

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/3973
3 November 1958
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

LETTER DATED 31 OCTOBER 1958 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

New York, 31 October 1958

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement by the USSR Government on the question of the cessation of nuclear tests, and also the text of a note from the USSR Government to the Government of the United States of America, dated 30 October 1958.

I would ask you to make arrangements for the publication and circulation of the statement and the note as an official document of the United Nations.

(Signed) A. SOBOLEV
Permanent Representative of the USSR
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY THE USSR GOVERNMENT ON THE QUESTION
OF THE CESSATION OF NUCLEAR TESTS

A meeting of representatives of the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom Governments, called for the purpose of solving the question of terminating atomic and hydrogen weapons tests, is to start at Geneva on 31 October.

Encouraged by the positive results of the recently concluded Geneva meeting of experts, which has worked out recommendations on methods to detect nuclear tests, the peoples pin great hopes on the forthcoming three-Power meeting, expect it to insure the practical solution of one of the most pressing and vital problems of our time, and expect the experimental explosions of atomic and hydrogen bombs to be finally ended throughout the world once and for all.

It may be said without exaggeration that this problem directly affects the vital interests of the people of the world. Let alone the hazards of nuclear explosions for human health, the continuing tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons whip up the race for the creation of ever more destructive means of wholesale annihilation and increase the danger of a rocket-nuclear war. In sending its representatives to the Geneva conference, the Soviet Government proceeds from the premise that this meeting of three nuclear Powers has every opportunity to solve positively the historic problem of terminating for ever the tests of the most destructive and lethal types of weapons ever created by man.

The Soviet Union demands the immediate and general termination of nuclear weapons tests once and for all. As experience shows, further delay in the solution of the question relating to the ending of nuclear tests creates ever new difficulties to the achievement of the necessary agreement on this score among the Powers concerned.

Expressing the will of the Soviet people and sharing the ardent desire of all the peoples of the world to put an end to the experimental explosions of nuclear weapons, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the USSR Government, desirous of making a practical beginning for the general termination of nuclear tests, adopted on 31 March 1958, a decision to end unilaterally all atomic and hydrogen weapons tests in the USSR. The Soviet Union voluntarily gave up its

nuclear weapons tests and waited for a long time for the Governments of the United States and United Kingdom to follow suit. The Soviet Union has taken this step, unprecedented in the history of international relations, despite the fact that it had then set off fewer experimental explosions of nuclear weapons than the United States and the United Kingdom. The Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom had only to follow this noble example of the Soviet Union and the explosions of hydrogen and atomic bombs would have ceased shaking the Pacific and the Arctic, while mankind would have been spared the injurious consequences of nuclear tests. However, the United States and the United Kingdom did not wish to follow the Soviet Government's initiative. Moreover, the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom replied with an unprecedented number of nuclear bomb explosions to the Soviet Union's suspension of tests.

Since 31 March, the date when the Soviet Union suspended all nuclear weapons tests, the United States alone detonated some fifty atomic and hydrogen bombs. The matter went to such lengths that nuclear explosions began to roar twice or even thrice a day on United States test grounds. The United Kingdom Government also stepped up its nuclear tests. That is how the United States and United Kingdom Governments are preparing for talks to end tests! If additional proof was needed that the United States and the United Kingdom only speak of their readiness to end tests and that they are actually striving for quite the opposite - for an unbridled nuclear weapons race - these actions of the United States and the United Kingdom Governments supply this proof.

For a long time, the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom alleged that it was altogether impossible to establish control over the execution of an international agreement on the termination of tests. The Soviet Government has always believed that the scientific and technical means possessed by the nations are fully adequate to establish a reliable control over the execution of the agreement to end nuclear tests, and that the references of the Western Powers to alleged difficulties or even the impossibility of such a control were nothing but an attempt to mislead the peoples and to cover up their unwillingness to end nuclear tests.

The recent meeting of experts at Geneva, which was attended also by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom, fully confirmed this view of the Soviet Government. The meeting of experts arrived at the conclusion that control over the general termination of nuclear tests was absolutely possible and that the establishment of a control system was practicable. The Soviet Government is known to have agreed to all the conclusions and recommendations of the Geneva meeting of experts and to be ready, for its part, to promote their implementation.

