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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fortieth year

Letter dated 4 December 1985 from the Permanent Representative of
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of the statement by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, M. S. Gorbachev, at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on 27 November 1985.

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I should be grateful if you would have the text of this statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 12, 14, 37, 57, 58, 63, 65, 68, 69, 72, 76, 84 and 145, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

ANNEX

REPORT BY DEPUTY MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, GENERAL SECRETARY
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Comrade Deputies,

Major questions of the domestic and foreign policy of the Soviet State have been submitted for discussion at the current session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The Laws on the State Economic and Social Development Plan of the USSR and on the State Budget for 1986, passed by this session, are vastly important to our country, to its present and future, to every work collective, to every Soviet family. The new year, 1986, ushers in not merely the first year of the twelfth five-year plan period but a qualitatively new stage in the development of Soviet society.

The 1986 plan reflects the Party's strategic policy of accelerating the country's socio-economic development. It provides for higher rates of growth of national income, industrial and agricultural production, and labour productivity. Efficiency in the use of material resources will increase. Priority is given to developing the branches which are called upon to ensure scientific and technical progress and improve product quality.

Measures have been set forth for speeding up reconstruction, refurbishing and modernizing production, and perfecting management and the economic mechanism. A further rise in the people's well-being is envisaged.

It is important, Comrades, that we all bear constantly in mind the specific features of the plan for 1986.

An even pace for all five years should be set as early as the first year of the five-year-plan period. Accordingly, the rates of development of the national economy envisaged for 1986 are such that their implementation, with gradually increasing intensity in subsequent years, will facilitate the implementation of the plan for the five-year period as a whole. This will help avoid the situation that occurred in the previous five-year period, when reduced indicators were established for the first years, while the major growth was planned for the final years. The negative results this practice led to are well known.

The second specific feature of the plan is that maximum account was taken in formulating it of the need to speed up scientific and technical progress. In line with the directive of the CPSU Central Committee Conference held in June, the plan assigns top priority to the targets for accelerating scientific and technical progress envisaged in the resolutions on developing major lines of scientific and technological advance in branches of the national economy. Simultaneously, established principles in planning were extensively revised. The plan provides for the first time for generalized key indicators of scientific and technical progress

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in the branches and its effectiveness. These indicators are fixed with a view to invigorating the practical work of ministries, combines and enterprises to ensure the advance to the frontiers of scientific and technical development.

The next specific feature of the 1986 plan is its orientation towards making the practical transition to intensive methods of running the economy. This is dictated by the facts of life, by the labour and material resources situation, which is not simple, and by the near exhaustion of extensive factors of economic growth. Next year, we are to achieve production growth through maximum resource conservation. In other words, conservation is in fact to become the main source of resources for the entire increase in production. Here are some figures to illustrate this. Next year, 97 per cent of production growth will be achieved through increased labour productivity, metal consumption in the national income will drop by 2.7 per cent, and energy consumption by 3 per cent.

And finally, this is a broad transition to new management methods which have proved their worth. Starting from January 1986, more than half of industry's output will be produced at enterprises working under these new conditions.

In general, Comrades, the line taken is correct. Now we have to make it a reality - both in the process of the further detailed elaboration of plans in the branches, Republics, territories and regions, in combines and enterprises, and of course, in concrete practical work. This aspect should be emphasized also because many workers at both central and local levels, including workers in planning and economic bodies, have not fully appreciated the importance of a new approach to assessing and resolving the country's economic, social and financial problems.

The current session is being held during the crucial period preceding the Party Congress. The April Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee charted the course towards accelerating the social and economic development of society, marked the beginning of substantive changes in approaching the attainment of economic and political objectives, and set a new rhythm for the entire work of Party, State and local government bodies, all our cadres and workers' collectives.

The Party's political course, in respect of both domestic matters and international problems, has found its fullest reflection in the theoretical and political documents of paramount importance that will be submitted for consideration to the twenty-seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - the draft of the new edition of the Party's Programme, the proposed changes in the Party Rules, and the draft guidelines for the economic and social development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and the period till the year 2000.

The initial outcome of the broad discussion which has taken place between the Party and the people shows that the documents submitted for consideration evoke profound satisfaction among the Soviet people. Our optimism, our confidence that the chosen road is correct and that what has been planned will certainly be fulfilled stems from the vigorous support expressed - in word and in deed - for the Party's strategic course.

As you know, Comrade Deputies, the Central Committee of the Party and the Soviet Government have recently undertaken a number of important measures aimed at speeding up the switching of the economy to the lines of intensive development and enhancing the efficiency of the national economic management. Further practical measures are being taken to put things in order, strengthen labour and state discipline and the régime of strict economy, and combat drunkenness and alcoholism. In other words, a great deal of intensive work has been started in all spheres of public life, and it is already beginning to bear fruit.

The new features now being introduced into our life have stirred up the Soviet people, boosted their creativity, and showed once again the vastness of resources and possibilities inherent in the socialist system.

We can now say with certainty that things have begun to look up. The growth rate of production is rising, and other economic indicators are improving. Despite setbacks in a number of sectors of the national economy at the start of the year, the Soviet people have managed to rectify the situation and ensure the fulfilment of economic plan targets. Change for the better is taking place in the agrarian sector of the country as well.

