

The Reality and Guarantees of a Secure World

Here follows the full text of the article 'The Reality and Guarantees of a Secure World' by Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Published by the newspapers Pravda and Izvestia on September 17:

THE 42nd session of the United Nations General Assembly opened a few days ago. It is this fact that suggested the idea of this article. Objective processes are making our complex and diverse world increasingly interrelated and interdependent. And it increasingly needs a mechanism which is capable of discussing its common problems in a responsible fashion and at a representative level and of being a place for the mutual search for a balance of differing, contradictory, yet real interests of the contemporary community of states and nations. The United Nations Organisation is called upon to be such a mechanism by its underlying idea and its origin. We are confident that it is capable of fulfilling this role. This is why in the first autumn days, when the period of holidays is over and international political life is rapidly gathering momentum, when an opportunity for important decisions in the disarmament field can be discerned, we in the Soviet leadership deem it useful to share our ideas on the basic issues of world politics at the end of the 20th century. It seems all the more appropriate since the current session of the United Nations General Assembly is devoted to major aspects of such politics.

It is natural that what we would like to do first of all in this connection is to try and see for ourselves what the idea of the establishment of a comprehensive system of international security — the idea advanced at the 27th CPSU Congress — looks like now that a year and a half have passed since the Congress. This idea has won backing from many states. Our friends — the socialist countries and members of the Non-aligned Movement — are our active co-authors.

The article offered to you deals primarily with our approach to the formation of such a system.

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At the same time it is an invitation for the United Nations member-countries and the world public to exchange views.

The last quarter of the 20th century has been marked by changes in the material aspect of being — changes revolutionary in their content and significance. For the first time in its history mankind became capable of resolving many problems that were hindering its progress over centuries. From the standpoint of the existing and newly-created resources and technologies there are no impediments to feeding the population of many billion, to giving it education, providing it with housing and keeping it healthy. Given obvious differences and potentialities of some or other peoples and countries, there has taken shape a prospect for ensuring befitting conditions of life for the inhabitants of the Earth.

At the same time dangers have emerged which put into question the very immortality of the human race. This is why new rules of coexistence on our unique planet are badly needed and they should conform to the new requirements and the changed conditions.

Alas, many influential forces continue adhering to outdated conceptions concerning ways for ensuring national security. As a result the world is in an absurd situation whereby persistent efforts are being made to convince it that the road to an abyss is the most correct one.

It would be difficult to appraise in any other way the point of view that nuclear weapons allegedly make it possible to avert a world war. It is not simple to refute it precisely because it is totally unfounded. For one has to dispute something which is being passed off as an axiom: since no world war has broken out after the emergence of nuclear weapons, hence it is these weapons which have averted it. It seems that it is more correct to say that a world war has been averted despite the existence of nuclear weapons.

Some time back the sides had several scores of atomic bombs apiece, then each came to possess hundreds of nuclear missiles, and finally, the arsenals grew to include several thousands of nuclear warheads. Not so long ago Soviet and American scientists specially studied the issue of the relationship between the strategic stability and the size of the nuclear arsenals. They arrived at the unanimous conclusion that 95 per cent of all nuclear arms of the USA and the USSR can be eliminated without stability being disrupted. This is a killing argument against the 'nuclear deterrence' strategy that gives birth to a mad logic. We believe that the 5 per cent should not be retained either. And then the stability will be qualitatively different.

Not laying claims to instructing anyone and having come to realise that mere statements about the dangerous situation in the world are unproductive, we began seeking an answer to the question as to whether it is possible to have a model for ensuring national security which is not fraught with the threat of global catastrophe.

Such an approach is in the mainstream of the conceptions that have taken shape during the

process of evolving the new political thinking permeated with a realistic view of what is surrounding us, of what is happening, and of ourselves — a view characterised by an unbiased attitude to others and the awareness of our own responsibility and security.

The new thinking is the bridging of the gap between the word and the deed. And we embarked on practical deeds. Being convinced that nuclear weapons are the greatest evil and the most horrible threat, we announced a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests, which we observed, let me put it straight, longer than we should have done. . . . then came the January 15, 1986 Statement putting forth a concrete programme for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons. At the meeting with President Reagan in Reykjavik we came close to realisation of the desirability and possibility of complete nuclear disarmament. And then we made steps which made it easier to approach an agreement on the elimination of two classes of nuclear arms — medium- and shorter-range missiles.

We believe that it is possible and realistic. In this connection I would like to note that the Government of the FRG assumed a stand which is conducive to it to a certain extent. The Soviet Union is proceeding from the premise that a relevant treaty could be worked out before the end of the current year. Much has been said about its potential advantages. I will not repeat them. I would only like to note that it will deal a tangible blow at concepts of limited use of nuclear weapons and the so-called 'controllable escalation' of a nuclear conflict. There are no illusory intermediate options.

This treaty on medium-and shorter-range missiles will be a fine prelude to a breakthrough at the talks on large-scale — 50 per cent — reductions in strategic offensive arms in conditions of the strict observance of the ABM Treaty. I believe that, given mutual striving, an accord on this matter can become a reality as early as in the first half of the next year.

