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Letter dated 6 June 1989 from the Permanent Representative
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the foreign policy section of the address entitled "On the major directions of the domestic and foreign policy of the USSR" made by Mr. M. S. Gorbachev, President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, to the Congress of People's Deputies on 30 May 1989.

I request that this text be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 32, 34, 44, 63, 64, 66, 69, 72, 73 and 76 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

A. BELONOGOV

ANNEX

Foreign policy section of the address entitled "On the major directions of the domestic and foreign policy of the USSR" made by the President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to the Congress of People's Deputies on 30 May 1989

Perestroika in the Soviet Union could not but influence all our international activities, but it also could not be implemented if our former foreign policy were maintained.

A radical change of our foreign policy course is connected with our new political thinking, which was developing as we were ridding ourselves of dogmatic notions, of conclusions that were correct only for their own time but were not in keeping with the realities of the present.

The new thinking is a dynamic concept which continues to develop and to deepen. Its main starting point was the conclusion reached at the twenty-seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the mortal danger of nuclear weapons and the arms race for humanity's existence, about the oneness and interdependence of the world today, the change in the nature of its contradictions and in the character of world progress.

The new thinking is based on the recognition of the primacy of human interests and values; of generally accepted norms of morality as the indispensable criterion of any policy; of freedom of socio-political choice, precluding interference in the affairs of any State; and of the need for the "de-ideologization" of inter-State relations. Despite profound differences in social systems, each system now has objective opportunities to embark on a fundamentally new and peaceful period in the history of humanity.

In the existing reality around us there are many facts which, it would seem, are not in the mainstream of the new thinking. There are forces of the past and contradictions inherited from the past. Therefore we cannot disband the army and bid farewell to arms. The same can be said of military alliances whose preservation does not depend on us alone.

But no matter how necessary the old forms and the old means, they cannot be allowed to block new approaches to the building of international relations. Herein lies the wisdom of any major policy. And herein lies the essential distinction of the foreign policy of the perestroika period. We can uphold it now, basing ourselves on actual results. Many things have already become customary and now seem normal. But where would we be now if everything had remained as it was?

The fever of international tension has abated and there is no direct threat of nuclear war. People from different countries have, as it were, looked each other straight in the face and realized the absurdity of animosity. A start has been made on the reduction of nuclear arsenals. The Europeans have begun to scale down military confrontation, the most dangerous in the world. We have withdrawn troops

from Afghanistan and started to withdraw them from allied countries. The country has been opened up to the outside world in order to assume its proper place in the international division of labour and use its advantages. Restrictions and prejudices that interfered with our effective participation in the solution of global problems and in scientific and cultural exchanges have been removed.

Our foreign policy is oriented towards the whole world. But each specific case naturally has its own characteristics and its own particularly important distinctive features, both on the bilateral level and from the point of view of regional and international significance.

This applies first of all to the socialist countries. Our relationship with them reflects a crucial stage in the development of the socialist world. We sensed this fully during our visit to our great neighbour, the People's Republic of China, the normalization of relations with which is an event of worldwide significance.

There can be and, indeed, are difficulties in shaping a new type of relationship between the socialist countries. These difficulties lie in the objective realities of the complex and contradictory processes taking place in various countries. The difficulties are, however, surmountable. Mutual respect, non-interference in the affairs of others, friendly mutual understanding, a profound interest in the experience of others, the need for co-operation and a readiness to work patiently together are the main conditions for this. All these are manifest now.

Participation in the building of a "common European home" is the major direction of our foreign policy activities. The basic ideas are well known. They have come into general use both by the public and in negotiating practice. The principles of sound relations, in the spirit of perestroika, with all States participating in the Helsinki process, have been established and are being increasingly applied.

We shall continue steadfastly to pursue the Vladivostok line in the Asia and Pacific region. The diversity of tasks in that area is even greater. With many countries we have established both an "agenda" and the tone of relations: relations of good will, constructive and respectful. As everywhere else, there are countries in the region relations with which will continue to be given special attention, first and foremost India.

We all understand that Soviet-American relations are of paramount importance for world politics. We are prepared to co-operate with the United States on a predictable and stable basis and are ready to move ahead, combining continuity with new ideas.

In recent years we have discovered exceptional possibilities for closer and more productive contacts with Latin America and Africa. Here, too, there are both common problems and the specifics of relations with individual countries.

It remains our paramount concern to strengthen good-neighbourly relations with all those countries with whom we share borders.

The task of the Congress of People's Deputies is to consider and legislatively endorse the principles of our foreign policy for the years to come. I believe these must be as follows:

- The country's security should be ensured first of all by political means, as a component of universal and equal security, through the process of demilitarization, democratization and humanization of international relations, with reliance on the prestige and resources of the United Nations;
- Nuclear weapons should be eliminated in the course of a negotiating process aimed at disarmament and at reducing countries' defence potential to the point of reasonable sufficiency;
- The use of force or the threat of force to attain any political, economic or other ends are inadmissible; respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity are indispensable in relations with other countries;
- Dialogue and negotiations with an eye to the balance of interests, and not confrontation, should become the only way of resolving international issues and settling conflicts;
- We are in favour of making the Soviet economy part of the world economy on a mutually beneficial and equitable basis, of active participation in the formulation and observance of the rules of the present-day international division of labour, scientific and technological exchanges and trade, and of co-operation with all those who are ready for it.

And another matter of principle.

In the past, our foreign policy practice has in some cases run counter to the lofty principles of socialist foreign policy we proclaimed. Arbitrary actions were taken which caused the country considerable damage and had a negative effect on its international prestige. This was the consequence of the same old command system and the taking of decisions in secret that characterized it.

One of the important tasks of the political system we are reconstructing is to rule out such procedures and methods. From now on, all important foreign policy decisions must be taken only after thorough discussion in the Supreme Soviet and its commissions. And the most important of them, for instance, those affecting relations with our allies or involving the conclusion of important treaties, should be submitted for consideration by the Congress of People's Deputies.

An endorsement of the above principles by the Congress of People's Deputies is not only of legal, but also of immense political, significance, both internationally and domestically.

By no means everyone in the West believes that our new course is a permanent choice and that we have no intention of changing it. Neither does everyone in this

country yet realize the fundamental essence of a foreign policy based on the new thinking. Some people regard it as a kind of tactic, as a temporary zigzag, or even as a concession to the West.

Therefore I want to emphasize, and I hope the Congress will support, the following statement: this is our fully substantiated strategy which reflects the interests of the Soviet people and serve, we are confident, the interests of the whole of mankind.

Here, at this Congress, it has been proposed that a message should be sent by our Congress to the peoples of the world.

I think we do indeed have much to say to them.