Immense credit for what has been achieved goes to our heroic working class who, sparing neither effort nor energy and overcoming difficulties, have done everything possible to meet the plan targets. The positive results achieved reflect the hard work of the collective farmers and all the other workers in the agro-industrial complex. Our achievements embody the creative thought of young people, who boldly and energetically come to grips with difficult and complex tasks and vigorously support the ongoing changes in our society, linking their own future to them, and have pioneered and initiated many important undertakings.

We also associate these changes with the activization of the work of the Party, local government and trade union bodies, and all our cadres.

In short, Comrade Deputies, a good deal is being done. However, it would be an error to overestimate all this - and that is not our custom anyway. We are at the start of the road we have planned, a road which is arduous and difficult and which calls for a combination of a creative approach to the tasks posed by practice with purposefulness, a high sense of discipline and dedication. We have immense reserves and potentialities, and we have to work assiduously to tap them and use them to maximum effect. This has to be done in every area of economic and cultural development, primarily in those in which the situation remains complex and which are slow to catch up and gather momentum.

Now that the current five-year period is drawing to a close, it is vital to work hard so that, from next year, we can start a confident and dynamic advance, ensure that the targets planned will be reached, and create the prerequisites for a further qualitative transformation of the country's productive forces.

Comrades, the plan for 1986 makes manifest the peaceful, constructive nature of our concerns. Our foreign policy aspirations, the international policy of the Soviet State are closely linked with this peaceful trend in our domestic policy.

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The foreign policy guidelines of the April Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee were a concrete manifestation of Leninist foreign policy at the present stage. The Plenary Meeting emphasized the need for the USSR's peace-loving policy to be intensified to the utmost on the broadest front of international relations. It called for everything to be done to prevent the forces of militarism and aggression from prevailing, emphasized the urgency of ending the arms race and stepping up the process of disarmament, and called for the development of equitable, proper, civilized relations between States and the widening and deepening of mutually advantageous economic ties.

The Plenary Meeting's directives were dictated by the time, the specificities of the situation and the demands of the socialist policy of peace and progress. In its assessments, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union proceeded from the premise that the degree of unpredictability of events is growing as a result of the continuing arms race. The possibility of the militarization of outer space signifies a qualitatively new leap in the arms race which would inevitably result in the disappearance of the very notion of strategic stability - the basis for the preservation of peace in the nuclear age. A situation would develop in which vitally important decisions, irreversible in their consequences, would in fact be taken by computers, without participation of the human mind and political will, without taking into account the criteria of ethics and morality. Such a course of events could result in a universal catastrophe - even if it was initially triggered by an error, miscalculation, or technical malfunction of sophisticated computer systems.

In other words, the course of world events has reached a juncture at which especially responsible decisions are required, where failure to act or dilatory action are criminal, for the point at issue today is the preservation of civilization, of life itself. That is why we have believed and continue to believe that all necessary measures must be taken to break the vicious circle of the arms race, so as not to miss a single chance of changing the course of events for the better. The issue today is extremely acute, and the need is extremely specific: to rise above narrow interests, to realize the collective responsibility of all States in the face of the danger stalking the human race at the threshold of the third millennium.

This is precisely the approach which the April Plenary Meeting of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union instructed us to take in the implementation of our foreign policy. And this approach is fully in keeping with the interests of the Soviet people and the peoples of the socialist States, and, we are convinced, has been met with understanding in other countries. Over a period of time which, though short, was marked by important international events, the Soviet Union has been striving to interact in the interests of peace with as many States as possible. We have been and are proceeding on the assumption that the period of dangerous tension can be ended only by the efforts of all countries, big and small.

Political and economic ties with countries of the socialist community have been intensified and deepened considerably in recent months. Long-term programmes of co-operation in the sphere of the economy and scientific and technical progress have been drawn up. A mechanism of effective, concrete ties has been created, and

co-ordination of foreign policy activity has become more intensive. The meetings of the leaders of fraternal countries in Moscow, Warsaw, Sofia and Prague became important milestones on the road towards the further unity of the socialist community. Ties with all the socialist countries are being developed and strengthened.

Co-operation with the States that have thrown off the colonial yoke and participate in the non-aligned movement is being broadened. Important steps have been taken in the development of relations with many of those countries. This is a factor of great importance in the stormy waters of present-day international relations, a factor that makes for peace, equality, freedom and the independence of peoples.

The Soviet Union is making an effort to improve ties with capitalist States as well. I will single out the recent Soviet-French summit in Paris, in the course of which important steps were taken for the further development of bilateral co-operation, consolidation of European and international security, and return to détente.

We will continue to build our foreign policy on a diversified foundation, on the basis of firm and stable bilateral relations with all countries. But the reality of today's world is such that there are States which - due to their military, economic, scientific and technical potential and their weight on the international scene - bear a special responsibility for the nature of world development, its course and its consequences. It is primarily the Soviet Union and the United States of America which have this responsibility, I stress, not privilege - responsibility.

Viewed in this light, the Soviet-American summit held last week is, the Politburo of the Central Committee believes, an important event - not only in our bilateral relations, but in world politics as a whole. I have already had occasion to speak, at the Press Conference in Geneva, about my first impressions of the talks with the United States President. The meeting's final document - the Joint Statement - is well known too.

Today, speaking at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, I would like to appraise the results and significance of the Geneva meeting in the context of the present-day situation, taking into account past experience and the prospects for the future, the tasks that we have to tackle.