Actually, it has been true for a long time that not a single nuclear explosion remains undetected and unregistered by other countries. The Soviet Union, for instance, is just as aware of the nuclear weapons tests held by the United States and the United Kingdom as the United States and the United Kingdom are of the nuclear tests held by the Soviet Union. Hence, the real obstacle resides by no means in control over the enforcement of a test-ending agreement but in the unwillingness of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom to accept such an agreement and thereby put an end to the dangerous experiments with atomic and hydrogen bombs.

After the Geneva experts' conference, which made impossible any references to the difficulties of establishing control, the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom resorted to fresh manoeuvres. They declared on 22 August that they were willing to negotiate only a "suspension" of the testing of atomic and hydrogen weapons rather than the ending of these tests once and for all. More than that, in their statements President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan mentioned a suspension of tests for one year, that is, just the time needed for analysing the results of the preceding tests and preparing for another series of nuclear explosions.

It is true that the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom grant the possibility of this temporary suspension of tests being prolonged for subsequent yearly periods, but they are hedging this possibility in with a whole series of conditions including the achievement of agreement on the "basic and essential measures" in the field of disarmament. The attempt is thus again being made to attach to the disarmament problem as a whole the simple and long overdue solution of the problem of ending the tests of atomic and

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hydrogen bombs, which does not, properly speaking, require anything more than the goodwill of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom. The Powers have, however, discussed the disarmament problem for thirteen years, without having reached any tangible progress in solving it and without so much as having brought their positions noticeably closer, in spite of all the efforts of the Soviet Union.

Why have the United States and the United Kingdom had to lay down conditions of this kind and to predicate the stopping of nuclear tests on the solution of far more complex issues? Apparently, they have done so for the sole purpose of preventing the achievement of agreement on ending nuclear tests forever and to have a free hand for resuming such tests whenever they choose. To accept the proposal of the United States and the United Kingdom would mean to join in deceiving the peoples who want the Governments to put an end to the testing of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

It is for this reason that the Soviet Government regards as utterly unacceptable the proposal of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom for a one-year suspension of nuclear tests and emphatically rejects it.

By proposing a one-year suspension of tests, after a hasty series of tests, the most intense yet held, the United States and the United Kingdom are obviously seeking to achieve unilateral military superiority over the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government cannot, naturally, overlook this.

The position of the Western Powers, which do not agree to an immediate unconditional termination of nuclear weapons tests and are carrying out atomic and hydrogen bomb explosions on an ever-increasing scale, has already compelled the Soviet Union to resume nuclear testing to ensure its security. The action of the Western Powers gives the Soviet Union a full right to continue test explosions in a one-to-one ratio to the number of explosions carried out by the United States and the United Kingdom together, until the number of explosions set off in the Soviet Union since the resumption of testing equals that of nuclear test explosions staged by these Powers since 31 March 1958. This is just the line of action the Soviet Government will pursue, in its concern for the security of the Soviet people, so long as the Governments of the United States and the

United Kingdom will persist in wrecking agreement and raising repeated obstacles to an agreement on the immediate stopping of the tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons for all time. The Governments of the above-mentioned two Powers should not have any illusions that they can decide when, under these conditions, the Soviet Union should hold nuclear tests and when it should not. The position of The Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom on the cessation of nuclear tests leaves the Soviet Union with no alternative but to conclude an agreement on the universal stopping of nuclear tests for all time or, as stated above, to continue with these tests.

Should the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom be willing to conclude the agreement in question, the Soviet Union, having signed it now, will, in common with them, stop tests forthwith, even in spite of the fact that it set off fewer test explosions than the United States and the United Kingdom.

Attempts were made in the United States and the United Kingdom in the last days before the opening of the Geneva talks, to misrepresent the Soviet Union's stand on the ending of nuclear tests. An assertion gained currency that the USSR has "reversed" its position on the matter and has all but refused to end test explosions. This was the tenor of the statement made by United States Secretary of State Dulles on 28 October. It was, in the main, an attempt by misrepresenting the Soviet position on the stopping of nuclear tests, to divert public attention from the stubborn refusal of the United States Government to accept an agreement on a permanent ending of atomic and hydrogen test explosions sought by the Soviet Union.

