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COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Letter dated 23 November 1987 from the Permanent Representative of
Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the delegations of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Poland, I have the honour to submit herewith the text of the Memorandum on the question of a comprehensive system of international peace and security with the kind request for its being distributed as a document of the General Assembly under item 73 of the agenda of the forty-second session.

(Signed) Dr. Eugeniusz NOWORYTA
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Poland

Annex

MEMORANDUM OF BULGARIA, THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC,
CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, HUNGARY, MONGOLIA,
POLAND, ROMANIA, THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS AND THE
UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC ON THE QUESTION OF A
COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

The idea of a comprehensive system of international peace and security arises from the Charter of the United Nations and today's international practices. The world has reached a stage in its history which calls for a new approach and joint action of the entire international community. Technology and resources now enable mankind to cope with numerous problems which have hindered its progress for centuries. At the same time, some dangers have emerged, and primarily the nuclear threat, that challenge the survival of the human race. The pressing global problems have given rise to the interdependence of nations.

In these circumstances, what is needed is an approach to ensuring security of each and every State that would not entail the threat of a world disaster, an approach of a truly multilateral character in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The initiative for a dialogue on the concept of comprehensive international security has been prompted by the awareness of that reality. It is based on the principles and purposes of the Charter and is aimed at its full implementation in the conditions of the nuclear and space age. Such a system will offer reliable guarantees of mankind's survival and make it possible to build a world free of nuclear weapons, violence, hatred, fear and suspicion.

It is imperative to embrace new political thinking which means a realistic view of world developments, an unbiased attitude towards others as well as an awareness of one's own responsibility. The new thinking also means eliminating the gap between words and deeds.

The cardinal issue of our times is the survival of mankind, above all in the face of nuclear threat, and the exercise of the right of every nation and every person to life, freedom, peace, well-being and pursuit of happiness.

In today's complex and diverse world, ever more interrelated and interdependent, what is needed is a machinery to discuss common issues and to search for a balance of various contradictory but real interests of the present-day community, States and nations. And the United Nations is called upon to be such a machinery.

The concept of comprehensive security calls for manifold concerted efforts in the military, political, economic, environmental, social, humanitarian and human rights areas. The task is to secure progress in all these areas, bearing in mind that headway made in one area will facilitate finding solutions to problems in other areas as well.

Comprehensive security can be achieved only through collective efforts of the entire world community - provided there is equality of rights among all its members, regardless of whether they are large, medium or small States - and relying on the world public.

The socialist countries believe in the boundless potential of the United Nations collective wisdom and will. They are certain that a transition to a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent and, eventually, demilitarized world is a historic necessity which holds out a possibility of being translated into reality.

That is y priority should be given to the universal values of all mankind. In terms of these values, what is required is to renounce the use or threat of force. Peaceful coexistence among sovereign and independent States with different social and political systems, of different sizes and different levels of development, is what, in the view of the co-sponsors, constitutes a universal foundation of international relations. The pre-eminence of international law-binding for all is a norm and a principle of the existence of a safe world. The progressive development of international law and its codification should be encouraged.

It is necessary that all States strictly respect the principles of national independence and sovereignty, non-use of force and threat of force, inviolability of frontiers and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, equality of rights, and other principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as other generally recognized norms of international relations.

The co-sponsors reiterate the importance of strict adherence to all principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

To avoid military and political confrontations and to establish international co-operation in addressing global problems, it is important to ensure that relations between States are not impaired by ideological differences and that good-neighbourliness and co-operation should prevail.

Following are some of the ideas which we propose as an invitation to a broad international dialogue.

Specific ways and practical means of shaping a comprehensive system
of international peace and security

In the military and disarmament area

The co-sponsors are convinced that present-day realities make it imperative that all international problems should be solved through negotiations, by political means. Consequently they deem it necessary to have generally reaffirmed the requirement that military factors be excluded from the solution of international disputes.

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 the lowest possible level of armed forces and armaments.

The co-sponsors consider the creation of a world free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction to be a fundamental condition for the survival of mankind. All efforts should be made to attain this goal by the turn of the century. There is an urgent need to take concrete steps to halt the current or projected arms programmes. Accordingly, it is necessary to establish new international conditions to guarantee the security of all countries on an equal basis.

