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SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 27 April 1981 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 to you a letter from A. A. Gromyko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, concerning the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be convened in 1982.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as an official document of the General Assembly under item 39 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

* A/36/50.

ANNEX

Letter dated 27 April 1981 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Secretary-General

This letter, sent in reply to your inquiry, sets out the comments of the Soviet Union concerning the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be convened in 1982.

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, this international gathering will be particularly significant because preparations for it are beginning in the context of an international situation which has become seriously complicated.

The continuing build-up of armaments, including the most dangerous kinds -- nuclear armaments, is outstripping efforts to curtail this process. The talks on a number of specific arms limitation and disarmament questions have -- through no fault at all of the Soviet Union -- been interrupted or suspended. This also applies to the Soviet-American strategic arms limitation talks.

In these conditions, the task of curbing the arms race is becoming increasingly urgent. Everything possible must be done to mobilize States' efforts to achieve practical results in this area.

In the Soviet Union, there is recognition of the rightful role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security and appreciation of the contribution being made by the Organization in the search for solutions to the questions involved in the limitation of the arms race and in the achievement of disarmament.

In our view, useful work along these lines was done in 1978 at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in the preparation and conduct of which the Soviet Union took a most active part. The Final Document adopted at that session laid a fairly good basis for States' disarmament activities in the years ahead.

The Soviet Union was among the first to respond to the decisions of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament and made a number of proposals designed to put an end to the arms race. A generalized statement of these was given in the letter dated 11 April 1980 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR to the Secretary-General of the United Nations concerning the tasks of the second disarmament decade and in the memorandum submitted to the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Peace, disarmament and international security guarantees". All these proposals, many of which were approved in the United Nations, are still valid.

At the recent Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, L. I. Brezhnev, put forward a broad selection of new and constructive proposals on questions concerning arms limitation and military détente.

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These proposals relate to nuclear missiles and conventional weapons, and land, sea and air forces. They concern the situation in Europe and in the Near, Middle and Far East. Reference is made in them to measures of both a political and military character. All these proposals combine one single aim and one general thrust -- to do everything possible to remove peoples from the threat of nuclear war and to preserve peace on earth.

An important role in the implementation of some of the new Soviet proposals could also be played by the United Nations.

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament can and should provide further stimulus for talks on the specific and pressing questions of arms limitation and disarmament. It is also important that it should be a landmark on the road to the convening of a World Disarmament Conference.

It is the view of the Soviet Union that the agenda for the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly should provide for a general exchange of views on the position with regard to arms limitation and on the progress made in the implementation of the decisions of the first special session of the General Assembly; a discussion of new initiatives by States Members of the United Nations; and the adoption of the relevant final document or documents.

If all States Members of the United Nations adopt a responsible approach and display the necessary political will, the forthcoming special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament will be able to make a weighty contribution to the curtailment of the dangerous arms race. This is particularly true of strategic weapons. The Soviet Union, for its part, is prepared to do everything to promote this goal.

A. GROMYKO
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE USSR