In an effort to justify the position of the United States Government on the ending of tests which runs counter to the demands of the peoples, the United States Secretary of State produced the story that at the Geneva experts' talks the Soviet Union had come to the conclusion that the Western Powers had outstripped it in nuclear research and that for that reason it had "lost interest in the suspensions of tests". That this assertion is absurd is obvious to anyone who does not deliberately shut his eyes to the consistent campaign for the stopping of nuclear tests which the Soviet Government has conducted all along, not to speak of the fact that if anyone fancies the Soviet Union to be "lagging behind" in nuclear research this is nothing but wishful thinking.

As regards the Geneva experts' talks, it may be recalled that the level of scientific achievement of nations in the development of nuclear weapons was not touched upon at all at those talks, as United States Government leaders are perfectly aware.

Particularly significant is the fact that, with the three-Power conference on the ending of tests about to open, the Government of the United States saw fit to make pessimistic forecasts of the possible outcome of this conference. One may well ask in this connexion: with what intentions is the United States Government going to the Geneva conference?

As regards the Soviet Union, it will continue to press for the immediate and universal stopping of nuclear tests for all time. This is the purpose which its representatives at the Geneva conference will seek to achieve. If the United States and the United Kingdom adopt a similar approach, the problem of stopping the tests of nuclear weapons will be solved finally and completely on the very day these Governments announce their consent to ending nuclear tests forever.

NOTE FROM THE USSR GOVERNMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DATED 30 OCTOBER 1958

In connexion with the United States Embassy's note No. 392 of 20 October concerning the talks between the United States, the USSR and the United Kingdom at Geneva on the question of the cessation of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR has the honour to make the following statement:

The Embassy's note, like earlier notes from the United States Government concerning the Geneva talks, intimates that the talks should be devoted to the question of the suspension, not the cessation, of nuclear weapons tests. In this note, the United States Government again makes agreement on the universal cessation of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests dependent on the preliminary fulfilment of a number of conditions. Moreover, the note lays great stress on the difficulties of carrying out agreements on control over the cessation of nuclear weapons tests. In this connexion, it should be borne in mind that the Geneva meeting of experts from eight States not only reached the unanimous conclusion that the creation of a workable and effective system of control over the observance of an agreement for the cessation of nuclear tests was perfectly feasible, but made concrete recommendations for the establishment of such a system. It is obvious that, in these circumstances, attempts to make the cessation of nuclear weapons tests dependent on the fulfilment of preliminary conditions, to make reservations and to stress the complications and difficulties of effecting control show a desire to continue to set up artificial obstacles to early agreement on the universal cessation once and for all of nuclear weapons.

In this connexion, the Ministry feels obliged to confirm the Soviet Government's position, set forth, inter alia, in its notes of 30 August and 1 October, to the effect that the purpose of the forthcoming conference between the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom at Geneva should be to conclude an agreement concerning the cessation of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests once and for all and to establish the appropriate controls for the fulfilment of such an agreement.

The immediate and universal cessation of nuclear weapons tests is an urgent problem, which affects the vital interests of all mankind, and the Soviet Government ventures to hope that the talks scheduled to begin at Geneva on 31 October will result in the cessation of nuclear weapons tests by all States once and for all. The Soviet Government, for its part, will do everything in its power to achieve this goal. It is firmly convinced that if the other participants in the talks, the United States and the United Kingdom, adopt the same approach to the solution of this problem, agreement on the cessation of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests of any kind will definitely be reached at the Conference. The Soviet Government regrets that its proposal to hold a meeting at the Foreign Minister level at Geneva was not supported by the United States Government. The Soviet Government still considers that holding a conference at the ministerial level would create the most favourable opportunities for reaching agreement on the cessation of nuclear weapons tests within the shortest possible time. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the fact that, according to the Embassy's note, the United States Government is willing in principle to send the Secretary of State of the United States to Geneva at a given stage of the talks, the Soviet Government proposes that the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom should participate in the work of the Conference at a later stage, since that would undoubtedly help to reach the necessary agreement on the cessation of nuclear weapons tests within the shortest possible time.