First of all I must say that the road to the Geneva dialogue was, for many reasons, long and arduous. The United States Administration which came to office in the early 1980s openly assumed a course of confrontation, while rejecting the very possibility of a positive development of Soviet-American relations. I think everyone remembers even today the intensity of anti-Soviet rhetoric in those years and the actions "from strength" practised by the ruling circles in the United States.

The mutual efforts over many years to achieve the essential minimum of trust in those relations were committed to oblivion, and virtually every thread of bilateral co-operation was snapped. Détente itself was branded as being contrary to the interests of the United States of America.

Having assumed a course of attaining military superiority over the USSR, the Administration went ahead with programmes for the nuclear and other rearmament of the United States. American first strike missiles began to be deployed in Western Europe. A situation was taking shape that was fraught with high-level military and political uncertainties and concomitant risks.

Lastly, there appeared the "Star Wars" programme, the so-called "Strategic Defense Initiative". In Washington, they became obsessed with that idea, with little thought for the grave consequences that were bound to ensue if it was translated into practice. The plan to introduce weapons into outer space is extremely dangerous to all the peoples of the world, to all without exception.

But we also knew something else: that such United States policies would inevitably clash with reality. So it transpired. The Soviet Union together with its allies unequivocally declared that they would not allow anyone to achieve military superiority over them.

Confusion arose even among the allies of the United States in the face of Washington's apparent disregard for the interests of their security, and its readiness to stake everything on the pursuit of the will-o'-the-wisp of military superiority. Even in the United States, the course being taken gave rise to serious doubts. The proclamation of the plans for the preparation of "Star Wars" sounded the alarm bell throughout the world.

Those who thought that their policy of confrontation would determine world development also miscalculated. I will add, perhaps, in this connection that dreams of world domination are flawed from the outset - flawed both in objective and in means. Like the designs for perpetual motion machines born of ignorance of the elementary laws of nature, imperial claims grow out of notions of the world which are far removed from present-day reality.

The Soviet Union combined its firm rebuff of the United States policy of disrupting the military strategic balance with large-scale peace initiatives, and displayed restraint and constructiveness in its approach to the key issues of peace and security.

Our initiatives, and there are quite a number of them, have clearly shown what we are seeking to achieve in the world arena, what we are calling on the United States and its allies to do. These actions by the USSR have met with the enthusiastic approval of the world public and been well received by the Governments of many countries.

Under the influence of these factors, Washington was compelled to manoeuvre. Tokens of a desire for peace appeared in the American Administration's statements. They were not backed by deeds, but the very fact of their appearance was symptomatic.

Early this year, at our initiative, agreement was reached on new talks between the USSR and the United States, talks designed to encompass the entire spectrum of space and nuclear armaments in their interrelationship, and taking as their aim the preventing of the arms race in outer space and its termination on Earth.

The atmosphere of Soviet-American relations, and to some extent the international behaviour of the United States, started to undergo changes; this fact, naturally, could not but be taken into account when considering the possibility of holding a summit meeting.

This decision was based on our firm conviction that the central place in the talks should be assigned to questions that determine our relations and the world situation in general - to security issues. We also took into account the political and strategic realities in Europe and the world, the opinion of our friends and allies, the views of the Governments and public of many countries, and their persistent calls on the Soviet Union to do everything possible to ensure that the summit meeting would be held. We understood how many hopes were pinned on the meeting all over the world, and undertook concrete steps to improve the international climate and make it more favourable for the meeting.

In the Geneva negotiations on nuclear and space arms, we put forward concrete and radical proposals. What is their substance?

First of all, we proposed the complete prohibition of space strike weapons. We did so because the beginning of an arms race in outer space, even one involving only anti-missile systems deployed in circumterrestrial space, will not contribute to the security of any State. Hidden behind a space "shield", offensive nuclear systems will become even more dangerous.

The appearance of space strike weapons could turn the present strategic balance into strategic chaos, trigger a feverish arms race along all possible lines, and undercut one of the fundamental pillars of its limitation - the ABM Treaty. As a result, mistrust in relations between States will grow and security will be considerably impaired.

Moreover, under conditions of the complete prohibition of space strike weapons we have proposed halving all nuclear systems of the USSR and the United States capable of reaching each other's territory, and limiting the total number of nuclear warheads on such systems belonging to either side to a ceiling of 6,000. These are radical reductions amounting to thousands of nuclear warheads.

Such an approach is fully justified. It embraces all those systems which form the strategic relationship of forces, and makes it possible to take due account of the nuclear threat which really exists for either side, regardless of how and from where nuclear warheads are delivered to their territory, whether by missile or aircraft, from the attacker's own territory or the territory of its allies.

We regard the reduction of the nuclear systems of the USSR and the United States by 50 per cent as a beginning. We are prepared to go further - as far as the complete elimination of nuclear weapons - with the participation, naturally, of other nuclear-weapon States.

Understandably, the nuclear arms race is a source of special concern to European nations. We fully appreciate this concern. Europe is overflowing with nuclear systems. The Soviet Union advocates the complete removal of nuclear

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weapons, both medium-range and tactical, from Europe. However, the United States and its NATO partners do not agree to that. Then we proposed to make a start, at least, with provisional decisions, and thereafter to work towards further reductions. We are convinced that our proposals accord with the hopes of European nations for a lessening of the nuclear threat and the enhancement of European security.

I would like to emphasize the point of principle involved in the matter: in the three areas of the negotiations - space, strategic offensive weapons and medium-range nuclear systems - we do not propose to the United States anything that would damage its security. Moreover, our proposals make it possible to resolve as well issues which the American side elevates to the rank of its "special concerns".

