

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 21 AUGUST 1985 ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TRANSMITTING THE TEXTS OF DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE USSR PROPOSAL "THE BASIC DIRECTIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL EXPLORATION OF OUTER SPACE UNDER CONDITIONS OF ITS NON-MILITARIZATION"

I have the honour to transmit herewith the texts of documents connected with the USSR proposal "The basic directions and principles of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization".

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have these texts issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) V. ISSRAELIYAN

PEACEFUL EXPLORATION OF OUTER SPACE

Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to  
the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Sir,

The Soviet Union proposes that an item entitled "International co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization" should be included in the agenda for the fortieth session of the General Assembly.

This proposal of the Soviet Union is based on the fact that mankind today is faced with a choice: either outer space will make an ever greater contribution towards improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of our planet or it will become a new source of mortal danger to them. The only intelligent choice worthy of man's space age can and must be to prevent the militarization of outer space and preserve it for peaceful activities.

The issue has become urgent. It must be resolved before weapons penetrate into outer space. The danger of this happening is growing every day. Concrete work is already in progress with a view to developing offensive space weapons. If this process is not halted, the arms race will further expand and intensify in every area, absorbing fresh material and intellectual resources and placing insurmountable obstacles in the path of the joint peaceful space activity of States.

The Soviet Union proposes that the General Assembly should once again resolutely call upon all States, especially those with a major space potential, to reach agreement without delay on effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, thus creating the conditions for broad international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

The Soviet Union proposes the adoption of a set of concrete measures which would help States to join their efforts in the peaceful exploration of outer space and the utilization of space technology for the good of all States, among other things providing developing countries with all-round assistance in this field. It is obvious that the successful solution of this problem, which affects the whole of mankind, will become possible if agreements can be reached effectively ensuring the non-militarization of outer space.

Motivated by the desire to promote rapid progress with regard to ensuring the peaceful exploration of outer space, the Soviet Union submits for consideration at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly a document entitled: "The basic directions and principles of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization (proposals by the USSR)".

I would be grateful if you would consider this letter as an explanatory memorandum as provided for under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and have it distributed, together with the attached document "The basic directions and principles of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization (proposals by the USSR)" and draft resolution, as official documents of the General Assembly.

(Signed) E. SHEVARDNADZE  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the USSR  
Pravda, 17 August 1985

THE BASIC DIRECTIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL  
CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL EXPLORATION OF OUTER  
SPACE UNDER CONDITIONS OF ITS NON-MILITARIZATION

(Proposals by the USSR)

The breakthrough into outer space and the transition towards the practical utilization of its limitless expanses represents one of mankind's most outstanding scientific and technical achievements.

In the historically brief period which has elapsed since the launching by the Soviet Union of the world's first artificial Earth satellite in 1957 and the launching in 1961 of the space ship "Vostok" piloted by Yuri Gagarin, the planet's first cosmonaut, a gigantic leap forward has been made in the peaceful exploration of outer space.

Man has, in essence, begun to settle in near space. Today, hundreds of satellites are in orbit, along with permanent stations in which teams of scientific and technical experts, including international teams, relieve one another and work for months at a time. Interplanetary scientific stations are venturing out to the depths of the solar system. Systematic studies of the Moon, Venus and Mars are being conducted with the help of spacecraft. Mankind's horizons in space are becoming ever broader and greater.

However, the possibility of outer space being transformed into a source of grave military danger is now growing. Plans are being announced and actions undertaken aimed at the development and deployment of offensive space weapons for the destruction of objects in space and, from space, in the air and on the Earth, including the development of a large-scale anti-missile system with space-based elements.

The implementation of plans for the militarization of space would lead to an abrupt intensification of the nuclear threat and would deprive peoples of any hope that a day might come when nuclear weapons will disappear from the face of the Earth. More than that, the arms race would acquire a qualitatively new and still more dangerous dimension in every respect. It would consume colossal new resources, which could serve the peaceful development of mankind and the solution of the vital problems facing it.

