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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE FOR THE PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL  
CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

Letter dated 2 November 1987 from the Permanent Representative  
of Czechoslovakia to the United Nations addressed to the  
Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward herewith the communiqué (annex I) and the document entitled "Towards Increasing the Effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva" (annex II) issued at the session of the Committee of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Warsaw Treaty held at Prague on 28 and 29 October 1987.

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English

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I would be most grateful if you could have this letter and its annexes circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 15, 17, 19, 22, 25, 26, 39 and 40.

(Signed) Evžen ZÁPOTOCKÝ

ANNEX I

Communiqué from the session of the Committee of the Ministers  
for Foreign Affairs of States parties to the Warsaw Treaty

A regular session of the Committee of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty on friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance was held at Prague on 28 and 29 October 1987.

The session was attended by Mr. P. Mladenov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. B. Chřoupek, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Mr. O. Fischer, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. P. Várkonyi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian People's Republic, Mr. M. Orzechowski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Polish People's Republic, Mr. I. Totu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Romania, and Mr. E. Shevardnadze, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

1. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs discussed the situation in Europe and in the world and noted that it remains complicated and conflict-ridden.

Participants in the session voiced satisfaction at the fact that encouraging signs have appeared in international life. For the first time in history, the idea of nuclear disarmament is on the verge of becoming a reality. Work is in progress on a mandate for negotiations on reducing armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe. Progress has been made in the talks on banning chemical weapons. Active efforts have been made to settle military conflicts and solve disputes among States by political means, through negotiation. The task of restructuring international economic relations on the basis of equal rights and mutual benefit is being vigorously pursued. The need to solve global problems, including environmental protection, jointly is being increasingly recognized. All this is demonstration of a new political thinking which contributes to creating a new kind of international relations to an understanding that individual security can be achieved only on the basis of security for all, and to efforts to find the shortest path to a world free of nuclear weapons and force.

At the same time, there are still acute problems in the world which need to be solved. The arms race is maintaining its alarming momentum and efforts to extend it to outer space are continuing. Despite the appeals and efforts of the socialist States, other countries and the world public, a comprehensive nuclear test ban has yet to be achieved. The policy of using force and interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, openly threatening sovereign States and exacerbating tensions in different parts of the world is continuing. Some conflicts have intensified, creating new threats to international peace and security. The continuing deterioration of the economic situation, especially in the developing countries, has disastrous consequences for the fate of the world. Energy, ecological and other problems remain acute.

The Ministers confirmed the position of their States that inviolability of borders, strict respect for existing territorial and political realities and the

sovereignty and territorial integrity of States are a pre-condition for meaningful progress in strengthening peace, security and co-operation in Europe. In this connection, they pointed out that the activities of revanchist forces, especially in the Federal Republic of Germany, and the encouragement of revanchism anywhere run counter to the interests of détente and security and the letter and spirit of the Helsinki Final Act. Such activities will also be opposed most resolutely in the future.

The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty are convinced that a radical change for the better in international affairs is necessary and possible. The positive trends which have begun to appear in world affairs must be strengthened and developed. Realizing that nuclear weapons threaten the very existence of life on Earth, that the main task today is to halt the arms race and make the transition to disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, they call upon all countries and peoples to combine their efforts in order to deal with the urgent tasks facing mankind, and to take a new approach to questions of war and peace. In order to achieve these goals, they reaffirmed their resolve to continue their policy of broad, constructive dialogue with other States.

2. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Shevardnadze, informed participants in the session of the results of the Soviet-United States talks held in Moscow on 22-23 October 1987, at which progress was made in completing preparations for a treaty on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles, new Soviet initiatives were put forward aimed at bringing closer together the positions of the two parties on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive weapons in strict compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and with the proviso that neither party shall withdraw from the Treaty for at least 10 years, and it was proposed that, as of 1 November 1987, a moratorium be declared on all work connected with the production, testing and deployment of intermediate nuclear forces and shorter-range intermediate nuclear forces.

The States participating in the session supported the Soviet position on these questions and expressed the hope that the agreement on the elimination of the two categories of nuclear missiles would be signed in the near future and that the United States would agree to the proposed moratorium.

They emphasized that, on the basis of the proposals put forward, together with the signing of the agreement on intermediate nuclear forces and shorter-range intermediate nuclear forces an understanding must be reached at the Soviet-United States summit meeting on basic positions on future agreements on strategic offensive weapons and the non-deployment of weapons in outer space.

The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty express their support for an early, comprehensive ban on nuclear testing as a first step towards halting the development, production and improvement of nuclear weapons. They attach great importance to the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States that comprehensive talks, to be held in stages in a single forum, will begin in the next few days on the limitation and ultimately the complete halting of nuclear tests; they also attach great importance to the signing of the Soviet-American agreement on setting up nuclear risk reduction centres.

