



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERALA/42/509  
25 August 1987  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

## Forty-second session

Items 50, 51, 58, 63, 67 and 74 of  
the provisional agenda\*

CESSATION OF ALL NUCLEAR-TEST EXPLOSIONS

URGENT NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 41/54 ON THE IMMEDIATE  
CESSATION AND PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR-WEAPON TESTS

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS  
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Note verbale dated 14 August 1987 from the Permanent Mission of  
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations  
addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, in reference to General Assembly resolution 41/46 B, "Cessation of all nuclear test explosions", and also to resolutions 41/46 A, "Cessation of all nuclear test explosions", 41/47, "Urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty", and 41/54, "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 40/88 on the immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests", has the honour to communicate the following.

The Soviet Union believes that today, when enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons that threaten the very survival of mankind have been assembled, it is more

\* A/42/150.

vital **than** ever for States to adopt a new mode of **political** thinking and a new **pattern** of behaviour **so that they can reduce** and dismantle those arsenals and set up a comprehensive system of international peace and security to take the place of **eternally-armed politics, "nuclear deterrence", and military doctrines based on intimidation.**

One of the **most** important means of turning **back** the nuclear arms race, forestalling nuclear proliferation and **eradicating** nuclear weapons entirely, as the United Nations has repeatedly stated, is to **impose** a **complete** and general ban on nuclear-weapon **tests**. **Such** a step has become all the more **topical** today **because**, under the influence of the Soviet programme for ridding the planet of nuclear and other weapons of **mass** destruction by the year **2000** and the **Soviet-American summit meeting in Reykjavik**, there **is** a real prospect of genuine movement towards nuclear **disarmament, beginning with the attainment by the USSR and the United States of agreement on the world-wide abolition of two categories of nuclear missiles: medium-range and theatre/tactical weapons.** The USSR will **continue** to do **everything** within its power to **encourage** swift practical **action to bring about a nuclear-free, non-violent world.**

In **an** effort to overcome the inertia on the question of halting nuclear tests, the Soviet Union in 1985 imposed a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear **explosions** and maintained it for **18** months. The General Assembly hailed that **move** and called **upon the** United States to join the moratorium, also **expressing** the **hope** that all other nuclear-weapons States would **consider** doing **so.**

The moratorium turned the **task** of halting nuclear tests into a **practical** proposition, and, with **it**, several **other** problems **associated** with turning **back the arms** race. **It** demonstrated that it was possible to **act** in a way that would **put** real obstacles in the path of the arms **race.** **Although** the Soviet Union **has** had to suspend its unilateral moratorium, it does not regard it as a closed chapter and is prepared to reinstate it on any given day if the United States **decides** to stop its own nuclear explosions.

In **entire** accordance with the **recommendations** of the United Nations, the **Soviet Union** proposes that talks on a complete nuclear test ban should begin forthwith. They **can** involve **any number** of participants and take place in any forum provided, of **course**, that the United States attends.

The Conference on Disarmament can and **must, without a doubt, contribute** substantially to the preparation of a treaty **on the** complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests.

The USSR **has** requested the Conference on Disarmament to lend moral and political support **to the attainment** of a **Soviet-American** agreement to prohibit nuclear tests. It will **be** easier to reach an accord in **Soviet-American** talks if **both sides** can be certain that other States **also** support a nuclear test ban and are prepared **to** become parties to a corresponding international treaty. **For precisely this reason, the** Soviet Union believes that the quest for a negotiated agreement in **Soviet-American** talks and the preparation of an all-embracing treaty **within the** Conference on Disarmament should proceed in parallel.

Seeking to prompt an immediate start on substantive work within the Conference on this priority item, the Soviet Union in conjunction with a group of socialist States recently took the initiative of submitting for the Conference's consideration a document entitled "Basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests". In so doing, the USSR was heeding the General Assembly's expressed belief that the elaboration of such a treaty is a task of the highest priority and should not be made dependent on the attainment of any other measure in the field of disarmament.

The draft submitted brings together in a single document the accumulated capital of many years' collective work to resolve the problem of nuclear testing and the constructive new ideas and proposals put forward recently by many other countries, in particular the "Group of 6". At the same time, the draft treaty is not just an assemblage of proposals but a qualitatively new document. It is steeped in the ideas and spirit of the new mode of political thinking, which requires diplomatic affairs to be conducted in accordance with the hard facts of the nuclear and space age,

The new text includes large-scale verification measures ranging from declaring the location of test ranges to the involvement of international inspectors in ensuring that no test explosions of nuclear weapons are conducted at those ranges.

The text submitted offers a fresh approach to the question of establishing an international seismic monitoring network. The basic components of the network, it suggests, would be seismic stations with standard specifications, operated with the participation of observers from among the members of an international inspectorate. This proposal, if put into effect, would be of substantial help in creating a climate of mutual trust between States. The foregoing is entirely in keeping with the provisions of resolution 41/47 relating to seismic monitoring and a network to monitor atmospheric radioactivity.

On-site inspections occupy a very prominent position within our proposed monitoring system. The USSR sees the purpose of such inspections as being to resolve questions which give rise to doubt as to compliance with a total ban on nuclear tests which cannot be eliminated by means of the other verification measures provided for in the text. It should be emphasized that a State receiving a request for on-site inspection would be unconditionally obliged to grant access to the location specified in the request. What is meant, in other words, is not voluntary but mandatory inspections. It is now necessary to draw up the criteria and procedures for requesting inspections and for conducting them, including a list of the rights and functions of the inspecting personnel. This should be done by the Conference on Disarmament, particularly as experience has been accumulated in other negotiations on a nuclear test ban.