For example, much is said about the Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles. Our proposals provide for a reduction in the number of such missiles, and for limitation of the share of their warheads in the overall number of nuclear charges. Or, to take another example, there has been quite an outcry in the West about the Soviet SS-20 missiles. We propose to reduce them substantially in the context of solving the problem of medium-range nuclear forces in Europe.

The United Kingdom's and France's nuclear weapon systems are presented as a stumbling block. It is said that they cannot be discussed at the Soviet-American talks. Well, we are prepared to seek a solution to this, too. We propose to start a direct exchange of views with those countries about their nuclear weapons.

The Soviet proposals have met with a broad and positive response throughout the world. They are backed by the prestige of the Warsaw Treaty member States, which have unanimously supported our constructive stand. The joint statements by the leaders of six countries - Argentina, Mexico, the United Republic of Tanzania, India, Sweden and Greece - are largely consonant with our approach. The Soviet initiative was received with approval and hope by communist and workers' parties, major public organizations in different countries and continents, scientists of world renown, prominent politicians and military leaders. It evoked a positive response on the part of most of the parties of the Socialist International.

What is more, thousands of letters from Soviet and foreign citizens were addressed to me on the eve of and during the Geneva meeting. I wish to take this opportunity to thank their authors for their good wishes, their advice and support, and their profound and sincere concern for safeguarding peace.

The Americans advanced their counter-proposals on the eve of the meeting. This of itself is a positive fact. One of our numerous initiatives evoked a favourable response.

A great deal was written in the press about the essence of these counter-proposals. I shall not repeat their contents. I shall say only that these proposals go no more than half-way, and they are largely inequitable. They are based on a one-sided approach and are clearly prompted by the drive towards military superiority for the United States and NATO as a whole.

But the main thing is that the United States position does not envisage a ban on the development of space strike weapons. On the contrary, it seeks to legalize their development. The position taken by the United States on the question of "Star Wars" is the main obstacle to agreement on arms control. And this is not only our opinion. The Governments of France, Denmark, Norway, Greece, Netherlands, Canada and Australia refused to take part in the so-called "Strategic Defense Initiative". On the eve of the Geneva meeting the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution urging the leaders of the USSR and the United States to work out effective agreements aimed at preventing the arms race in space and putting an end to it on Earth. It is only the United States and some of its allies that deemed it possible not to support this clear call by the world community. A fact, as it is said, that requires no comment.

It should also be recalled, perhaps, that there were powerful political forces at work in the United States, doing whatever they could to thwart the meeting or at least to make it meaningless and to nullify its importance. I think such steps as the testing of an anti-satellite system, the entry into the Baltic of the Iowa battleship carrying long-range cruise missiles, the speedy deployment of Pershings in West Germany, the decision on the development of binary chemical weapons and, finally, the adoption of a new all-time record military budget are fresh in the memory of many people.

Moreover, the President was already on his way to Geneva when a letter from the United States Secretary of Defense, pleading with him not to make any agreements with the USSR which would reaffirm the treaties on the limitation of strategic offensive weapons and on anti-missile defence systems, was made public. In other words, the Secretary of Defense wanted the United States to have a completely free hand to act in all aspects of the arms race, both on Earth and in space.

And indeed, was the Pentagon alone in this? The "mandate" given to the United States President by the American extreme right-wing forces, represented by their ideological headquarters, the Heritage Foundation, did not escape our notice. The President was instructed to carry on the arms race, not to give the Soviet Union any opportunity to transfer resources to socio-economic development programmes and to seek eventually to crowd the USSR out of international politics. These gentlemen went so far as setting the United States Administration the objective of forcing us to alter our system, to revise our Constitution! This is an old song, Comrades. We have heard it all many times before. In short, there were quite a few attacks.

And yet we decided in favour of meeting the President of the United States. We took that decision because we had no right to disregard even the slightest chance to reverse the dangerous world developments. We took it in the awareness that if we failed to start a direct and frank discussion now, tomorrow it would be a hundred times more difficult, and perhaps too late altogether.

Unquestionably, the differences between us are enormous. But the interrelationship and interdependence between us in the present-day world are equally great. The crucial times we are living through leave the leaders of the

USSR and the United States, the peoples of the USSR and the United States, no alternative to learning the great art of living together.

During my first one-on-one conversation with the President - and such conversations featured prominently at the Geneva meeting - it was stated directly that the Soviet delegation had come to seek solutions to the most urgent problem, the one which was at the focus of international affairs, the problem of averting nuclear war and curbing the arms race. That, as I told the President, was the main point of our meeting and that was what would determine its results.

I must stress that the Geneva talks were sometimes very animated, and they could not, I would say, have been more frank. It was impossible there either to hoodwink each other or to get away with political or propaganda stereotypes - too much depends on these pivotal questions of war and peace.

The American side stubbornly insisted at the meeting on going ahead with the SDI programme. We were told that the point was to develop purely defensive systems, which were not really weapons at all. We were also told that those systems would help stabilize the situation and get rid of nuclear weapons altogether. There even was the proposal that in some foreseeable future these systems would be "shared", and that we would open our laboratory doors to each other.

