in building up nuclear arsenals; interaction in peaceful outer space and the establishment of a world space organization rather than "Star Wars"; joining efforts to further develop the peaceful chemical industry rather than producing chemical weapons, and so on. The Socialist countries consider it imperative to undertake concrete and urgent measures to ensure that science and technology are used exclusively for peaceful purposes, that scientific and technological research in the military field is reorientated towards solving the major economic and social problems resulting from the present underdevelopment of two thirds of mankind and to examine ways and means so that all countries and peoples might benefit freely on an equal basis from the recent achievements of technical and scientific revolution. They believe that the resources and the intellectual potential that would be released in the process of disarmament should be channelled toward broader co-operation in promoting peaceful alternatives in various fields of scientific and technological progress, including environmental protection, and that the developing countries should be able to share in the latest advances.

8. The Socialist countries resolutely stand for an immediate cessation of the arms race and for the adoption of genuine and urgent disarmament measures in order to eliminate nuclear weapons, substantially to reduce conventional arms, armed forces and military expenditures. To this effect, they have offered to the peoples of the world a programme to rid this planet, by the year 2000, of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, reduce the States' military capabilities to the limits of reasonable sufficiency and build, in the foreseeable future, a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world. The reduction and complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the cessation of nuclear weapon tests, a substantial reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, as well as other disarmament measures on a global as well as regional basis - subject to reliable verification - would make it possible within a relatively short period of time not only to achieve a radical breakthrough in strengthening security, but also to allocate large additional funds for development, including assistance. A radical reduction of military expenditures would release important funds which might contribute to the solution of many serious problems confronting mankind, in particular the developing countries. These purposes would also be served by limiting the sales and supplies of conventional arms which only worsen the financial plight of the developing countries.

9. The concept of "disarmament for development" should replace distrust and confrontation, as soon as possible, making the arms race a "turned-over page" of history. The Socialist countries propose that when discussing concrete disarmament measures negotiators should take into account projected savings of funds and resources that will be generated in their respective countries and consider measures aimed at their efficient utilization. The funds thus released must not be channelled toward other military projects and disarmament agreements might include provisions to this effect. A part of the funds actually released through disarmament measures should be used to increase assistance to developing countries.

10. An active search should be continued for ways to lower the level of resources consumed by the military sector of economy; in particular through agreements on the reduction of military expenditures. Implementation of the proposals made by the Warsaw Treaty States to this effect would release substantial additional funds for development. The Socialist countries are of the view that the Conference might call for a freeze on military expenditures at the present level and for their reduction in absolute figures or in percentage points so that the resources thus released can be used to meet social and economic needs as well as to promote further assistance to the developing countries. The Socialist countries favour increased openness regarding military activities and defence allocation including the comparison of military doctrines and military expenditure.

11. Differences in the arms price structure and in the pricing mechanism of many countries have so far complicated specific comparison of their military budgets. The Socialist countries view this problem with utmost seriousness and will, for their part, contribute to making it possible for the military budgets of various countries to be realistically compared.

12. A real possibility exists to reduce the share of military spending in the world gross product to the lowest possible level of sufficiency. The Socialist countries, for their part, are prepared to work toward this goal and to negotiate with other States to that end.

II. PRINCIPLES OF THE REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

13. The Socialist countries are prepared to take part in efforts to reach agreement on principles to reallocate part of the resources released through disarmament for assistance to developing countries. Such principles might be as follows:

(a) Assistance should be provided using a portion of real resources released as a result of arms limitation and disarmament;

(b) Agreements on arms limitation and disarmament could be accompanied by statements on the amount of the resources saved, which should be used for assistance purposes;

(c) All major military Powers, including the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, should participate - in a balanced manner - in transferring such resources;

(d) The allocated resources should serve the strengthening of mutually beneficial co-operation with developing countries and be a supplement to the already existing forms of assistance and should not result in cutbacks in the current programmes;

(e) Assistance can be provided both on a multilateral and bilateral basis;

(f) Assistance should be provided on a non-discriminatory basis with priority given to the least developed countries, countries stricken by natural disasters, etc.

III. INTERNATIONAL MECHANISM

14. A special mechanism for the transfer of part of the resources released through disarmament to developing countries and for dealing with other global problems would ensure the necessary institutional relationship between disarmament and development and demonstrate the determination of States to translate this relationship into their policies and to create, through practical deeds, an atmosphere of mutual understanding, openness and predictability in international affairs, thereby strengthening international peace and security.

