

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 15 FEBRUARY 1988 ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF ARGENTINA, INDIA, MEXICO AND SWEDEN TRANSMITTING A DOCUMENT ENTITLED THE "STOCKHOLM DECLARATION" ADOPTED IN STOCKHOLM ON 21 JANUARY 1988 BY THE FIVE HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA, GREECE, INDIA, MEXICO AND SWEDEN AND THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF TANZANIA

As a result of their continued examination of questions relating to disarmament and international peace and security, the Five Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico and Sweden and the First President of Tanzania adopted in Stockholm, Sweden, on 21 January a document entitled the "Stockholm Declaration".

The Stockholm Declaration - the text of which is annexed to this letter in English and in Spanish - relates to several items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. We are convinced that the Declaration contains ideas and perspectives which can be positively useful in our common endeavour to promote the cause of disarmament and peace. We therefore request that the text be reproduced and distributed as a document of the Conference.

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(Signed) Jaskaran Singh Teja  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of  
India to the United Nations  
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(Signed) Alfonso García Robles  
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Mexico to the Conference on  
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(Signed) Rolf Ekéus  
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#### THE STOCKHOLM DECLARATION

During the last few decades, a handful of nations have acquired the capability of destroying not only one another but all others as well. Their war machines could terminate civilization and all life on Earth.

No nation has the right to use such instruments of war. And what thus is morally wrong should also be explicitly prohibited by international law through a binding international agreement.

All States have the responsibility to uphold the rule of law in international relations. The respect for its basic principles is a fundamental prerequisite for creating a just and stable world order and for making disarmament possible.

These principles are being trampled upon at this very moment. International disputes are more and more dealt with through resort to force. The dangerous delusion that might is right is, particularly in the nuclear age, one of the most threatening features of our world.

Crucial decisions to prevent the ultimate catastrophe lie with those who possess nuclear weapons. It is their responsibility to live up to the objective of eliminating all of them.

But the rest of us, the non-nuclear weapon States, have a legitimate interest in the abolition of these awesome weapons. We demand it. We owe it not only to ourselves, but also to future generations. The fate of weapon systems which can spread death and destruction regardless of national borders must not be left in the hands of only a few States.

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When the Six Nation Initiative was launched, more than three years ago, prospects for disarmament looked grim. Virtually all negotiations were at a standstill. Since then, we have welcomed the resumption of the dialogue between the Soviet Union and the United States. The signing in Washington on 8 December of the INF Treaty can be seen as a historic first step. It shows that given political will, all obstacles can be removed, including verification which ostensibly has been the principal obstacle for so long. Indeed, the Treaty's provisions on verification provide useful guidelines for future agreements. But much more remains to be done. The arms race has not even been halted, let alone reversed. New nuclear weapons are still being constructed and tested. The INF Treaty will not reduce the total number of nuclear weapons by more than a few per cent. The Treaty is, however, significant evidence that a reversal is possible. No time must now be lost before more far-reaching nuclear disarmament agreements are achieved.

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Even after the implementation of the INF Treaty, thousands of tactical nuclear weapons will still remain in Europe and elsewhere. In fact, these weapons could actually be the ones to trigger a nuclear holocaust.

We urge that also these tactical nuclear weapons be completely abolished, without delay. In this connection, the need for substantial reductions in conventional forces must also be considered on a priority basis.

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The strategic nuclear weapons pose a mortal threat all over the world. They form the core of the present overkill capacity. It is our firm conviction that they must be totally abolished before we witness a catastrophe which might occur even by mistake.

The agreed principle of 50 per cent reductions in the strategic arsenals of each super-Power must be honoured. We urge that a treaty on such reductions be signed by the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union in the first half of 1988. Such a treaty would constitute a decisive step towards the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons.

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Military competition must not be introduced into new fields. Space belongs to us all, and the number of countries growing more and more dependent on the benefits of the peaceful utilization of outer space is increasing. It must not be used for destructive purposes.

There is still time to prevent an arms race in space. We call on the parties to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to strictly abide by that Treaty. We also reiterate our call for a complete banning of anti-satellite weapons. Specifically, and as an interim measure, we propose an agreement banning the testing of such weapons.

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Agreements to reduce existing nuclear arsenals must be backed up by decisive measures to check the unbridled development of new generations of ever more dreadful and sophisticated nuclear weapons. The single most effective measure would be to end all nuclear-weapon tests, by all States. Such a step would be of crucial importance not only for achieving this objective, but also for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to countries which have so far refrained from acquiring them.

The United States and the Soviet Union have started bilateral negotiations on gradually establishing lower limits on nuclear tests. Any agreement that leaves room for continued testing would not be acceptable. We stress once again that a comprehensive test ban is already long overdue. Pending that, we reiterate our call for an immediate suspension of all nuclear testing, by all States.

An effective test ban must be universally observed. This requires multilateral negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament. We, as representatives of non-nuclear weapon States, are ready to contribute in working towards a speedy adoption of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

Our offer to assist in the monitoring of any halt in nuclear testing still stands. In this connection, our group of experts will shortly convene in Sweden a conference with wide international participation to take stock of global efforts so far undertaken to develop the most efficient test ban verification measures.

The Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, should be strengthened and made a more effective instrument for achieving nuclear disarmament and for the elimination of all other weapons of mass destruction. A convention for the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons should be urgently concluded. It would also provide an example for future efforts in the multilateral field.

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Verification of compliance with disarmament agreements is an issue of concern to all nations. We all want to be certain that agreements to destroy weapons, or to refrain from their development, are strictly complied with. We therefore see a strong need for international verification in the field of disarmament.

To that end, we recognize the need for the establishment of an integrated multilateral verification system within the United Nations, as an integral part of a strengthened multilateral framework required to ensure peace and security during the process of disarmament as well as in a nuclear-weapon-free world. Our six nations will jointly propose, at the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament this year, that the United Nations promotes the establishment of such a system.

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The total abolition of nuclear weapons, and the rapid movement towards that end, is a fundamental and moral imperative for humankind without qualification by reference to any other struggle for justice and development in the world. Even so, it is impossible to consider any questions relating to disarmament without being appalled by the waste of human and material resources now being devoted to weapons of death and mass destruction.

The current instability in the world economy has deeply affected the poorest and most indebted countries. The arms race, particularly between the super-Powers, greatly contributes to the worsening of the situation.

The first ever United Nations Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development took place in New York last year. It reached an understanding on the complex relationship between disarmament, development and security, and brought non-military threats to security to the forefront of international concern.

The world's resources are finite. We have to choose. The sufficient manufacture of ploughshares calls for a reduction in the manufacture of swords.

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As we have always maintained, the issue of nuclear disarmament is of concern to all nations. We have been greatly encouraged by the support which we have received from other non-nuclear weapon States, from parliaments and non-governmental organizations, from peace movements and individuals throughout the world. We look forward to their continued support.

Mutual confidence and disarmament should replace mistrust and overarmament as a prevailing pattern of international relations. Recent developments give rise to hope. It is now of utmost importance that the opportunity be seized to halt and decisively reverse the arms race. Creating a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world calls for even greater imagination, energy and determination.

The nuclear threat remains real. Our world order is still built on the edge of the nuclear abyss. As we move into the last decade of the twentieth century, the goal must remain not only to avert the holocaust, but ultimately to eliminate all nuclear weapons.

Each and everyone can and must play a part in safeguarding our survival, strengthening our security and creating the conditions for a life in dignity.

We urge the nuclear weapon States to fulfil their obligation to pursue the process of nuclear disarmament.

We, on our part, pledge to do all we can to make that process irreversible.

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