We frankly told the President that we did not agree with those assessments. We had thoroughly analysed all those questions and our conclusion was unequivocal. Space weapons are not at all defensive. They can breed the dangerous illusion that a first nuclear strike can be delivered from behind a space "shield", and retaliation averted or at least weakened. And what are the guarantees that space weapons would not themselves be used against targets on Earth? There is every indication that the United States space-based ABM system is being conceived precisely as a component of an integrated offensive complex, rather than as a "shield".

Naturally, we cannot agree that the space systems envisaged under its programme are not weapons at all. Neither can we rely on the assurances that the United States will share with us what they develop in that field.

So if the laboratory doors are to be opened, it will only be to verify compliance with a ban on the development of space strike weapons, not to legalize these weapons.

We are told about a desire to remove the fear of missiles and to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This desire can only be welcomed, and is in full accord with the goals of our policy. But it is far easier to eliminate these weapons without developing space strike systems. Why spend tens and hundreds of billions of dollars and pile up mountains of space weapons in addition to nuclear armaments? What is the point?

I asked the President if the American leadership believed in all seriousness that, at a time when American space weapons were being developed, we would reduce

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our strategic potential and help the United States with our own hands to weaken it. No one should expect that. Precisely the opposite will take place: to regain the balance, the Soviet Union will have to improve the efficiency and accuracy and to raise the yield of its weapons so as to neutralize, if necessary, the "Star Wars" electronic space machine that the Americans are developing.

And will the Americans really feel more comfortable if our weaponry joins in space the echelons of space weapons planned by Washington? Surely they cannot really hope in the United States to achieve a monopoly in outer space. All this is not serious, to say the least.

However, the American Administration is still tempted to try out the possibility of achieving military superiority. At present, too, by undertaking an arms race in outer space, they hope to overtake us in the field of electronics and computers. But we will find a response, just as we have done several times in the past. The response will be effective, sufficiently prompt and, perhaps, less costly than the American programme. We also put this idea across clearly to the President.

I think that, in order to achieve a real turn-around in our relations which would meet the interests of the USSR and the United States, and of the peoples of the world, what we need are new approaches, a fresh look at many things, and, what is most important, the political will of the leadership of the two countries. The USSR - and I emphasized that in Geneva - does not feel enmity towards the United States, and respects the American people. We are not building our policy on the desire to infringe on the national interests of the United States. I will say more: we would not like, for instance, a change of the strategic balance in our favour. We would not like that, because such a situation will enhance the suspicion of the other side, adding to the instability of the overall situation.

Life is developing in such a way that both our countries will have to grow accustomed to strategic parity as a natural state. We will have to come to the joint understanding of which level of arms on either side can be considered relatively sufficient from the point of view of its dependable defence. We are convinced that the level of such sufficiency is well below what the USSR and the United States actually have at the present time. And this means that tangible, practical steps in arms limitation and reduction are quite possible. These are measures which will not diminish the security of the USSR and the United States, or overall strategic stability in the world; on the contrary, they will enhance them.

What can be said about other questions discussed at the meeting?

I will begin with the problem of regional conflicts. Both sides expressed concern over the continuing existence of such "trouble spots". It is easy to understand why. Such conflicts are a dangerous thing, especially in the light of the threat of their escalation in this nuclear age.

However, it can be said that our approaches to the causes of such conflicts and ways of settling them are not simply different: they are diametrically opposed. The United States, which is used to thinking in terms of "spheres of

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interests", reduces these problems to East-West rivalry. But nowadays that is an anachronism, a relapse into imperial thinking which denies the right of a majority of nations to think and take decisions independently.

The underlying causes of such conflicts are multi-faceted; to some extent they are rooted in history, but they are mainly to be found in that social and economic situation into which the emergent countries have been put. It is definitely not by chance that, in discussing the problem of regional conflicts, the United States does not mention the atrocities of apartheid in South Africa, the aggression staged by that country against its African neighbours, the wars fought by American puppets in Central America and South-East Asia, Israel's banditry in the Middle East and many other things. Washington is trying to place the legitimate Governments of the States that follow the path of national liberation and social progress on a par with counter-revolution.

It goes without saying that we could not accept such an interpretation of the situation. The President was told that we are in favour of the recognition of the inalienable right of every people to freedom and independence, to an independent choice of the path it wishes to follow. We wish this right not to be flouted by anyone: there should be no attempts at outside interference, and freedom, not tyranny, should prevail. We have been and remain on the side of peoples upholding their independence. This is our position of principle.

The President touched upon the question of Afghanistan. It was confirmed again in this connection that the Soviet Union consistently advocates a political settlement of the situation surrounding Afghanistan. We are in favour of friendly neighbouring Afghanistan being an independent, non-aligned State, and of establishing a system of guaranteed non-interference in Afghanistan's affairs. The question of withdrawal of Soviet troops from that country will thus also be resolved. The Soviet Union and the Government of Afghanistan are wholly for this. And if anybody hinders an early resolution of that question, it is primarily the United States which, in financing, backing and arming gangs of counter-revolutionaries, is frustrating efforts to normalize the situation in Afghanistan.

The question of bilateral relations assumed an important place at the talks. Some revival discernable in this area of late has now been translated into concrete agreements on exchanges and contacts in the sphere of science, education and culture and on the resumption of air services between our two countries.

The potential inherent in this will naturally be much easier to bring fully into play when security matters decisive for our mutual relations start being tackled. If we are to co-operate, this must be co-operation on an equal footing, without any discrimination or prior conditions, and without attempts at interference in the internal affairs of the other side. Our stand on this is firm and consistent.