The States participating in the session are of the opinion that the conclusion of a Soviet-United States agreement on the elimination of intermediate nuclear forces and shorter-range intermediate nuclear forces and an understanding on strategic offensive weapons and outer space would mark the real beginning of a process of nuclear disarmament and would provide an opportunity for making progress in other spheres of disarmament and the strengthening of security, for completely freeing Europe of nuclear weapons, and for limiting armed forces and conventional weapons, with corresponding reductions in military expenditures.

It is extremely important that no actions be taken that might complicate the achievement of these understandings. In this connection statements by certain representatives in the West calling for the forthcoming elimination of United States missiles in Europe to be "compensated" by the deployment of new nuclear and non-nuclear weapons and the creation of new military structures are cause for serious concern.

3. The States participating in the session reaffirm their resolve to work for the creation of a comprehensive system of international peace and security. They are in favour of ensuring the security of all States on an equal footing and in all spheres of international relations.

Creating a safe world requires, above all, destroying nuclear, chemical and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, drastically reducing armed forces and conventional weapons and making corresponding reductions in military spending, dismantling military blocs and eliminating foreign bases, withdrawing all troops from foreign territories and establishing effective mechanisms for averting all kinds of aggression and for strengthening peace on the basis of substantially reduced levels of armament.

The speedy peaceful settlement of existing regional conflicts and the averting of new ones are important pre-conditions for ensuring the security of nations. Another significant component of the security system is effective measures for combating international terrorism.

Equal economic security must be ensured by restructuring international economic relations, including currency and financial relations, on an equal and democratic basis in the interests of all States, including developing countries, by establishing a new international economic order, by eliminating backwardness and by ensuring a global, just settlement of the foreign debt problem. Transferring the resources released by genuine disarmament to economic and social development needs would be an important contribution to attaining these goals.

The creation of a system of universal security would be facilitated by broad and genuinely equitable co-operation among countries in the humanitarian sphere. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty view as essential the full realization of man's basic rights to life and work, and of his political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights in their totality and mutual dependence, while respecting the sovereignty of States and eliminating all forms of discrimination, apartheid, racism, nationalism and chauvinism, and war propaganda. They support the idea of a broad dialogue on humanitarian issues, inter alia within an all-European conference in Moscow.

The States participating in the session once again emphasized the need for strict observance by all States of the principles of national independence and sovereignty, non-use of force and the threat of force, inviolability of frontiers and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, equality and other principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and other generally recognized norms of international relations.

The participants noted the importance of constructive consideration being given at the ongoing forty-second session of the General Assembly to the joint initiative of the socialist countries aimed at establishing, through the collective efforts of all United Nations Member States, a system of comprehensive security. The Ministers, believing that such a system should function on the basis and within the framework of the United Nations Charter, advocated enhancement of the role of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General, and expressed the view that all States should support them to the fullest possible extent, work for greater effectiveness of the activities of the United Nations and its institutions and strive to enable them to contribute more fully to the solution of international issues. They expressed the hope that the General Assembly would provide a stimulus for fruitful international dialogue on those issues and give it new depth and substance.

4. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty call upon the participants in the talks on the general and complete prohibition of chemical weapons and the elimination of stockpiles of such weapons to display the necessary political will in order to discharge the mandate given by the United Nations and to conclude without delay the drafting of the international convention on the subject.

5. The States participating in the session regard the substantial reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe as a priority objective. This is the aim of the joint programme put forward by them at Budapest in June 1986. In this connection, the Ministers emphasized the need to accelerate the formulation of a mandate for future talks which would take into account the security interests of all participating in them, give all 35 States involved in the Helsinki process, in line with the Concluding Document of the Madrid meeting, a real opportunity to consider and resolve issues relating to disarmament and confidence- and security-building in Europe, and permit the earliest possible initiation of the talks. The States represented at the session reaffirmed their proposal for a meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe at which a decision would be taken on the opening of large-scale talks with a view to substantially limiting armed forces, tactical nuclear weapons and conventional weapons in Europe, with a concomitant reduction in military expenditures, adjusting imbalances through appropriate limitations and averting the danger of a surprise attack. The meeting would also be conducive to the solution of other issues of European security and co-operation.

The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the implementation of the provisions of the Stockholm Conference document is contributing to the enhancement of mutual understanding and the building of confidence and security.

Implementation of the proposal of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty for consultations on military doctrines, put forward in Berlin in May 1987 and addressed to the member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, would be of major importance for the strengthening of confidence in Europe.

