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GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
 Forty-first session  
**Items 49, 56, 57, 62, 63 and 64** of the  
 provisional **agenda\***  
 CESSATION OF **ALL** NUCLEAR-TEST EXPLOSIONS  
 PREVENTION OF AN **ARMS RACE IN** OUTER SPACE  
 IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
 RESOLUTION **40/88** ON THE IMMEDIATE  
 CESSATION AND PROHIBITION OF  
 NUCLEAR-WEAPON TESTS  
 GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT  
 REVIEW AND **IMPLEMENTATION** OF THE  
 CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE TWELFTH  
 SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
 REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
 RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED  
 BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH  
 SPECIAL SESSION

 SECURITY COUNCIL  
 Forty-first year

Letter dated 25 August 1986 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 to you the text of the letter dated  
 23 August 1986 from Mr. **M. S. Gorbachev**, General Secretary of the Central Committee  
 of the Communist Party of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in reply to the  
 letter from the leaders of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United  
 Republic of Tanzania (A/41/518-S/18277).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a  
 document of the General Assembly, under items 49, 56, 57, 62, 63 and 64 of the  
 provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. M. BELONOVOV

\* A/41/150.

ANNEX

Letter dated 23 August 1986 from the General Secretary of the  
Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Union of  
Soviet Socialist Republics in reply to the letter from the  
leaders of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the  
United Republic of Tanzania

I wish to thank you for your letter of 7 August 1986, in which you make a new concrete proposal aimed at giving fresh impetus to the efforts undertaken to resolve the essential question with regard to reduction of the risk of nuclear war, namely, the question of the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests.

We fully share the conviction that emerges from your declaration that the preservation of our planet is the affair of all the peoples that inhabit it. To seek the means of preserving human civilization and preventing it from disappearing in the flames of a nuclear catastrophe is the common task of all States and all peoples. Were a nuclear war to break out, it would affect the whole world, without exception.

We share your opinion regarding the disastrous consequences that might result from the use of even a small fraction of the nuclear arsenals existing in the world. They are constantly being developed and increased, and that process is served by nuclear-weapon tests. That is why, at the present time, there is no more pressing or more important task than to put an end to all nuclear tests. Such a measure would contribute effectively towards halting the qualitative and quantitative growth of nuclear arsenals, and, in our view, it would constitute the point of departure for a movement leading mankind towards a world without nuclear weapons.

Once an end is put to such tests, there are no other obstacles but the position adopted by certain Powers, which, in suicidal fashion, flex their nuclear muscles. The preservation of human civilization in the nuclear and space age absolutely demands a different kind of political thinking. This thinking must henceforth rest on realization of the fact that increasing nuclear arsenals not only does not increase security but may, on the contrary, lead to "zero" security, i.e., total self-destruction.

Aware of our responsibility towards the destiny of mankind, we adopted a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests. After one year, the Soviet Government has just decided to extend it up to the beginning of 1987. This decision, I wish to stress, was not an easy one for us to take. As you know, the United States, in spite of our moratorium, has not ceased carrying out its nuclear tests and, consequently, is continuing to increase its nuclear arsenals. We nevertheless consider our unilateral decision justified, since it should help to resolve the problem of nuclear tests and to protect mankind from the nuclear threats. In adopting this measure, we think that men of all countries will appreciate the true value of the prolonged silence that reigns over Soviet nuclear test sites.

I am deeply convinced that, if the United States would join in the Soviet moratorium - which the extension of our moratorium gives them an additional chance to do - a very important step would be taken towards halting the development and stockpiling of the most destructive weapon ever,

A bilateral moratorium of that kind would also, unambiguously, contribute to the banning of nuclear weapons by treaty. The monitoring measures that would be worked out for verification of the observance of the moratorium might, as you rightly note, constitute important steps towards the establishment of a verification system for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. At the political level, the moratorium would also establish favourable premises for the conclusion of such a treaty.

We believe that it is towards this end that the Soviet-American talks which began at Geneva in late July should be directed. The Conference on Disarmament can constitute an important forum for multilateral talks on this same problem, subject to the removal of the artificial obstacles that prevent it from working effectively on the elaboration of a draft agreement on the banning of all forms of testing.

We also believe that the United Nations, which has been dealing for more than three decades with the question of the cessation of nuclear tests, has not yet exhausted all its possibilities and that these should be further utilized in order to solve that question.

In our view, efforts should be made in all directions in this field, and talks, far from being mutually exclusive or substituted one for the other, should be complementary. On this basis and in reply to your proposal, it seems to me that the meeting of experts from your six countries with Soviet and American experts could make a useful contribution to the achievement of the objective of a comprehensive nuclear test ban and constitute the starting-point for a concrete and effective multilateral dialogue in this area. We are ready to send Soviet experts to this meeting.

The Soviet Union has already announced that it accepts your proposal for assistance in the field of verification and the cessation of nuclear tests, including on-site inspections, provided, of course, that the other party agrees to it also. It would, indeed, be useful to examine together your new proposals and to seek to settle the problem of monitoring nuclear tests in a manner acceptable to both parties.

As emerges from the "Mexico Declaration" that you have adopted, we share the same attitude with regard to the evaluation of the grave consequences that would result from the transformation of space into a new sphere of the arms race. Just like you, we are convinced that space should be used only for peaceful purposes and in the service of all mankind. It is precisely this principle that forms the basis of the initiative which our country has taken recently and which envisages the strengthening of international co-operation with a view to preventing an arms race in outer space and ensuring its use for peaceful purposes. During the Soviet-American talks on nuclear and space weapons, we made concrete proposals that space should not become an arena for military rivalry. We declare ourselves in

favour of the **strengthening of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems**, which, in the current **circumstances, constitutes the basis of strategic stability, and in favour of total and strict observance of all the provisions of that document, which has permanent validity.** It is very important, in our view, that an agreement should be concluded **as soon as possible between the USSR and the United States banning space strike weapons of the "space-earth" or "space-space" type, as well as anti-satellite systems, and providing also for the elimination of devices of that type already available to the parties.** The Soviet Union is ready to resolve all these problems in their entirety and to seek to conclude special agreements leading ultimately to the objective in question, namely, the definitive banning of armaments from space.

In the "Mexico Declaration", you also touch on the question of a new Soviet-American summit meeting. The Soviet Union is favourable to such a meeting. However, it must contribute towards the normalization of relations between the USSR and the United States, the clearing of the international atmosphere and the acceleration of the ongoing talks on arms reduction. We should be ready, for example, to sign, at the conclusion of such a meeting, an agreement on the cessation of nuclear tests. In short, the meeting between the leaders of the USSR and the United States should be truly substantial. It is precisely that that constitutes the essential feature of the agreement reached by the leaders of the two countries at Geneva.

In conclusion, I may say that I am convinced that our joint efforts to put an end to nuclear arms and tests will finally bear fruit in the form of concrete measures that will make it possible to achieve this essential objective.

M. S. GORBACHEV

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