How can the main results of the Geneva meeting be assessed?

The meeting was undoubtedly a significant event. It was useful to have a direct, clear and practical talk, with the possibility of comparing positions. Too many explosive, acute problems had accumulated, and they needed to be considered in earnest in order to try to break the deadlock.

We value the personal contact established with the President of the United States. A dialogue between top leaders is always a moment of truth in relations between States. It is important that such a dialogue has been held. It is a stabilizing factor in itself in the present, troubled times.

But we are realists and we must say outright that a solution of the most important questions connected with an end to the arms race was not achieved at the meeting. The unwillingness made it impossible to achieve in Geneva concrete arrangements on real disarmament, and above all, on the cardinal problem of nuclear and space weapons. The amount of arms stockpiled by both sides has not lessened as a result of the meeting. The arms race continues. This cannot but cause disappointment.

There remain major differences between the USSR and the United States on a number of other matters of principle concerning the situation in the world and events in individual regions. But we are also far from belittling the significance of the Geneva accords.

I will recall the most important of them. These are, above all, the common understanding, embodied in the Joint Statement, that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and the pledge by the USSR and the United States to build their relations on the basis of this indisputable truth, and not to seek military superiority.

We believe that this understanding, jointly endorsed at the highest level, should actually be made the basis of the foreign policy of the two States. Once it is acknowledged that a nuclear war, by its very nature, cannot help attain any rational goals, the stronger the stimulus should be in favour of its prevention, termination of the development and testing of weapons of mass destruction, and complete elimination of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons. It is even less inadmissible to open up new directions in the arms race. Of course, the Joint Statement is not a treaty, but it is a fundamental framework that commits the leaders of the two countries to much.

Further, the USSR and the United States clearly reaffirmed their pledge to facilitate in all ways the enhancement of the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation régime and agreed on practical steps in this direction. In the present-day, unsettled international situation, this is of no mean importance for maintaining world stability and diminishing the risk of nuclear wars.

The Joint Statement by the leaders of the two countries in favour of the universal and complete prohibition and destruction of such barbarous weapons of mass destruction as chemical weapons is of fundamental significance. We express the hope that the United States will observe that important understanding in its practical policies as well.

The agreement of the leadership of the USSR and the United States to contribute, jointly with the other States participating in the Stockholm Conference, to its early completion with the adoption of a document which would include both concrete obligations on the non-use of force and mutually acceptable confidence-building measures goes far beyond the bounds of Soviet-American relations.

It is only to be welcomed that the meeting produced a number of useful agreements in many areas of the development of bilateral co-operation between the USSR and the United States. I think that they will provide a good base for increasing trust between our countries and peoples - if, of course, a careful attitude is taken towards all the achievements and if everything positive embodied in those achievements is developed, but not if artificial pretexts are found to cast them aside.

The importance of the agreement reached in Geneva to continue political contacts between the Soviet Union and the United States, including new meetings at the summit level, should be mentioned specifically.

In other words, we have every right to say that the overall balance-sheet of the Geneva meeting is positive.

Undoubtedly, the constructive and consistent policy of our country contributed decisively to the achievement of such an encouraging outcome. At the same time, it would be wrong not to say here also that the position of the American side at the meeting included certain elements of realism, which helped to resolve a number of questions.

Of course, the real importance of everything useful agreed upon in Geneva can manifest itself only in practical deeds. I want to state in this context that the Soviet Union for its part intends not to slacken the pace and to seek most resolutely, and in the spirit of honest co-operation with the United States, the ending of the arms race and an overall improvement of the international situation. We hope that the United States will display a similar approach. Then, I am certain, the work done in Geneva will bear real fruit.

This is our assessment of that event and its role in international relations. I can say with satisfaction that this evaluation is shared by our allies, the fraternal socialist countries, as was borne out with utmost clarity by a meeting of the leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries in Prague immediately upon the completion of the Soviet-American summit talks.

The participants in the Prague meeting stressed that the situation, of course, remained difficult. The struggle to improve it is being carried on but the conditions for that struggle have become better, as can already be stated today. The Geneva meeting is an important element of our long-term, joint, closely co-ordinated efforts to ensure peace.

A natural question to ask is: what is to be done now in the light of the results of the Soviet-American dialogue in Geneva?

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As I have already said, we attach much importance to the agreement reached in Geneva on new Soviet-American summit meetings. I want to stress that our approach to this question is not formal. What is important is not the mere fact of another meeting between the leaders of the two countries but its results. The peoples will expect tangible progress along the road mapped out in Geneva. It is precisely this that we shall be seeking. We should begin making preparations for the next Soviet-American summit meeting already now, first and foremost in the area of practical policies.

In order not to make it more difficult to achieve new agreements, both sides, we are convinced, should first of all refrain from actions subverting what was achieved in Geneva, refrain from actions which would block talks and erode the existing constraints on the arms race. This calls, among other things, for strict and honest compliance with the treaty on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems and also for continuing mutual respect by the sides for the relevant provisions of the SALT-2 treaty.

But the main thing, of course, is to create the possibility of actually ending the arms race and initiating practical reductions in nuclear-arms arsenals.

Is there such a possibility? It is our firm conviction that there is. True, at present there are differences on many counts between our and the American proposals on nuclear-arms reductions. But we do not overdramatize this circumstance. Compromises are possible here, and we are prepared to look for them.