The military dimensions of comprehensive security should be approached in a comprehensive manner, with equal consideration given to both quantitative and qualitative levels, having in mind both global and regional and all other aspects of the matter. Another basic requirement is to keep in mind that the arms build-up can be stopped and disarmament achieved only through negotiations.

The Soviet Union-United States agreement to eliminate medium- and shorter-range missiles shows that the arms race can be halted as a result of successive measures. The conclusion of an agreement on radical reductions in strategic offensive arms, while concurrently preserving the ABM Treaty, would be of decisive importance for the further expansion and significant consolidation of this process. Furthermore, of crucial importance in stopping the arms escalation is also the prevention of its extension to outer space.

Gradual reductions, the cessation and comprehensive ban on all nuclear-weapon-tests as well as the prevention of a further proliferation of these weapons would be of paramount importance for reducing the nuclear threat. In the view of the co-sponsors, an early signing of an impending agreement on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons would have a beneficial effect on the world's security.

Progress towards a world free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction can be achieved stage by stage, involving different participants and armaments. At every stage and throughout the entire process there should be a steady strengthening of security at the lowest possible level of armed forces and armaments.

Significant cuts in military programmes, budgets and activities as well as a gradual conversion of military production to peaceful purposes would serve to free mankind from the burdens caused by the arms build-up.

Mutual confidence should be created and placed on a solid foundation. As part of such effort, the current military doctrines should proceed from the recognition that no country's security can be guaranteed to the detriment of other countries. Military concepts and doctrines should be based on defensive principles.

Specific measures are urgently needed to prevent war in general, both nuclear and conventional. Of major significance would be the renunciation by the nuclear Powers and other States, members of the military and political alliances to which these nuclear powers are parties, of the first use of both nuclear and conventional weapons and of the threat or use of force in inter-State relations in any conditions and under any circumstances.

It should also be guaranteed that no State have to build up armaments and armed forces to ensure its own security. In carrying out radical reductions of armed forces and conventional armaments it is essential to redress the existing imbalances and asymmetries in the structure and location of the armed forces and armaments of States and alliances and to bring them in line with the principle of non-offensive defence.

Radical cuts in military forces and conventional armaments with a corresponding reduction of military expenditures are similarly necessary for giving a strong momentum to the process of disarmament.

A considerable reduction of military confrontation in Europe may exert a favourable effect on efforts to lessen tension in other regions of the world too.

The co-sponsors advocate openness with regard to military activities and budgets and accordingly favour the dissemination of objective information in this respect.

An indispensable condition for substantive progress in arms limitation and disarmament as well as for the strengthening of confidence lies in the reliable and effective verification of compliance with specific agreements.

The co-sponsors consider a simultaneous dismantlement of military-political alliances, primarily the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, to be an important goal of a comprehensive system of international peace and security. They believe that dismantling the rivalling and opposing alliances is bound to have a beneficial effect in terms of reducing the military and political confrontation in general. Important steps to reduce the military confrontation and mistrust would be the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free and chemical-weapon-free zones as well as zones of thinned-out arms concentration. The mutual withdrawal of the most dangerous categories of offensive weapons from the zone of direct contact between military alliances, and measures to lower the concentration of armed forces and armaments in these zones to an agreed minimum level would lead also to that end.

Taking urgent military and political steps towards arms limitation is indispensable if mankind is to embark on the road to general and complete disarmament to a world of lasting peace and security.

In the political area

A sine qua non condition of universal security is the respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the right of peoples to exercise in a sovereign manner a choice of the ways and forms of their development - revolutionary or evolutionary.

The speedy peaceful settlement of existing regional conflicts and the averting of new ones are an important condition for ensuring the security of nations. It is necessary to enhance the role of the United Nations in this respect.

The interests of the stable and comprehensive security of mankind require evolving of all political means and rules of conduct, based on the Charter of the United Nations, with regard to local and regional armed conflicts. The countries which are not parties to an armed conflict should articulate their attitude towards such a conflict by taking into account the fundamental interests of other countries, as well as the effect which a local armed conflict is likely to have on a particular region and on the overall international situation. Consequently, such conflicts can be settled through joint efforts and within international framework.

