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REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE
TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO PEACE

Letter dated 22 October 1984 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 herewith the text of the answers given by
K. U. Chernenko, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and
Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics, to questions from the newspaper Washington Post dated 17 October 1984.

Kindly arrange to have this text distributed as an official document of the
General Assembly under agenda items 60, 68 and 138.

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

* Reissued for technical reasons.

ANNEX

ANSWERS GIVEN BY K. U. CHERNENKO TO QUESTIONS FROM THE
NEWSPAPER WASHINGTON POST

Question: President Reagan has said that the United States is prepared to resume a dialogue with the Soviet Union on a broad range of questions including arms control. What is the attitude of the Soviet Union towards President Reagan's expression of readiness for talks?

Answer: We have already heard words about the United States Administration's readiness for talks, but they have never been supported by deeds which would attest to a genuine desire to reach agreement on a just and mutually acceptable basis on at least one of the essential questions of our relations, particularly in the field of arms limitation and a reduction of the danger of war.

Every time we put forward practical proposals, they ran into a solid wall. Let me give some examples.

That was the case in March of this year, when we identified a whole set of problems. Reaching agreement on them - or at least on some of them - would mean a real shift both in Soviet-American relations and in the international situation as a whole. But the United States simply avoided replying to our proposals.

That was the case in June, when we proposed reaching agreement on preventing the militarization of outer space. This time we received a reply, but what was it? An attempt was made to change the very subject of the negotiations: it was proposed that we discuss issues relating to nuclear weapons, i.e., issues that had previously been discussed at the talks in Geneva, which had been broken off by the United States itself. At the same time, the United States has not only refused to remove the obstacles created by the deployment of new American missiles in Western Europe, but is going ahead with their deployment.

And what about outer space? Instead of preventing an arms race in space, we were invited to engage in working out some kind of rules for such a race, which would amount to legalizing it. Obviously, we cannot agree to that. Our objective is genuinely peaceful outer space, and we will persistently strive for this objective.

They are the facts.

Now let us turn to President Reagan's statement which you have referred to. If what the President has said about readiness to negotiate is not merely a tactical move, I wish to state that the Soviet Union will not be found wanting. We have always been ready for serious and businesslike negotiations and have repeatedly said so.

We are ready to proceed to negotiations with a view to working out and concluding an agreement to prevent the militarization of outer space, including the complete renunciation of anti-satellite systems, with a mutual moratorium - to be established from the date the negotiations begin - on the testing and deployment of space weapons. This is precisely the way we formulated our proposal from the outset. Now it is up to Washington to respond.

The Soviet proposal that the nuclear Powers freeze in quantitative and qualitative terms all the nuclear weapons at their disposal also remains valid. Agreement on that question would mean a mutual cessation of the build-up of all components of existing nuclear arsenals, including delivery vehicles and nuclear warheads. The nuclear arms race would thus be stopped. That would greatly facilitate further agreements on the reduction and eventually the elimination of such weapons. The White House still has our official proposal that the USSR and the United States should first of all reach mutual agreement on freezing their nuclear weapons, thus setting an example to the other nuclear Powers.

There is a real opportunity to finalize the agreement on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. If there were no such tests, these weapons would not be improved, which would put the brakes on the nuclear arms race. Here, too, the United States could prove in deeds the sincerity of its affirmations in favour of nuclear arms limitation. It can also prove this by ratifying the Soviet-American treaties on underground nuclear explosions. These treaties were signed back in 1974 and 1976. What it needs to do is to ratify them and not, as the American side suggested, invite observers, who would merely dispassionately ascertain that explosions had occurred.

The Soviet Union has repeatedly called upon Washington to follow our example in assuming an obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. Every time, the answer was "No". Imagine the reverse situation: the United States assumes an obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and calls upon us to reciprocate, but we say, "No, this does not suit us and we reserve the right to a first nuclear strike". What would people in the United States think of our intentions in that case? There cannot be two views on that score.

I have mentioned several most pressing problems related to the cessation of the arms race and the strengthening of security. There are other important questions which, I believe, the President is well aware of. All of them call for solutions and for making concrete efforts. Words about the readiness to negotiate, if unsupported by practical deeds, remain mere words.

I believe that what I have said answers your question.

Question. A view is widely spread that recently a shift has become discernible which could lead to better Soviet-U.S. relations. What do you think about this and what is your view of the prospects for these relations in the time to come?

Answer. There is, indeed, a widespread mood around the world in favour of a shift for the better in Soviet-American relations. This, in our view, reflects a growing understanding of the importance of these relations, particularly in the present international situation.

Unfortunately, so far there have been no grounds to speak of such a shift in Soviet-American relations, as if it were a fact. Is it possible? I shall give an unequivocal answer to this question: Yes, it is possible. The solution of the problems to which I referred earlier would help to bring this about.

I am convinced that there is no sound alternative at all to a constructive development of Soviet-American relations. At the same time we do not close our eyes to the fact that we have different social systems and different world outlooks. But if we keep constantly in mind the responsibility that rests with our two countries, and if policy is oriented towards peace and not war, then these differences do not exclude the search for mutual understanding; on the contrary, they demand it.

I have already had occasion to say, and I wish to stress it once again: we stand for good relations with the United States, and experience shows that that is how they can be. That requires a mutual desire to build relations as equals, for mutual benefit and in the cause of peace.