Undoubtedly, given such a course of events, questions of reliable verification, in which the Soviet Union has a direct interest, could also be resolved. One cannot depend on promises here, especially since what is involved is disarmament and the country's defences.

But to resolve all these questions, it is absolutely essential to lock the door through which weapons could reach outer space. Without this, radical reductions in nuclear armaments are impossible. I want to state this with the utmost responsibility on behalf of the people and their supreme organ of power.

Accord is possible if it respects the interests of both sides. The stubborn desire of the American side to go ahead with the development of space weapons can have only one result, the blocking of the possibility of ending the nuclear-arms race. This outcome, naturally, could bitterly disappoint the peoples of the whole world, including, I am certain, the American people.

There is a real chance today dramatically to lessen the threat of a nuclear war and subsequently to eliminate altogether any possibility of such a war. It would be a fatal mistake to miss that chance. We hope that what was said about SDI in Geneva was not the last word from the American side.

We reached agreement with President Reagan on instructing our delegations to the Geneva talks on nuclear and space arms to speed up negotiations, pursuing them on the basis of the January agreement between the two countries. Thus, it was confirmed by both sides at the highest level: it is necessary to prevent an arms

race in space, resolving this question hand in hand with the reduction of nuclear arms. This is what the Soviet Union will press for. This is what we call upon the United States to do. By honouring with practical actions the pledge we have made jointly, we will live up to the hopes of all the peoples of the world.

As time goes on, the question of terminating nuclear tests is becoming more and more acute. This is primarily because, with it, an end would be put to the development of new types of nuclear weapons and modernization of existing ones; further, because without testing and without renewing them, the gradual process of the withering away of nuclear arsenals and the demise of nuclear weapons would begin; and lastly, because it is impossible to go on allowing nuclear explosions - and their number stands in the hundreds - to deface our beautiful planet, intensifying the concern over how succeeding generations will live on it.

This is why the Soviet Union has announced a moratorium on all types of nuclear tests until 1 January 1986, and is ready to extend this moratorium, given reciprocity on the part of the United States. We expect the United States leadership to make a concrete and positive decision that would have a very favourable effect on the entire situation; it would greatly change it and build up trust between our countries.

We put this question to the American President in Geneva.

Silence was the answer we got. Really, in essence there are no reasonable arguments against the prohibition of nuclear tests. Difficulties of verification are sometimes mentioned. But the Soviet Union clearly demonstrated the excellent possibility of implementing such verification by national means. This year we registered an underground nuclear blast of a very low yield carried out in the United States and unannounced by it. We are also ready to examine the possibility of establishing international verification. In this context special attention should be paid to the ideas put forward in the appeal from six States which proposed the setting up of special stations in their territories to monitor the observance of a test-ban agreement.

The entire world raises its voice in favour of terminating nuclear tests. The United Nations General Assembly has just adopted a resolution calling for such a step. And only three countries - the United States, Britain and France - voted against it. This is a deplorable move.

But there is still time. I think the leaders of the United States and other nuclear Powers will use the existing opportunity and, in the interests of peace, will show the necessary responsibility. I would like to remind them: our moratorium remains in effect, and we hope that the discussion of that issue at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR will be regarded as an urgent call for a realistic and immediate prohibition of all nuclear tests.

The Soviet Union is proposing, as an integral whole, a comprehensive set of measures which would block all paths for the arms race, whether in space or on earth, whether in nuclear, chemical or conventional weapons. The specific proposals to that end are well known - in Vienna, in Geneva and in Stockholm. They remain in effect and retain their full timeliness and importance.

Europe should be mentioned separately. The task of preventing the level of military confrontation in Europe from growing any further is more urgent than ever before. The European home is a common home where geography and history have strongly bonded together the destinies of dozens of countries and peoples. It is only by a collective effort, by following the reasonable norms of international contacts and co-operation, that the Europeans can preserve their home, and make it better and safer.

We proceed from the view that Europe, which gave the world so much in the sphere of culture, science, technology and advanced social thought, is capable of setting an example also in the solution of the most complex problems of present-day international life. The basis for this was laid down in Helsinki 10 years ago. It is our profound conviction that the whole world, including the United States, stands ultimately to gain from positive developments in Europe. We have been and shall be working to ensure that the principles and policy of détente are consolidated more vigorously on the long-suffering European continent, and that the roadblocks of the past and the consequences of the confrontation of recent years are overcome.

I would like to make a special mention here of trade and economic relations. The business circles of many Western countries would like to establish wider economic contacts with us. I heard this mentioned by very influential representatives of those circles, when they spoke about the readiness to conclude large contracts and to start large-scale joint projects. Those politicians who try to impose restrictions on this natural striving for businesslike co-operation, in the hope of "punishing" someone or inflicting losses on a partner, are simply acting unwisely, to my mind. Such a policy has long been outdated. It would be much more useful to exert efforts for a different purpose, for ensuring that trade and scientific and technical exchanges consolidate the material basis for agreement and confidence.

We will continue to co-operate closely with our Warsaw Treaty allies and with all the other countries of the socialist community in the struggle for lasting peace and co-operation among nations in Europe and in other continents. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty will under no circumstances forsake the security of their peoples. They will also pool their efforts to an ever-growing extent, within the CMEA framework, to accelerate scientific and technical progress and socio-economic development.

Interaction with the Non-Aligned Movement, including comprehensive co-operation with the Republic of India, for the people and leaders of which we have the greatest respect, has an extremely important role to play in the improvement of international relations.