While thinking of advancing towards a nuclear weapon-free world it is essential to see to it even now that security be ensured in the process of disarmament at each of its stages, and to think not only about this, but also to agree on mechanisms for maintaining peace at drastically reduced levels of non-nuclear armaments.

All these questions were included into the proposals put forward jointly by the USSR and other socialist countries at the United Nations — proposals for the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

What should this be like, as we see it?

The security plan proposed by us provides, above all, for continuity and concord with the existing institutions for the maintenance of peace. The system could function on the basis of the UN Charter and within the framework of the United Nations. In our view, its ability to function will be ensured by the strict observance of the Charter's demands, additional unilateral obligations of states as well as confidence measures and international co-operation in all

spheres — political-military, economic, ecological, humanitarian and others.

I do not venture to foretell how the system of all-embracing security will appear in its final form. It is clear that it can become a reality only if all means of mass annihilation are destroyed. We propose that all this be pondered by an independent commission of experts and specialists which would submit its conclusions to the United Nations Organisation.

Personally, I have no doubt about the capability of sovereign states to assume obligations in the field of international security already now. Many states are already doing this. As is known, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China have stated that they will not be the first to use nuclear arms. The Soviet-American agreements on nuclear armaments are another example. They contain a conscious choice of restraint and self-limitation in the most sensitive sphere of relations between the USSR and the United States. Or take the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. What is it? It is a unique example of a high sense of responsibility of states.

In the present-day reality there already exist 'bricks' from which one can start building the future system of security.

The sphere of the reasonable, responsible and rational organisation of international affairs is expanding before our very eyes, though admittedly timidly. Previously unknown standards of openness, of the scope and depth of mutual monitoring and verification of compliance with adopted obligations are being established. An American inspection team visits an area where exercises of Soviet troops are held, a group of United States Congressmen inspects the Krasnoyarsk radar station, American scientists install and adjust their instruments in the area of the Soviet nuclear testing range. Soviet and American observers are present at each other's military exercises. Annual plans of military activity are published in accordance with agreements within the framework of the Helsinki process.

I do not know a weightier and more impressive argument in support of the fact that the situation is changing than the stated readiness of a nuclear power voluntarily to renounce nuclear weapons. References to a striving to replace them with conventional armaments in which there supposedly exists a disbalance between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty in the latter's favour are unjustified. If a disbalance, disproportions exist, let us remove them. We do not tire saying this all the time and we have proposed concrete ways of solving this problem.

In all these issues the Soviet Union is a pioneer and shows that its words are matched by its deeds.

The question of the comparability of defence spending? Here we will have to put in more work. I think that given proper effort already within the next two or three years, we will be able to compare the figures that are of interest to us and our partners and which would symmetrically reflect the expenditures of the sides.

The Soviet-American talks on nuclear and space arms and the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which is close to being concluded, will intensify, I am sure, the advance to detente and disarmament.

An accord on 'defence strategy' and 'military sufficiency' can impart a powerful impulse in this direction. These notions presuppose a structure of the armed forces of a state such that they will be sufficient to repulse a possible aggression but not sufficient for the conduct of offensive actions. The first step to this could be the controlled withdrawal of nuclear and other offensive weapons from the borders, with subsequent creation along borders of strips of reduced armaments and demilitarised zones between potential — let us put it this way — adversaries. While in principle we should work for the dissolution of military blocs and the liquidation of

bases on foreign territories and the return home of all troops stationed abroad.

The question of a possible mechanism to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear conflict is more complex. Here I approach the most sensitive point of the idea of all-embracing security: much will have to be additionally thought out, reconsidered and worked out. In any case, the international community should work out agreed-upon measures in the event of a violation of the all-embracing agreement on the non-use and elimination of nuclear arms or an attempt to violate this agreement. As to potential nuclear piracy, it appears possible and necessary to consider in advance and prepare collective measures to prevent it.

If the system is sufficiently effective then the more so will it provide effective guarantees of averting and curbing non-nuclear aggression.

The system proposed by us precisely presupposes a definiteness of measures which will enable the United Nations Organisation, the main universal security body, to ensure its maintenance at a level of reliability.

II

The division of the world's countries into those possessing nuclear weapons and those not possessing them has also split the very concept of security. But for human life security is indivisible. In this sense it is not only a political, military, juridical but also a moral category. And contentions that there has been no war for already half a century do not withstand any test on the touchstone of ethics. How is there no war? There are dozens of regional wars flaring in the world.

It is immoral to treat this as something second rate. The matter, however, is not only in the impermissible nuclear haughtiness. The elimination of nuclear weapons will also be a major step towards genuine democratisation of relations between states, their equality and equal responsibility.

Unconditional observance of the United Nations Charter and the right of peoples sovereignly to choose the roads and forms of their development, revolutionary or evolutionary, is an imperative condition of universal security. This applies also to the right to social status quo. This, too, is exclusively an internal matter. Any attempts, direct or indirect, to influence the development of 'not one of our own' countries, to interfere in this development should be ruled out. Just as impermissible are attempts to destabilise existing governments from outside.