The establishment of nuclear- and chemical-weapon-free zones in the Balkans, in central Europe and in the north of Europe would be conducive to the amelioration of the situation on the continent, and would at the same time make a major contribution to freeing the world from those types of weapons of mass destruction. In that connection, the participants in the session renewed their support for the proposals made by the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia, by Romania and by Bulgaria, and underscored the need to put them into effect.

They reaffirmed the readiness of their States to promote the implementation of the plan for arms limitation and confidence-building in central Europe put forward by Poland. Implementation of that plan would be a significant factor in the strengthening of peace and stability and the safeguarding of lasting security on the European continent.

The Ministers expressed the view that the States situated along the line of contact between the two politico-military groupings should take concrete steps to reduce the level of military confrontation and strengthen confidence, including reciprocal removal of the most dangerous types of offensive weapons.

The States represented at the session support the proposal of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for a radical reduction of the level of military confrontation in the north of Europe and in the Arctic as a whole, the transformation of that region into a zone of peace and co-operation, and the holding of talks to that end among the States concerned.

They welcome the efforts of the non-aligned Mediterranean countries aimed at converting that region into a zone of peaceful co-operation. The Ministers recall the proposals made in this respect by the Warsaw Treaty member States.

7. The States participating in the session emphasize the need to work out, at both the national and the international levels, a strict and effective verification system, including on-site inspection. Such a system of verification would provide a reliable guarantee of strict compliance with all disarmament agreements, and a firm assurance that obligations ensuing therefrom would not be violated under any circumstances. The verification system must cover all aspects of disarmament.

8. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty consider that it is now more essential than ever that all States should substantially increase their efforts with a view to taking effective steps in the sphere of disarmament. That objective must also be pursued by stepping up the work of the respective international forums, especially the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. A document on that subject was adopted at the session.

The allied socialist States, advocating a comprehensive approach to disarmament issues, deem it extremely important that the third special session of

the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should give a positive impetus to all the ongoing talks on various disarmament problems and to agreement on concrete measures in this sphere, should focus on real progress towards a safe, nuclear-weapon-free-world, and should contribute to the establishment of a political climate based on confidence, glasnost, openness and predictability in international affairs.

9. The States participating in the session are for an indivisible Europe, a Europe of peace and co-operation, for the building of a "common European home", in which an atmosphere of good-neighbourly relations and trust, coexistence and mutual understanding would prevail.

The emerging trends in the fields of security and co-operation create the conditions necessary for giving new impetus to the Helsinki process. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty consider it particularly important that, in an atmosphere of growing trust, an all-round dialogue should be conducted on a solid and reliable basis and that co-operation should be dynamically expanded and intensified. They reaffirm their commitment to progressive development of the Helsinki process and their readiness to open up, through joint efforts, a new phase of détente in Europe.

Discussing the progress at the Vienna meeting, the Ministers expressed the view that it should produce balanced agreements in all fields, based on all the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. In their opinion, efforts must be stepped up to achieve in the near future results that would make it possible to raise the Helsinki process to a qualitatively new level. They emphasized the importance of the convening of an economic forum in Prague, a conference on scientific and technological co-operation in Bucharest, an ecological forum in Sofia and a symposium on the protection of Europe's cultural heritage in Cracow.

10. The Ministers exchanged views on existing hotbeds of tension and conflict and reaffirmed the determination of their States to take an active part in promoting their just political settlement.

The holding of an international conference under United Nations auspices, attended, on an equal footing, by all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization and the States holding permanent seats on the Security Council, would be of major significance for the attainment of an equitable and comprehensive settlement and for the safeguarding of lasting peace in the Middle East.

The Ministers expressed their concern about the escalating tension in the Persian Gulf area and emphasized the need for the earliest possible halting of the war between Iran and Iraq, the full and immediate implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), the withdrawal of foreign naval forces from the Gulf and the safeguarding of freedom of navigation in the region.

11. The allied socialist States reaffirmed their determination to consolidate their unity and cohesion and to enhance the dynamism of their co-operation in the sphere of foreign policy with a view to eliminating the threat of war and



strengthening security both in Europe and world-wide. A number of concrete practical measures were considered at the session, including those concerning the activities of the newly established permanent bodies - the multilateral group on reciprocal supply of topical information and the special commission on disarmament issues.

The participants emphasized that the session was taking place on the eve of the seventieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which had opened up a new era in the life of mankind and had paved the way to the social and national liberation of peoples, to a world free of wars and weapons. The victory of socialism in many countries led to the establishment of the world socialist community, which is playing an ever greater role as the leading force in the struggle for peace and disarmament, international security and social progress, freedom, equality of rights, and respect for the independence and sovereignty of every State.

The session took place in an atmosphere of friendship and comradely co-operation. The next session will be held at Sofia.