The Soviet leadership attaches great importance to the Asian and Pacific region. The Soviet Union's longest borders are in Asia; we have there loyal friends and reliable allies, from neighbouring Mongolia to socialist Viet Nam. It is extremely important to ensure that this region is not a source of tension and an area of armed confrontation. We stand for the broadening of political dialogue among all the States in the region, in the interests of peace, good neighbourliness, mutual

trust and co-operation. We welcome the stand of the People's Republic of China, which is opposed to the militarization of outer space, and its statement renouncing the first use of nuclear weapons.

Dangerous upheavals could be caused by the growing gap between a handful of highly industrialized capitalist nations and those developing countries - and there is the overwhelming majority of them - whose lot is poverty, hunger and despair. The gap between these two poles in the world is becoming ever wider, and relations between them ever more antagonistic. It cannot be otherwise unless the industrialized capitalist nations alter their self-serving policies. Mankind is capable of resolving all these problems today if it pools its forces and intellect. Then it will be possible to scale new heights in the development of our civilization.

Militarism is an enemy of nations. The arms race, whipped up by the thirst of gain on the part of the military-industrial complex, is sheer madness. It affects the vital interests of all countries and peoples. This is why, when instead of the destruction of nuclear weapons it is proposed to us to extend the arms race into outer space as well, we respond with a firm "no". We say "no", because such a step means a new round of the mad squandering of funds. We say "no", because this means the heightening of the threat already looming over the world. We say "no", because life itself calls not for a competition in armaments but for joint action for the sake of peace.

The Soviet Union is a decisive advocate of the development of international life in this direction.

On the initiative of the USSR, work involving scientists from different countries has begun on the Tokamak thermonuclear reactor project, which opens up the opportunity for a radical solution of the energy problem. According to scientists, it will be possible to create before the end of this century a "terrestrial sun" - an inexhaustible source of thermonuclear energy. We note with satisfaction that it was agreed in Geneva to carry on with that important project.

We stand for better relations with Japan, and it is our conviction that this is possible. It even stems from the mere fact that our countries are next-door neighbours. The interests of the USSR and Japan cannot help but coincide in the vital matter of removing the nuclear threat. We have established relations of equal co-operation with many States of Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. The Soviet Union will continue to work purposefully to develop these relations. We value especially our close contacts with socialist-oriented countries in different continents.

The peoples of the whole world are today facing a host of questions which can only be resolved jointly and only under conditions of peace. A few decades ago serious ecological problems were virtually non-existent. But already our generation is witnessing mass extermination of forests, extinction of animals, contamination of rivers and other water bodies, and growing desertification. What will the world be like to future generations? Will they be able to live in it, if the voracious destruction of nature is not stopped and if the economic, technical and scientific

achievements of our time are directed not towards the need to ensure conditions for the existence and progress of man and his environment but towards perfecting weapons of destruction? Or take energy. We are now living for the most part at the expense of the earth's depths. But what was lying virtually on the surface is being exhausted and the further development of these resources is growing more and more expensive and becoming more and more arduous. Moreover, this source is not everlasting.

Our country submitted to the United Nations a well-developed programme for peaceful co-operation in outer space, and for the establishment of a universal space organization to co-ordinate the efforts of countries in the exploration and exploitation of outer space. There are truly boundless possibilities for such co-operation. They include fundamental research projects and the application of their findings in geology, medicine and materials science, and studies of the climate and the environment. They include the development of global satellite-aided communications systems and remote sensing of the earth. Lastly, they include the development of new space technology, such as large orbital scientific stations and various manned spacecraft, and their use in the interests of all peoples, and, in the longer term, the industrialization of circumterrestrial space. All this constitutes a realistic alternative to the "Star Wars" plans; it is oriented towards a peaceful future for all mankind.

The Soviet Union was an active participant in the conclusion of an international convention to regulate the economic utilization of the resources of the world's oceans and seas. The accomplishment of this task is also vastly important in ensuring the progress of human civilization and in broadening and multiplying the possibilities open to present-day society.

We offer the whole world, including the world of capitalist States, a broad, long-term and comprehensive programme of mutually beneficial co-operation, a programme incorporating the new opportunities which are being opened up before mankind by the age of the scientific and technical revolution. And co-operation between two such States as the Soviet Union and the United States could play a far from minor role in carrying out this programme.

Our policy is clear: it is a policy of peace and co-operation.

Comrades, the successes of our foreign policy are inherent in the nature of the socialist system. The Communist Party senses well and highly values the nation-wide support for its domestic and foreign policy. This support is manifested in the daily practical work of millions upon millions. The results achieved in the national economy mean not only an economic but also an important moral and political result attesting to the correctness of our course.

The tasks we face are important and not easy. "However, difficulty does not mean impossibility", the great Lenin taught us. "The important thing is to be confident that the path chosen is the right one; with this confidence, revolutionary energy and revolutionary enthusiasm are multiplied a hundred-fold ..." And the Party and the Soviet people do have this confidence which multiplies our strength.

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We are confident that every Communist, every worker, every peasant, every engineer and scientist, every work collective, being aware of high responsibility to the Motherland, will perform their duty.

We are confident that everything will be done at every work place to ensure that the plans of 1986 are successfully fulfilled and overfulfilled, that our country becomes still richer and mightier, and that the cause of peace on earth grows stronger and triumphs.