At the same time the world community cannot stay away from inter-state conflicts. Here it could be possible to begin by fulfilling the proposal made by the United Nations Secretary-General to set up under the United Nations Organisation a multilateral centre for lessening the danger of war. Evidently, it will be feasible to consider the expediency of setting up a direct communication line between the United Nations Headquarters and the capitals of the countries that are permanent members of the Security Council and the location of the Chairman of the Non-aligned Movement.

It appears to us that with the aim of strengthening trust and mutual understanding it could be possible to set up under the aegis of the United Nations Organisation a mechanism for extensive international verification of compliance with agreements to lessen international tension, limit armaments and for monitoring the military situation in conflict areas. The mechanism would function using various forms and methods of monitoring to collect information and promptly submit it to the United Nations. This would make it possible to have an objective picture of the events taking place, to timely detect preparations for hostilities, impede a sneak attack, take measures to avert an armed conflict, and prevent it from expanding and becoming worse.

We are arriving at the conclusion that wider use should be made of the institute of United Nations military observers and United Nations peace-keeping forces in disengaging the troops of warring sides, and observing ceasefire and armistice agreements.

And of course at all stages of a conflict, extensive use should be made of all means for the peaceful settlement of disputes and differences between states, and one should offer one's good offices and one's mediation with the aim of achieving an armistice. The ideas and initiatives concerning non-governmental commissions and groups which would analyse the causes, circumstances and methods of resolving various concrete conflict situations appear to be fruitful.

The Security Council permanent members could become guarantors of regional security. They could, on their part, assume the obligation not to use force or the threat of force, and renounce demonstrative military presence. This is so because such a practice is one of the factors of fanning up regional conflicts.

A drastic intensification and expansion of the co-operation of states in uprooting international terrorism is extremely important. It would be expedient to concentrate this co-operation within the framework of the United Nations Organisation. In our opinion, it would be useful to create under its aegis a tribunal to investigate acts of international terrorism.

More coordination in the struggle against apartheid as a destabilising factor of international magnitude would also be justified.

As we see it, all the above-stated measures could be organically built into an all-embracing system of peace and security.

III

The events and tendencies of the past decades have expanded this concept, imparting new features and specificities to it. One of them is the problem of economic security. A world in which a whole continent can find itself on the brink of death from starvation and in which huge masses of people are suffering from almost permanent malnutrition is not a safe world. Neither is a world safe in which a multitude of countries and peoples are stifling in a noose of debt.

The economic interests of individual countries or their groups are indeed so different and contradictory that consensus with regard to the concept of the new world economic order seems to be hard to achieve. We do hope, however, that the instinct of self-preservation should snap into action here as well. It is sure to manifest itself if it becomes possible to look into the chain of priorities and see that there are circumstances menacing in their inevitability, and that it is high time that the inert political mentality inherited from past views of the outside world be abandoned. This world has ceased to be a sphere with the big and strong divided into domains and zones of 'vital interests'.

The imperatives of the times compel us to institutionalise many common sense notions. It is not philanthropy which prompted our proposal to agree on the reduction of interest payments under bank credits and the elaboration of extra benefits for the least developed nations. This holds benefit for all, namely a secure future. If the debt burden of the developing world is alleviated, the chances for such a future will grow. It is also possible to limit debt payments by each developing country to the share of its annual export earnings without detriment to development, accept export commodities in payment for the debt, remove protectionist barriers on the borders of creditor-nations and stop adding extra interest when deferring payments under debts.

There may be different attitudes to these proposals. There is no doubt, however, that the

majority of international community members realise the need for immediate actions to alleviate the developing world's debt burden. If that is so, it is possible to start working out the programme through concerted effort.

These words 'through concerted effort' are very important for today's world. The relationship between disarmament and development, confirmed at the recent international conference in New York, can be implemented if none of the strong and rich keep themselves aloof. I already expressed the view that Security Council member states, represented by their top officials, could jointly discuss this problem and work out a coordinated approach. I confirm this proposal.

Ecological security. It is not secure in the direct meaning of the word when currents of poison flow along river channels, when poisonous rains pour down from the sky, when the atmosphere polluted with industrial and transport waste chokes cities and whole regions, when the development of atomic engineering is justified by unacceptable risks.

Many have suddenly begun to perceive all that not as something abstract, but as quite a real part of their own experience. The confidence that 'this won't affect us', characteristic of the past outlook, has disappeared. They say that one thorn of experience is worth more than a whole wood of instructions. For us, Chernobyl became such a thorn. . .

The relationship between man and the environment has become menacing. Problems of ecological security affect all — the rich and the poor. What is required is the global strategy of environmental protection and the rational use of resources. We suggest starting its elaboration within the framework of the UN special programme.

States already exchange appropriate information and notify international organisations of developments. We believe that this order should be legitimised by introducing the principle of government annual reports about their conservationist activity and about ecological accidents, both those that occurred and those that were prevented on the territory of their countries.

Realising the need for opening a common front of economic and ecological security and starting its formation means defusing a delayed-action bomb planted deep inside mankind's existence by history, by people themselves.