As a practical move to advance the preparation of a treaty banning nuclear-weapon tests, the USSR proposes the establishment of an ad hoc group of scientific experts with a mandate to provide the Conference with agreed recommendations and supporting arguments relating to the structure and functions of a monitoring system for any possible agreement prohibiting nuclear-weapon tests.

There is **also**, in **our** view, **a** need to establish **an** international **syatom** for global radiation monitoring, using **space communications** airavits. **Suah a eystem** would be useful in terms of **enhanced effectiveness** in monitor' g compliance with a nuclear test **ban**, when such a ban is **imposed**.

The **text submitted aonfirms** that the Soviet Union is prepared to reaah a settlement on the problems of verifying **that tests have stopped**. It is open to conetructive **discussion and to** any **other** proposals or aonsideratione **that** will lead to the swift conclusion of an effective **treaty on the** oomplete and general prohibition of nualear-weapon tests.

The Soviet Union still **regards verification not as an end in itself but as a means** of ensuring that **the treaty is effective**; the treaty, in turn, should be a **major** measure in its **own** right, and one that advanaee the **cause of reduations in** and **the** complete abolition of nualear **weapons**. In a world rid of nualear **weapons**, furthermore, the treaty and the **strict verification** it aalls for, together with **the** Non-Proliferation Treaty, should **serve** as safeguards against the **reappearance** of **such weapons** and an important structural **component** in a **comprehensive** system of international peace **and security**.

Without doubt, halting and prohibiting nualear **weapon** tests depends first and foremost on the USSR and the United **States which**, aaaording to the Final **Document** of the **first** special **session** of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, bear **special** responsibility **for** the attainment of the goals of nuclear disarmament. For that reason the Soviet Union **suggests that the** Treaty should allow for the **possibility that**, initially, only the USSR and the United States should **be** parties to it, not all the nuclear Powers.

The involvement of **the** Conferenoe on Disarmament in the practical process of drawing **up a** treaty prohibiting nualear-weapon tests in **no** way oonfliots **with** efforts being made **by the** Soviet Union to resolve this matter bilaterally with the United States. The Conference cannot nowadays **be** highly **productive** unless a **balance is** struck **between** bilateral and **multilateral** negotiations on security problems. There **should** be no conflict **between the two**; the principles of interaction and mutual advancement should apply.

The Soviet Union would like **full-scale Soviet-American talks** leading to a **complete ban on** nuclear testing to begin **as** soon as possible. **Having** made a realistic assessment of **the situation**, it **has** proposed **that such** full-scale talks should, as a first step, consider **the** issues associated with rat if **ication** of the Soviet-American **Agreements** of 1974 and 1976, a **significant** reduction in the thresholds set by those Agreement6 for **the force** of nualear explosions, and a simultaneous restriction in their **numbers**. **As an** immediate praatiaal step associated with **such** talks, it would be prepared to reach, for example, an interim agreement with **the** Americans limiting **the** force of underground nuclear explosions to **a** threshold of **one kilotonne** and **the** number of nuclear-weapon tests to two or three per year.

To **hasten the ratification** of the aforementioned Soviet-American Agreements, the USSR is prepared to come to terms **with the** United States on the conduct of the

requisite calibration **experiment8** at **oaa** other's test ranges. It **has said** that **suah** experiments should **use both** the two **countries'** national **seismological** apparatus **and the seismic** monitoring facilities of the "**Six States**" - provided, of **course**, that they **agree**.

It is the Soviet Union's opinion that, even **given the most** favourable **aonfluenae of! ciraumstanaes**, Soviet-American talks, owing to their bilateral **nature**, **cannot** finally resolve **the issue** of a treaty prohibiting nuclear-weapon tests **everywhere** and by all parties. Hence its **conviction** that **the** negotiation of **agreed** positions in Soviet-American talks and the preparation of **an all-embracing** treaty within the Conference **on** Disarmament should proceed in **parallel**.

Overall, **our** position is that it is **neaeaseary** to **work practically**, **conetruatively** and without delay **on** a radical solution **to the nuclear test issue**. **We** do not wish simply to bring the existing machinery into **play**, but to **ensure that it produces** results in the shortest possible time. We reaffirm **our readiness** to attend a **aonferenae** for **the purpose** of extending **the scope** of the **prohibitions** embodied in the 1963 **Mosaow Treaty**, for this would **be** in **aomplete aaard** with the **wishes** and **aommitments** voiced **by the parties at** the time of **signature**, and with **resolution 41/46 B**.

**Many years** of experience in **talks** and discussions on **the problems of** nuclear-weapon tests, **the proposals** made **on** the subject, and **the advanced level** of modern technology that **can be used** for verification, **suggest** that **aoncludinq a** treaty is **entirely possible**. Today as never before, **what** is needed **is the** requisite political will on all sides to turn this **genuine** opportunity into reality in **the shortest possible time**.

The Permanent Mission of **the USSR** to the United Nations requests **that this** letter be circulated as **a document** of the General Assembly under items **SO, 51, 58, 63, 67 and 74 of the** provisional agenda.

-----