ANNEX II

Increasing the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament  
at Geneva

1. Being firmly convinced that lasting peace and reliable security for all can be attained solely by political means, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty consider it of fundamental importance to ensure maximum effectiveness of the whole existing system of disarmament negotiations. Both bilateral and multilateral talks on security and disarmament must be centred upon questions relating to the halting of the nuclear-arms race and to nuclear disarmament. It is necessary to activate the efforts of all States towards building up a non-nuclear and non-violent world.

2. The Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, in whose work States of all continents, with different socio-economic systems, members of military and political alliances, non-aligned and neutral countries, all the nuclear Powers as well as non-nuclear-weapon countries participate on an equal footing, has a special role to play in these endeavours.

3. This multilateral forum has proved that, provided that political will is displayed by States, it is capable of serving as an organ for concrete and effective negotiations on the elaboration of measures and agreements in the sphere of disarmament. To it we owe such significant instruments of international law as the Treaties on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons on the Sea-bed and the Ocean Floor and the Conventions on the Prohibition of Bacteriological Weapons and on the Prohibition of Military Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

4. At the same time, the results of the work of the Geneva forum in recent years have fallen far short of meeting the challenge of the times.

5. The States represented at the session propose that efforts at the present stage of the work of the Conference on Disarmament should be concentrated on the solution of the following crucial issues:

(a) Completion of the drafting of the convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty consider the earliest prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons to be one of the primary goals of their foreign policy. In this connection, they recall their Moscow Statement of March 1987, as well as other significant initiatives. The work on the convention is in its final stage. There is every possibility of bringing it to a successful conclusion in the near future. The States represented at the session are ready to continue co-operating constructively with their negotiating partners with a view to overcoming the remaining obstacles so as to proceed soon to the complete elimination everywhere of chemical weapons and of the industrial basis for their manufacture.

(b) Progress towards a complete nuclear-weapon test ban. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty regard the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and their general

and complete prohibition as measures of primary importance on the way towards curbing the arms race, as a step which can reliably block the paths of further refinement of nuclear weapons. In this connection, they call attention to the document entitled "Main Provisions of a Treaty on the Complete and General Prohibition of Nuclear-Weapon Tests" put forward at the Conference on Disarmament in June 1987, and suggest the setting up of a special group of scientific experts to prepare without delay practical proposals for a system of verification of the non-conduct of nuclear tests. The drafting of such an agreement within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament and full-scale Soviet-United States talks on the limitation and, ultimately, complete cessation of nuclear tests will be mutually complementary and lead to the same objective. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty are ready to consider in a constructive manner any other proposals and ideas aimed at a speedy solution of this issue.

6. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty believe that a solid foundation has been built at the Conference on Disarmament for practical and effective work in matters relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The socialist countries have put forward concrete proposals on this issue.

7. The States represented at the session stress the need to activate the work of the Conference in other crucial areas as well, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations which reflect the will of the overwhelming majority of States throughout the world.

8. They propose that all aspects of the work of the Conference on Disarmament be considered from all angles at a third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the Conference.

9. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty advocate joint efforts in a spirit of constructive, non-confrontational dialogue to determine ways and means of improving the practical results of the deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva. They propose that the following practical measures should be considered and agreed:

(a) First, the Conference should be given a tighter work schedule, remaining in session throughout the year with two or three breaks. It should be agreed that the auxiliary organs of the Conference, in accordance with its general mandate, should operate not on a year-by-year basis but until their work is completed.

(b) Second, experts and scientific centres existing in various countries should be more actively involved in preliminary work on the problems facing the Conference. The practice of groups of experts in specific areas of work should be applied more widely, as required. Consideration should be given to the question of involving world-renowned scientists and public figures in efforts to find solutions to the most complex disarmament problems before the Conference and to diagnose in good time the long-term factors which are of crucial importance to the strengthening of security. This might be done in various ways, and in the first instance by establishing a consultative council of the Conference.

(c) Third, meeting sessions at the level of Ministers for Foreign Affairs should be held, on the basis of agreement among the parties to the Conference, in times of critical importance, inter alia, when difficulties of principle arise in the course of the deliberations. Attendance by Ministers would give a positive impetus to such fundamentally important talks.

10. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty consider it appropriate that all countries which are not participants of the Conference on Disarmament should have opportunities to contribute to its work. It is their opinion that the Conference might in the long term become a permanent universal organ for disarmament negotiations.

11. The States represented at the session note that talks on questions of security and disarmament conducted on a bilateral or multilateral basis complement and enrich one another.

12. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty declare that they are ready to participate constructively in the consideration and implementation of all concrete proposals, whatever their origin, aimed at activating the Conference on Disarmament and increasing its effectiveness.

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