IV

Human rights. One can name all the top statesmen of our times who threatened to use nuclear weapons. Some may object: it is one thing to threaten and another to use. Indeed they haven't used them. But campaigning for human rights is in no way compatible with the threat to use weapons of mass destruction. We hold it is unacceptable to talk about human rights and liberties while intending to hang in outer space overhead the 'chandeliers' of exotic weapons. The only down-to-earth element in that 'exoticism' is the potentiality of mankind's annihilation. The rest is in dazzling wrapping.

I agree: the world cannot be considered secure if human rights are violated in it. I will only add: if a large part of this world has no elementary conditions for a life worthy of man, if millions of people have the full 'right' to go hungry, to have no roof over their head and to be jobless and sick indefinitely when treatment is something they cannot afford, if, finally, the basic human right, the right to life, is disregarded.

First of all, it is necessary that national legislation and administrative rules in the humanitarian sphere everywhere be brought into accord with international obligations and standards.

Simultaneously it will be possible to turn to co-ordinating a broad selection of Practical Steps, for instance, to working out a world information programme under UN auspices to

familiarise peoples with one another's life, life as it is, not as someone would like to present it. This is precisely why such a project should envisage ridding the flow of information of the 'enemy image' stereotypes, of bias, prejudices and absurd concoctions, of the deliberate distortion and unscrupulous violation of the truth.

There is much promise in the task of co-ordinating unified international legal criteria for handling in the humanitarian spirit issues of family reunification, marriages, contacts between people and organisations, visa regulations, and so on. What has been achieved on this account within the framework of the all-European process should be accepted as a starting point.

We favour the establishment of a special fund of humanitarian co-operation of the United Nations formed from voluntary state and private contributions on the basis of the reduction of military spending.

It is advisable that all states join the UNESCO conventions in the sphere of culture, including the conventions on protection of the world cultural heritage, and on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property.

The alarming signals of the recent times have pushed to the top of the agenda the idea of creating a world-wide network of medical co-operation in treating most dangerous diseases, including AIDS, and combating drug addiction and alcoholism. The existing structures of the World Health Organisation make it possible to establish such a network at relatively short notice. The leaders of the world movement of physicians have big ideas on this account.

Dialogue on humanitarian problems could be conducted on a bilateral basis, within the forms of negotiation that have already been established. Besides, we propose holding it also within the framework of an international conference in Moscow — we made the proposal at the Vienna meeting in November last year.

Pooling efforts in the sphere of culture, medicine and humanitarian rights is yet another integral part of the system of comprehensive security.

V

The suggested system of comprehensive security will be effective to the extent to which the United Nations, its Security Council and other international institutes and mechanisms will effectively function. It will be required to enhance resolutely the authority and role of the UN, the International Atomic Energy Authority Agency. The need for establishing a World Space Organisation is clearly felt. It could work in the future in close contact with the UN as an autonomous part of its system. UN specialised agencies should also become regulators of international processes. The Geneva Conference on Disarmament should become a forum that internationalises efforts on transition to a nuclear-free, non-violent world.

One should not forget the capacities of the International Court either. The General Assembly and the Security Council could approach it more often for consultative conclusions on international disputes. Its mandatory jurisdiction should be recognised by all on mutually agreed-upon conditions. The permanent members of the Security Council, taking into account special responsibility, are to make the first step in that direction.

We are convinced that a comprehensive system of security is at the same time a system of universal law and order ensuring the primacy of international law in politics.

The UN Charter gives extensive powers to the Security Council. Joint efforts are required to ensure that it can use them effectively. For this purpose, there will be sense in holding meetings of the Security Council at foreign ministers' level when opening a regular session of the General Assembly, to review the international situation

and jointly look for effective ways for its improvement.

It will be useful to hold meetings of the Security Council not only at the Headquarters of the UN in New York, but also in regions of friction and tension and alternate them among the capitals of the permanent member states.

Special missions of the Council to regions of actual and potential conflicts would also help consolidate its authority and enhance the effectiveness of decisions adopted.

We are convinced that co-operation between the UN and regional organisations could be considerably expanded. Its aim is the search for a political settlement of crisis situations.

In our view, it is important to hold special sessions of the General Assembly on the more urgent political problems and individual disarmament issues more often if the efficiency of the assembly's work is to be improved.

We emphatically stress the need for making the status of important political documents passed at the United Nations by consensus more binding morally and politically. Let me recall that they include, among others, the final document of the 1st Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Charter of Economic Rights and Obligations of States, and others.

In our opinion, we should have set up long ago a world consultative council under the UN auspices uniting the world's intellectual elite. Prominent scientists, political and public figures, representatives of international public organisations, cultural workers, people in literature and the arts, including laureates of the Nobel Prize and other international prizes of world-wide significance, eminent representatives of the churches, could seriously enrich the spiritual and ethical potential of contemporary world politics.

To ensure that the United Nations and its specialised agencies operate at full capacity, one should come to realise that it is impermissible to use financial levers for bringing pressure to bear on it. The Soviet Union will continue to co-operate actively in overcoming budget difficulties arising at the United Nations.