It is essential at all stages of a conflict to make broad use of all means of peaceful settlement of disputes and differences between States and to come forward with offers of good offices, mediation or conciliation in achieving armistice and eventual solution.

For the purposes of disengaging the forces of parties in conflict and monitoring cease-fires and truce agreements, wider use should be made of the institution of United Nations military observers and United Nations peace-keeping forces while strictly complying with the Charter.

Taking into account the serious dangers for international security resulting from the intensification of existing conflicts, the United Nations should address a general appeal to all States parties to such conflicts to cease all military operations and to call all States of the world to proceed to a peaceful solution of their conflicts and disputes through negotiations. It should be also requested that during negotiations, starting from their very commencement, the military operations of any kind should be ceased. The Security Council or a special organ of the United Nations should ensure the fulfilment of the obligation undertaken concerning the cessation of military operations during the negotiations, as well as the peaceful resolution of disputes through negotiations.

It is necessary to make strong efforts to secure a greater consolidation of forces and take a more concerted action to combat apartheid as one of the destabilizing factors of international significance, which adversely affect regional and international security.

In addition to intensifying the work of the existing bodies, it is advisable to consider further arrangements for strengthening regional security as future components of a comprehensive system, which would take into account a complex set of historical, geographical and geopolitical factors and the security interests of large and small States in various regions of the world.

The establishment of zones of peace and co-operation in various parts of the world could be an important area of strengthening global security.

Among the global problems of mankind, the co-sponsors deem it particularly important to devise means and to create effective institutional forms of jointly

Combating terrorism, which has acquired an international dimension and thus poses a threat to all countries.

The unprecedented degree of internationalization of world political processes and the fact that global problems can only be solved with the broadest participation of countries call for openness in foreign policy and require that full effect be given to the principles and practices of democratism in the decision-making process and in the implementation of decisions.

The initiative of the socialist countries is designed to overcome any confrontational approach and to assert civilized standards and an atmosphere of openness, transparency and trust in international relations.

This purpose is being also served by the efforts to ensure that the United Nations and other international organizations and forums play a more active role in normalizing political relations among States and regions, solving local armed conflicts, developing the practice of dialogue and consultations between States, and strengthening political co-operation.

In the economic sphere

The growing interrelationship and interdependence of all countries of the world call for more effective joint efforts on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations for the solution of world economic problems.

The concept of international economic security, which embraces the areas of international economic, trade, financial, scientific, technological and environmental co-operation, proceeds from the premise that the world economy is universal in its character and that, given the interdependence of nations, its state affects all participants in the international division of labour.

Therefore, the solution of problems in the world economy demands joint action, including the creation of conditions for the economic security of all States, with fundamental importance being attached to the predictability of world economic processes and to the necessity of broad economic international co-operation.

Another important requirement is to build meaningful contacts among regional economic organizations, while taking into account the fundamental interests of all other countries as well. In this context all forms of economic discrimination, including protectionist barriers, should be gradually eliminated.

The security of the world is threatened by the growing trend of unequal development that widens the economic and technological gap between the developed and developing, rich and poor countries. It is essential to adopt comprehensive and effective measures to accelerate the development of economically underdeveloped countries and to create necessary international economic, trade and financial conditions. In this pursuit, the national efforts of developing countries should be supplemented by increased international assistance and an economic co-operation capable of providing effective support to overcoming underdevelopment.

Neither economic and political stability nor peace in the world can be safeguarded without resolute measures to prevent any further deterioration of the situation of developing countries and to eliminate underdevelopment.

An indispensable part of the creation of international economic security is to find solution to the burden of the external debt crisis. This process calls for the efforts of debtors and creditors alike to ensure the economic growth and development of indebted countries and the interests of harmonious development of the world economy.

The international financial institutions bear a specific responsibility for contributing to a more secure operation of the world economy in the context of universal co-operation on international monetary and financial issues.

Considering that the accelerated scientific and technological advancement constitutes a basic source of general economic growth, its achievements should be made accessible for all nations.

