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CONCLUSION OF A WORLD TREATY ON THE NON-USE OF FORCE IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Letter dated 31 May 1977 from the Permanent Representative
of Czechoslovakia to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

With reference to General Assembly resolution 31/9 of 8 November 1976, I have the honour to transmit to you a letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Mr. B. Chřoupek, concerning the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

I request you to circulate the text of this letter as an official document of the General Assembly under item 37 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Dr. Ladislav ŠMÍD
Permanent Representative

* A/32/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Letter dated 20 May 1977 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Czechoslovakia to the Secretary-General

In connexion with General Assembly resolution 31/9 of 8 November 1976 concerning the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, I have the honour to inform you of the opinion of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

Conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations is directly connected, in the opinion of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, with efforts for the deepening of the process of international détente and for its irreversibility, for the strengthening of the foundations of collective security in the world, for the elimination of the threat of war and for the creation of prerequisites for a transition to the reduction of armament, and to disarmament.

The principle of the non-use of force or the threat of force in relations among States was reflected in a number of bilateral and multilateral international measures, declarations, agreements and treaties, including the Charter of the United Nations. In post-war decades, however, we have been witnesses to a series of international disputes and armed conflicts in which illegal use of force or threat of force took place. Conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would, in the opinion of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, assist significantly in making the prohibition of use of any kind of force or threat of force in relations among States a genuine law of international life. Only if the possibility of any kind of aggressive act is excluded from relations among States on a permanent basis and on a world-wide scale, can détente become an irreversible element of the whole further international development. Conclusion of such a treaty would substantially reduce the danger which arises for the whole world from the so-called policy of force, based on the concept of the balance of fear and imminent military confrontation, and would establish equal and equitable conditions for the settlement of all fundamental questions of the relations among States. Conclusion of such a treaty would create completely new favourable conditions for the solution of the persisting conflict situations and for the elimination of hotbeds of war in the world and would prevent the occurrence of similar, new hotbeds. This treaty would considerably strengthen the inalienable right of all nations to their political and economic independence, self-determination, equality and free and undisturbed development. The treaty would be an undisputable contribution to an accelerated progress in the field of disarmament and would turn into anachronism the so-far growing arsenals of weapons, especially weapons of mass destruction.

The Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, proceeding from these assumptions, is convinced that the draft World Treaty on the Non-Use of Force in International Relations, submitted by the Soviet Union to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, represents a comprehensive background material for arriving at the final text of the treaty. In the opinion of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, this draft proceeds fully from significant documents elaborating

the principle of the non-use of force in international relations adopted by the United Nations in past years, such as the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security a/ of 1970, the declaration on the non-use of force in international relations and permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons b/ of 1972, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations c/ of 1970, the Definition of Aggression d/ adopted in 1974, and others. The main provisions of the Soviet draft treaty, concerning obligations of contracting parties to fully refrain from the use of force or threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, not to use armed force with utilization of any kinds of weapons or threat of their utilization, to settle mutual disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that the international peace and security are not jeopardized, proceed directly from the Charter of the United Nations. One of the main provisions of the Soviet draft treaty is also the obligation of the contracting parties to exert every effort for effective measures leading to the reduction of military confrontation and to a general and complete disarmament.

The Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is of the opinion that the draft treaty submitted by the Soviet Union fully corresponds to one of the most urgent requirements of the present time - to achieve unconditional, general and permanent prohibition of any use of force or threat of force in relations among States. The thirty-second session of the General Assembly should adopt, in the view of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, necessary measures so that on the basis of existing proposals and documents deliberations on the final text of the treaty could be started.

(Signed) Bohuslav CHNOUPEK

a/ General Assembly resolution 2734 (XXV), annex.

b/ General Assembly resolution 2936 (XXVII).

c/ General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), annex.

d/ General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX), annex.