And finally, about the United Nations Secretary-General. The International community elects an authoritative figure enjoying everybody's trust to that high post. Since the Secretary-General is functioning as a representative of every member-country of the Organisation all states should give him the maximum of support and help him in fulfilling his responsible mission. The international community should encourage the United Nations Secretary-General in his missions of good offices, mediation and reconciliation.

* * *

Why are we so persistent in raising the question of a comprehensive system of international peace and security?

Simply because it is impossible to put up with the situation in which the world has found itself on the threshold of the third millennium — in the face of a threat of annihilation, in a state of constant tension, in an atmosphere of suspicion and strife, spending huge funds and quantities of work and talent of millions of people only to increase mutual mistrust and fears.

One can speak as much as one pleases about the need for terminating the arms race, uprooting militarism, or about co-operation. Nothing will change unless we start acting.

The political and moral core of the problem is the trust of the states and peoples in one another, respect for international agreements and institutions. And we are prepared to switch from confidence measures in individual spheres to a large-scale policy of trust which will gradually

Mikhail Gorbachev's reply to a letter from Ruhr workers

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S reply to a letter from members of production councils of steel-making enterprises in the Ruhr region was handed over in the major industrial centre of Dortmund in the Federal Republic of Germany on September 21.

The Soviet leader's reply was presented to representatives of the Ruhr steel-workers by the USSR Ambassador to the FRG, Yuli Kvitsinsky.

In their letter to Gorbachev, the Ruhr steel-workers backed his idea for building a common European home. In their view, the Soviet Union with its plans for economic restructuring and the Ruhr region with its great economic and technical potential could extract mutual benefit from greater economic co-operation between the two countries.

Welcoming the General Secretary's proposals for eliminating all types of nuclear weapons, the authors of the letter emphasised that this would open the way for eliminating missiles and adopting other disarmament measures and that these chances should be used to boost mutually beneficial economic co-operation.

Thanking them for the letter, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee emphasised that it dealt not only with the most urgent problems of eliminating nuclear missiles and finding new ways in European politics, but also with burning issues of the FRG's domestic situation, including prospects for developing the Ruhr region.

Assessing the Ruhr steel-workers' address as an expression of trust in the Soviet Union and its policy, the Soviet leader noted that good-neighbourliness, trust and co-operation should determine the situation in the common European home, a home yet to be built through concerted effort by all European peoples.

"Europe is ripe for that," Gorbachev observed. "In handling its own problems, it may set a good example of far-sighted and effective co-operation in the name of mankind's survival and solution of large-scale tasks of further developing civilisation in the conditions of interaction between different socio-political systems.

"Our countries possess substantial capabilities for promoting this course of development. This would open a new page in relations between

the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany.

"New European thinking is required," he said. "Virtually everything attests to that.

"The convulsion of confrontation between the two blocs seizing Europe, the economic, technological and scientific division of the continent is an unnatural state.

"Preserving it is against the interests of the Europeans.

"Honest co-operation, rather than confrontation, should be central to the entire make-up of life in Europe. This will open new prospects in politics, economics and the human sphere. Each resident of our new European home will benefit from that."

Noting that the Soviet Union maintained longstanding co-operation and trade with the Ruhr region, Gorbachev stressed the USSR's interest in maintaining and multiplying these traditions.

In the conditions of economic reform currently under way in the USSR and restructuring of its foreign economic ties, he observed, "there are considerable opportunities for invigorating co-operation with firms and workers' collectives in the Ruhr, transition to its ever more intensive forms.

"It is necessary to use these opportunities for mutual benefit," the Soviet leader said.

"In our view, there are reserves for increasing shipments of metallurgical products from the Ruhr to the Soviet Union, if, naturally, the Western side builds no obstacles and conditions are mutually beneficial."

In conclusion, Mikhail Gorbachev wished the Ruhr region's inhabitants success in work and private life, in their efforts to preserve their native land and ensure its prosperity. □

Mikhail Gorbachev's greetings to friendship societies

HERE follows Mikhail Gorbachev's message of greeting to a meeting of representatives of foreign societies for friendship with the USSR and of the Soviet public —

"Let me cordially greet the representatives of foreign societies for friendship with the USSR and of the Soviet public participating in an international meeting on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

"It is significant that your meeting is taking place in Leningrad, the cradle of the revolution

and the city where the Peace Act, an impassioned appeal to the governments and peoples to do away with war, has been adopted.

"Throughout its history, the country of Soviets has remained faithful to the October Revolution's behest to live in peace and friendship with all nations and has consistently upheld in its international policy the principles of peaceful coexistence.

"This goal has been served also by the concept of building a comprehensive system of international security, which has been put forward and is being actively translated into reality by the Soviet Union.

"Removing the threat of nuclear catastrophe, which has come to loom large over the planet, and ensuring the latter a future without wars is what our country has been urging and what it is working for. It is prepared to interact with all states and public forces without exception in these efforts.

"We are convinced that the policy we have adopted of promoting change, bringing out the creative potential and humane substance of socialism more fully and asserting a new manner of political thinking in international relations is a direct continuation of the October Revolution's cause and helps to broaden the base of international mutual understanding and constructive co-operation.