Like a grave, incurable disease, militarization would strike at all spheres of space activity and create insurmountable obstacles blocking the development of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space.

The peoples and Governments of all countries must realize the scale of the task facing mankind and the full measure of their historical responsibility for resolving it.

We have reached a point in the development of civilization when either an age of large-scale exploration and utilization of outer space for the good of man will begin or outer space will become a source of lethal danger to man.

The Soviet Union is a firm opponent of competition in any arms race, including the space arms race. The efforts at present being undertaken by the USSR to prevent the militarization of outer space represent the continuation of a consistent policy specifically aimed at ensuring the utilization of outer space for the good of mankind. When blazing the first trails in space, as far back as in 1958 the USSR submitted a proposal in the United Nations providing for the prohibition of the utilization of outer space for military purposes.

Although it proved impossible at that time to find a radical solution to the problem of the non-militarization of space, important agreements were concluded in the 1960s and 1970s which substantially limited the possibilities of its military use. We refer to the multilateral treaties on the banning of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water (1963), the principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies (1967), the Soviet-United States Treaty on the Limitation of ABM Systems (1972) and a number of other agreements.

These instruments created favourable conditions for the first steps towards the establishment of mutually advantageous co-operation among States in outer space. Today, too, if the entry of weapons into outer space was effectively blocked, States would have an opportunity to unite their efforts and resources so that the results of the space activities of all States might serve not destructive but creative ends and contribute to the development of all peoples of our planet.

The USSR is in favour of such co-operation. It turns to all countries and peoples with a proposal to do everything in order to avert an arms race in space and to work together on its peaceful exploration and utilization for the good of all mankind.

One. The non-militarization of outer space, whereby States would refrain from the development (including scientific research work), testing and deployment of offensive space weapons and unite their efforts in peaceful space activities, would assist the expansion of mutual understanding and co-operation between them and promote the efficient use of mankind's material and intellectual resources. This would give fresh impetus to the development of science and technology and open up truly limitless prospects for the use of developments in space to assist the economic and social progress of peoples and the solution of the global problems facing mankind, including such urgent problems as eliminating famine and disease and overcoming the economic backwardness of developing countries by, among other things, providing them with assistance.

Global peaceful co-operation in space research would be organized and would develop on a rising curve - from the exchange of scientific and technological information and simple forms of co-operation to the pooling of States' existing possibilities for solving large-scale problems of space exploration.

Mankind would thus also be able to attain such long-term goals as the industrialization of near space in the sense of the integration of space complexes designed for various purposes into the terrestrial economies of States and the operation of orbital factories and plants for the manufacture of new materials and industrial products in the high vacuum of zero-gravity. The inexhaustible reserves of outer space, including the resources of celestial bodies and solar energy, would be placed at the service of man.

Two. The USSR considers that international co-operation in the peaceful use of outer space could be pursued principally in the following directions:

1. Fundamental scientific research into outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, and the launching of interplanetary spacecraft for these purposes;

2. The application of the results of space research, experiments and the utilization of space technology, inter alia in fields such as biology, medicine, the study of materials, weather forecasting, climatic and environmental studies, global satellite communications systems, remote sensing of the Earth with a view to obtaining data for geology, agriculture and the exploration of the oceans and seas, and the search for, detection and rescue of victims of accidents at sea and in the air;

3. The development and utilization of space technology, including major international orbital scientific stations, as well as piloted spacecraft of various types.

Three. The peaceful exploration of outer space must be pursued within the framework of the strict observance of previously concluded treaties aimed at the prevention of an arms race in space, as well as on the basis of the following general principles derived from the Charter of the United Nations:

The non-use of force or threat of force, the settlement of disputes exclusively by peaceful means;

Equal rights, respect of sovereignty, and non-interference in the internal affairs of States;

Co-operation in good faith, mutual assistance and due consideration for the interests of other States.