15. The role of such a mechanism could be performed by an international fund called "Disarmament for development" open to all States. Each country would determine for itself the most convenient form of its inputs by way of resources calculated in the prices of the world market or of financial contributions,

including those in national currency. The fund could be established within the framework of the United Nations. The procedure for its operation would be governed by an international agreement. The fund could transfer resources either directly to developing countries or to the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Environment Programme and other bodies or specialized agencies of the United Nations. The fund would carry out various development programmes on a national as well as regional level and could participate, inter alia, in the financing of a future world space organization, in the development and operation of a global programme of scientific and technological co-operation, including facilitating the transfer of technology, the programme and study to solve the problem of foreign debts, as well as programmes to combat diseases in co-operation with the World Health Organization, etc.

16. The mechanism for distributing the resources released through disarmament for the purposes of development should be sufficiently flexible. It should provide for a possibility of rendering additional assistance on a bilateral basis. National branches of the fund could be set up to manage a part of the resources allocated by a particular State.

IV. CONVERSION

17. The Socialist countries regard conversion as an essential component of the disarmament process offering as it does a way for releasing material, financial and human resources for the purposes of development. Conversion is what makes the process of curtailing the arms race irreversible. Converting the production capacities of the defence industry to the civilian sector of economy will also create a genuinely stable foundation for rendering additional assistance to developing countries.

18. The difficulties associated with conversion should not be underestimated. Initially, a State may have to bear additional expenditures to offset the decrease in military demand, facilitate the retraining of manpower, etc. But the difficulties of conversion are minimal compared with the enormous damage that the arms race causes virtually every hour. States are amply capable of converting their military economy to peaceful uses since creating jobs is less costly in civilian than in military industries. Already at present the military sector of the economy is linked to the civilian sector, and there is a possibility of launching major international programmes as an alternative to the arms race.

19. The priorities and plans for the economic and social measures required to convert military activities to civilian activities should be established and drafted well in advance.

20. Research in the area of conversion and a free comparison of its various models will facilitate the drafting of a scientifically sound world-wide plan for conversion to peaceful economy. Here, the United Nations has an important role to play. Contributions could also be made by trade unions, political parties, private foundations and international non-governmental organizations.

21. In the process of studying the problems of conversion, methods to verify its implementation could also be worked out.

22. The Socialist countries, which consider verification as an important means to assure confidence in the actual fulfilment by States of their obligations and as a lever for strengthening trust are also prepared to take part in these efforts.

V. RESTRUCTURING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

23. The Socialist States reaffirm their resolve to spare no effort to promote international economic, scientific and technological co-operation with all States and also to contribute to the elimination of underdevelopment, the establishment of a new economic order and the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis. Equal economic security should be assured for all States. This concept calls for confidence-building in international economic relations and requires banishing from those relations arbitrary rule, unlawful embargoes, illegal sanctions and restrictions, boycotts, trade, credit and technology blockades, the use of economic links as a tool of political pressure, discriminatory measures and practices as well as protectionist barriers and constraints. The Socialist countries continue to be ready to intensify economic co-operation also with developing nations on the basis of long-term agreements and programmes, which would take into account the potential and needs of the national economies of the countries concerned.

VI. THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AND ITS FOLLOW-UP, THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

24. It is from these positions that the Socialist countries approach the goals of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The convening of the Conference reflects the new awareness by the world community of this objective relationship as well as its desire to give effect to that relationship. The Conference is called upon to play a major role in achieving this goal. The Socialist countries suggest that a review conference to examine the progress in this field should be convened in four or five years.

25. If all States act on the assumption that every measure to limit and reduce armaments and every step towards ridding mankind of nuclear and other weapons should bring the peoples of the world greater security and more opportunities for a better life, and if they chart bold co-ordinated approaches to accomplish this goal in a spirit of non-confrontation and common responsibility, then the Conference will fulfil its task.

26. At the same time, the central role in resolving the issues of disarmament and development that the United Nations is called upon to play should be reaffirmed and implemented, for the United Nations must become the guarantor of a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world based on trust and co-operation, security and justice.

27. The Socialist countries advocate that the United Nations Security Council considers the relationship between disarmament and development at top level. The policies of "armament instead of development", imposed by militarism, should be reversed to become "disarmament for development". At this turning point in history, prompt collective efforts are required if the arms race is to be drastically curtailed and resources released for the purposes of economic and social progress of all nations. The Socialist countries stand ready to co-operate with all States of the world in this crucial area in the spirit of goodwill and awareness of the international community's common responsibility for the preservation and flourishing of human civilization.