"Working for a nuclear-free world and for the survival of humanity is a mission not only for politicians. This truth is being increasingly realised by people who have begun to get involved with the issues of war and peace on a growing scale and ever more actively.

"The movement for friendship and co-operation among nations is an important integral part of the social forces pressing for the creation of a non-violent world free from nuclear weapons, and is a kind of public diplomacy school.

"I sincerely wish success to your meeting and to your noble activities directed at strengthening friendship among nations."

M. Gorbachev □

Gorbachev's reply to American schoolchildren

A message by Mikhail Gorbachev in reply to a letter from a group of schoolchildren from the Vose Elementary School in Beaverton, Oregon, was handed over in a ceremony held at the Soviet Embassy in the American capital on September 18.

Soviet Ambassador Yuri Dubinin read out the text of the message in which the Soviet leader thanked the American schoolchildren for their letter, which expressed a striving to preserve peace in the world and contained a "peace gift programme".

The Soviet Ambassador handed over the text of Gorbachev's message to the headmaster, Jack Kirby, who led the group of American schoolchildren, along with a colourful illustrated book about the Soviet Union. The book was Mikhail Gorbachev's gift to the American schoolchildren who had sent him a symbolic "peace quilt", which they made with their own hands, together with the letter.

Jack Kirby and school teacher Harriet Nicholson warmly thanked Mikhail Gorbachev for the attention he showed to the American schoolchildren. □

Gorbachev's message to architects

Here follows the text of Mikhail Gorbachev's message of greeting to the first session of the International Academy of Architecture:

Let me cordially greet the participants in the first session of the International Academy of Architecture.

Architecture has occupied a prominent place in the evolution of human society. It has been connected with the fulfilment of highly important social tasks, directly involved in shaping the material habitat of humans, and influencing the spiritual life and aesthetic education of every person.

Representing the social sphere, architects may not stay away from the resolution of pressing problems on which the fate of our entire civilisation depends.

In this connection I set great store by your desire to make a contribution of your own to accomplishing the overriding task of the times — preventing nuclear disaster and ensuring a peaceful and just future for all nations in the name of their mutual understanding and co-operation.

I am convinced that the active participation of the broadest sections of the peace-loving public is an earnest of success in efforts to realise these great humanistic ideals.

I would like to wish the International Academy of Architecture success in uniting the efforts of architects for the benefit of peace and progress.

M. Gorbachev. □

Eduard Shevardnadze's Washington press conference

Eduard Shevardnadze, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR, addressed a press conference in Washington on September 18 on the completion of the Soviet-American talks. He said, in part:

Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades, at this time, we should have already been in New York, but delayed our departure in order to hold this press conference which had been planned for yesterday.

I think you understand — you know why it was not held yesterday.

But still, I have to say that, the road to an agreement about which everyone spoke as an accomplished fact turned out to be more complicated than we had thought.

Yesterday, we and our American partners met for a whole day. And only towards the evening were we able to resolve some difficult questions.

For the first time in the history of the existence of nuclear weapons, of the existence of what I would call the nuclear face-off between the Soviet Union and the United States of America, it has been possible to agree on the elimination of two classes of nuclear weapons.

This is a beginning. Certainly a beginning which we hope has to be and will be followed by a continuation.

Let me repeat, those were difficult negotiations, but not for a moment did we have any doubts about their success — their mutual success, for the Soviet Union and for the United States. A common success for all mankind, for human civilisation.

Our confidence has been based, continues to be based, on the understanding of the logic of our time. We have a good system of political and ethical reference points. And at the most critical moment, we received powerful moral support.

I am referring to the article by Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of our Party's Central Committee, published on September the 17th in *Pravda* and titled, "The Reality and Guarantees of a Secure World". This is the most extensive and structured presentation of the view of the Soviet leadership concerning the problems of peace, security and disarmament which builds on the ideas contained in Mikhail Gorbachev's statement, January the 15th, 1986, and in his political report to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

It is clear from this document that the principles which we uphold are not for us something rigid and immovable — that they constantly develop, they constantly become more specific and detailed in line with the current situation.

In this sense, the article, which is a new departure, contains new revolutionary thinking, new revolutionary spirit. This is of great interest in and of itself. But, the main significance of this article lies as we see it in the fact that it charts what we think is the current route leading to a secure, a non-nuclear world.

The analysis of the trends of recent times contained in the article is supported by a prognosis, a forecast, of the development of the situation in Soviet-American and international relations. In other words, this forecast, which is being justified before our very eyes, convincingly vindicates the General Secretary's belief that the concept of a comprehensive system of international peace and security can become a reality.

Quite recently, there were few people who believed in a possibility of nuclear disarmament, and today we are taking the first major step

towards a nuclear-free world. Similarly, all the other proposals contained in Mikhail Gorbachev's article, which I would describe as the doctrine of a secure world — all of them can, and we are convinced of that, become practical reality.

I would like also to congratulate those of you who, over these days, have demonstrated heightened professional insight by discerning in our negotiations with the President and the Secretary of State optimism and hope.

I know that you need details and facts. Almost all that could be said is contained in our joint statement that we approved with the Secretary of State, a joint statement for the press and other agreed documents.