In the view of the co-sponsors, there is a close relationship between disarmament and development. The possibilities of economic development could be enhanced through the utilization of resources to be released as a result of the disarmament process. International resolve is necessary to turn those possibilities into reality.

Mutual confidence, which is indispensable in all aspects of economic security, and development efforts and efforts of promoting co-operation call for an effective exchange of information among States.

It would be appropriate to hold broad consultations, through the United Nations structures, to assess the state of and prospects for the development of the world economy and to find generally acceptable methods of ensuring the economic security of States.

In the ecological area

The protection of environment, both on the national and international scale, is a necessary prerequisite of the security and development of civilization.

The growing danger of the rapid degradation of the natural environment requires that efforts of the entire international community be united and focused on ensuring the ecological security of nations.

The rational use of natural resources and the guaranteeing of the environmental interests of States constitute a basis of international ecological security. It presupposes the elaboration of a global strategy covering the entire range of existing and foreseeable environmental problems and mapping out concrete plans of action to solve them, and principles for international co-operation aimed at the full implementation thereof. The development of and access to ecologically clean technologies would pave the way to the practical implementation of this strategy. It would be advisable to establish early warning systems predicting natural disasters and adverse global effects of technological development.

In the social, humanitarian and human rights area

Respect for general human values, for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in their indivisibility and interdependence, promotion of their exercise, and development of international co-operation in this field will contribute to the strengthening of mutual confidence and understanding between States in the interest of international peace and security. In this spirit, human life should be recognized as the supreme value.

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 co-sponsors 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.

Flagrant and massive violations of human rights have harmful effects on relations among States and the international political atmosphere, may threaten international security and should be a matter of general concern for all the international community.

Civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights should be respected everywhere. Therefore, it is necessary for all States to accede to the international instruments on human rights, to give effect to their letter and spirit. The solution of all problems relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms should be secured by each State and represents an important element of its sovereignty in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Democracy and its further development, with respect for national specifics and historical traditions, remain important prerequisites for economic and social development and the exercise of human rights in their entirety.

It is necessary to act for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, all manifestations of racism, fascism, nationalism, chauvinism, anti-semitism and other practices and ideas which humiliate human dignity. Education for life in peace could play an important role in achieving those objectives.

Serious attention should be given to finding a solution to such unresolved humanitarian problems as unemployment, famine, illiteracy and homelessness.

The idea of promoting medical co-operation in combatting the most dangerous diseases, such as cancer, AIDS, as well as other diseases resulting from misery, malnutrition, drug abuse and alcoholism, deserves attention.

The co-sponsors support the idea of a broad dialogue on humanitarian issues, inter alia within an all-European conference in Moscow.

The comprehensive system of international peace and security should be achieved through collective efforts of all the United Nations Member States and the entire world community and is not directed against the interests of any country or of any group of countries. Being of the opinion that such a system should function on the basis and within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, the co-sponsors advocate the enhancement of the role of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and express 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.

The co-sponsors, bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant documents of the United Nations, as well as the wealth of experience accumulated so far in the process of their implementation, deem it necessary for the world Organization to concentrate its efforts on enhancing its role as a forum for political dialogue and multilateral co-operation in order to ensure compliance with and implementation of the Charter, with particular regard for the crucial and interrelated areas of international security, disarmament, crisis and conflict settlement, economic development and co-operation, the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The strengthening of the United Nations' role depends on the wisdom, goodwill and efforts of all Member States and, in particular, of course, the permanent members of the Security Council. The socialist countries are convinced that the political line of all members of the world community in the United Nations should be oriented towards a search for realistic and generally acceptable solutions to international problems and a full utilization of the co-operation potential contained in the Charter of the United Nations.

This initiative is an invitation to the United Nations Member States and to the world public to hold a wide and thorough exchange of views on ways and means of practically ensuring comprehensive international security. It is necessary to institutionalize the continuing all-embracing international dialogue on various aspects of this problem.

The countries launching this initiative call upon all States Members of the United Nations and the world public to continue the exchange of views and to elaborate constructive proposals with a view to enhancing the process of bringing about a comprehensive system of international peace and security.