Four. In order to organize and implement co-operation among States, steps could be taken to establish a world space organization for international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization;

Such an organization would be called upon to:

Ensure that all States without discrimination have access, on the basis of mutual advantage, to the results of scientific and technological developments connected with the study and peaceful exploration of outer space;

Prepare international projects aimed at concerting efforts and resources for the scientific exploration of outer space and the utilization of space technology.

Provide developing countries with all-round assistance in joining in the exploration and use of outer space and in using the practical results of such activities in order to accelerate their economic and social development in accordance with their needs and without any conditions infringing their sovereignty.

Co-ordinate, on an international scale, the activities of other international organizations in the sphere of the peaceful use of outer space;

Assist, where necessary, in monitoring the observance of agreements already concluded or to be concluded with a view to preventing an arms race in outer space.

Five. The USSR proposes that a representative international conference be convened with the participation, inter alia, of States possessing a major space potential for the purpose of considering every aspect of the question of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization and agreeing on the basic directions and principles of such co-operation.

This same conference would also consider the question of setting up a world space organization for international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, bearing in mind that the practical establishment of such an organization can be embarked upon once agreements have been reached effectively ensuring the non-militarization of outer space.

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The peaceful exploration of outer space, as men already know by experience, can yield a great deal for the development and improvement of life on Earth. The Soviet Union is convinced that outer space - part of the common heritage of mankind - must be placed not in the service of war but in the service of peace and security and the economic and social progress of all peoples. The way towards this lies through the combined collective efforts of all States of our planet.

In a spirit of goodwill and a sense of responsibility for the destiny of our planet, the Soviet Union appeals to all countries and peoples to embark together on this historic task. Desirous of making its contribution to the common cause, it submits for the consideration of the United Nations these proposals on the basic directions and principles of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization.

Draft resolution of the General Assembly

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL EXPLORATION OF  
OUTER SPACE UNDER CONDITIONS OF ITS NON-MILITARIZATION

The General Assembly,

Determined to ensure that the exploration and use of outer space constitutes a sphere of broad, equitable and mutually advantageous international co-operation in conditions of peace,

Recognizing the vital need, before it is too late, to prevent an arms race in outer space which would lead to a sharp increase in the danger of nuclear war, undermine prospects of arms limitation and reduction in general and create insuperable obstacles to the development of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space,

Guided by the desire to ensure that the exploration and utilization of outer space should as effectively as possible serve the scientific, technical, economic and social progress of all peoples and help solve the global problems facing mankind, including problems of development and the eradication of economic backwardness,

1. Calls upon all States, especially those with a major potential in the space field, to do everything for the adoption of effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, thereby creating the conditions for broad international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

2. Expresses the conviction that, given effective guarantees of the non-militarization of outer space, a major practical step towards its peaceful exploration and the development of international co-operation in this field would be the establishment of a world space organization for concerting, co-ordinating and uniting the efforts of States in peaceful space activities, including the provision of assistance to developing countries in this field, and also for assisting in the necessary monitoring of the observance of agreements already concluded or to be concluded with a view to preventing an arms race in outer space;

3. Resolves to convene, not later than in 1987, an international conference with the participation of States possessing a major space potential and other interested countries for the purpose of considering every aspect of the question of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and utilization of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization and agreeing upon the basic directions and principles of such co-operation. The conference would also consider the question of the establishment of a world space organization, bearing in mind that the practical establishment of such an organization could be embarked upon when agreements have been reached effectively ensuring the non-militarization of outer space;

4. Establishes an open-ended preparatory committee with the participation of States possessing a major potential in the field of space for the purpose of convening the international conference;



5. Proposes to the preparatory committee that it submit a report on its work and appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-first session;
6. Invites all States to communicate any views or proposals relating to the convening of the international conference to the Secretary-General not later than 1 March 1986 for transmission to the committee;
7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-first session an item entitled "International co-operation in the non-militarization and peaceful exploration of outer space".