I know that you need details and facts. Almost all that could be said is contained in our joint statement, and the rest is emotions which, for me, are very important. Over these days, we have experienced a complex spectrum of emotions, from anxiety to a strong emotional uplift. And this is what we are feeling now, because, by our joint efforts, we have been able to achieve what we have been moving towards for many years. The day before yesterday, I said to Secretary Shultz that it is time for us to bring in the harvest, and he agreed.

Now, this agreement is much broader than just simple mutual understanding. I would like to recall, for your benefit, some moments which preceded this important landmark event. I would like to recall Geneva and Reykjavik, the summits in those two cities, because I think that the agreements which we have reached now reflect the spirit of those two summits.

I would like also to remind you that to ensure that the agreement is reached, the Soviet Union agreed to set aside the question of British and French nuclear arsenals, which is an important question.

We unpacked the well-known Reykjavik package, although we would prefer to have a package, a complex solution to the problems relating to nuclear and space weapons. We accepted a global double zero on INF and shorter-range missiles. Also, in order to satisfy the request and the demand of Asian countries, we agreed to eliminate also the whole class of such missiles in Asia. Also, the fact that we are eliminating a greater number of warheads in our nuclear arsenals than the NATO side, although I do not want to say by this that we are neglecting the security interests of ourselves and our allies. No, we do have guarantees of sufficient and reliable defence.

Having agreed in a firm and definitive manner to sign an agreement on the elimination of two classes of nuclear weapons, we have also identified the sequence and the time frame for the further steps which will bring us to the actual implementation of the agreement.

In about one month's time the Secretary of State and myself will have another meeting in order to receive from our delegations the finalised texts of the documents to be signed, and also in order to set out the modalities of the meeting between the top leaders of our two countries. The meeting with the Secretary of State will take place in Moscow, and of course, the Secretary of State will have a talk with the General Secretary.

Let me emphasise that the progress that we have been able to achieve would hardly have been possible without the assistance of our allies

and I mean here both the European socialist countries, particularly the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia, where shorter-range INF missiles are located and also the US allies in Europe, particularly the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

As you know, Mikhail Gorbachev positively appreciated that well-known statement by Federal Chancellor Kohl as part of the mutually acceptable solution to the question of the Pershing-IA missiles in the FRG. There is now an agreed provision that the nuclear warheads belonging to the United States for those missiles will be subject to the same procedure as all the other nuclear warheads for INF and shorter-range missiles.

So we've been able to find a solution which does not affect the alliance interests of the United States and which is also consistent with our interests.

It has been confirmed that within the time frame established by the future treaty all nuclear warheads of the missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometres will be eliminated.

Agreement has been reached on the procedures for the implementation of the agreements about the scope and methods of verification and control and on other fundamental provisions. Both we and our American partners have complete confidence that the treaty will be signed before the end of this year.

Unfortunately, and this I have to report to you with some regret, we have not yet been able to bring our positions substantially closer together on the question of the 50 per cent reductions of strategic offensive weapons in the context of strict compliance and strengthening of the regime of the ABM Treaty. This question, which we believe is the root question of Soviet-US relations, has to be moved forward in the period remaining before the meeting of the ministers, so that they can prepare productive agreements for approval at the summit. On this, our delegations in Geneva have now received straightforward and very categorical firm instructions from the two foreign ministers.

We also put forward a number of specific proposals concerning the preservation and strengthening of the ABM Treaty regime. This could become the subject of discussion at a meeting between our defence ministers. Particularly, I have in mind the questions referring to the different positions concerning the possible violations of the ABM Treaty.

I was authorised by the Soviet leadership to transmit to Secretary Weinberger the invitation to such a meeting which could be held within the framework of the next session of the standing consultative commission.

I have to tell you in confidence that Secretary Weinberger so far has not responded to that proposal. We await for the response.

Yesterday, we issued a statement concerning the starting before December the 1st of this year of comprehensive negotiations on the problems relating to the cessation of nuclear weapons testing. This is also a very important step in a very important area. Although, you remember what our position is on this question; we would have preferred a more radical solution and that is the immediate ending of all nuclear tests, all nuclear

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Soviet Foreign Minister's meetings in New York

EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE paid a visit to the President of the 42nd session of the United Nations General Assembly, Peter Florin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, on September 21.

Upon congratulating Peter Florin on his being elected President of the UN General Assembly's session, Eduard Shevardnadze expressed confidence that the session's work would become an important stage in the cause of setting up a large-scale international dialogue on the establishment of a comprehensive system of international security the basic principles of which received further development in Mikhail Gorbachev's article headlined "Reality and Guarantees for a Secure World."

Eduard Shevardnadze has had a meeting with Thorvald Stoltenberg, Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

It was pointed out that the agreement in principle reached between the Soviet Union and the United States on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles was justly viewed by the international community as a historic one inspiring hope for a fundamental change in the cause of disarmament.

The two foreign ministers reaffirmed the striving of the two sides for further development of Soviet-Norwegian high-level political dialogue and of bilateral co-operation in various fields.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR has met with his Portuguese counterpart, Joao de Deus Pinheiro. The sides discussed a number of practical matters aimed at developing Soviet-Portuguese relations, and pointed out the special importance of giving greater scope to the political dialogue between the two countries.

Some matters concerning Soviet-Indonesian relations as well as the agenda of the 42nd session of the UN General Assembly from the viewpoint of effectively using the international forum for building a secure world free from nuclear weapons were considered during Eduard Shevardnadze's friendly conversation with Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Indonesian minister highly appreciated the importance of Mikhail Gorbachev's article contributed to the newspaper *Pravda*, pointing out that the world should be grateful to the General Secretary for the boldness to take upon himself the task of looking into the future and determining ways leading to a nuclear-free world.

The sides pointed out the great importance of the initiatives, put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev in his answers to the questions put by the Indonesian newspaper *Merdeka*, for improving the political climate in the Asian-Pacific region and for establishing an atmosphere of trust and good-neighbourly relations there.

Common understanding of the need to solve the outstanding problems in South East Asia, including Kampuchea, through peaceful political

means was reaffirmed. The Soviet side took note of Indonesia's positive role in a search for ways for a Kampuchean settlement.

Eduard Shevardnadze met with Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs Charles Joseph Clark. In accordance with the Soviet-Canadian protocol on consultations, a thorough exchange of opinions on some key international issues was held. Special attention was paid to the need for effective co-operation of all countries in strengthening common security on the basis of new political thinking in international affairs, which meets the realities of a nuclear space age.

The sides expressed a striving towards further extending multifaceted co-operation between the two neighbouring countries on a mutually beneficial basis.

Expressing his thanks for the information concerning the results of the Soviet-US talks in Washington, Joseph Clark highly assessed the agreement in principle between the USSR and the USA on eliminating a whole class of nuclear weapons and expressed the hope that it would provide an additional impetus for talks on the entire range of disarmament problems, including the reduction of conventional weapons in Europe and a switch-over to the policy of trust in all fields of international relations. The sides spoke out in favour of intensifying work at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament with a view to concluding the convention on banning chemical weapons, in the nearest future. □

SHEVARDNADZE'S PRESS CONFERENCE

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explosions. This would be an historic — historic step.

And also about one more addition, and that is we find an agreement about establishing the centres for the reduction of the risk of nuclear war.

Exchanges relating to the problems concerning the prohibition of chemical weapons — in this area, substantial progress has been achieved — concerning the reduction of armed forces in Europe, and concerning bilateral aspects of Soviet-US relations have been useful and encouraging. I would like particularly to

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shape a system of comprehensive security. But such a policy should be based on the community of political statements and real positions.

The idea of a comprehensive system of security is the first plan for a possible new organisation of life in our common planetary home. In other words, it is a pass into the future where security of all is the token of the security of everyone. We hope that the current session of the United Nations General Assembly will jointly develop and concretise this idea. □

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emphasise that, for the first time, both sides expressed satisfaction about the constructive nature of the discussion of humanitarian questions that took place.

To summarise, I would say that we have been able to reach as much agreement and as broad agreement as is possible today. It is amazing that — the degree of the possible is so significant, so substantial. This causes us to feel a great deal of optimism, though, of course, many difficulties, many contradictions do remain in Soviet-US relations.

Yesterday, I thanked Secretary Shultz and Mr Carlucci, who was actively involved in our negotiations, particularly at their concluding stage. I thanked also their assistants and also Soviet and US experts for good co-operation, and I would like you to mention this in your reports, if possible.

I attach great importance to the fact that during the first day of our negotiations, and also the last day of our negotiations, we were received by President Reagan, and had important meetings with the President, had a good exchange of views which was an important factor for the success of our negotiations. Over all, the meetings, the dialogue between us have been held in a constructive, business-like atmosphere, I would say an atmosphere of good will, and this is the atmosphere that is characteristic of our relations with the Secretary of State.

We have a great deal of very substantial and difficult work ahead of us, but this is a different kind of work, because when one has agreed drawings, one knows when construction will be completed.

Eduard Shevardnadze then answered questions asked by journalists. □

SOVIET-AMERICAN STATEMENT

THE following joint Statement was adopted last Thursday at the meeting between Eduard Shevardnadze, Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR, and US Secretary of State George Shultz:

The Soviet and US sides have agreed to begin before December 1, 1987 full-scale stage-by-stage negotiations which will be conducted in a single forum.

In these negotiations the sides as a first step will agree upon effective verification measures which will make it possible to ratify the USSR-US Threshold Test Ban Treaty of 1974 and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty of 1976, and proceed to negotiating further intermediate limitations on nuclear testing leading to the ultimate objective of the complete cessation of nuclear testing as part of an effective disarmament process.

This process, among other things, will pursue, as the first priority, the goal of reduction of nuclear weapons and ultimately their elimination.

For the purpose of elaborating improved verification measures for the USSR-US treaties of 1974 and 1976 the sides intend to design and conduct joint verification experiments at each other's test sites. These verification measures will, to the extent appropriate, be used in further nuclear test limitation agreements which may subsequently be reached. □

Meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee

AT its meeting last Thursday the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee studied and approved on the whole a draft statute on the State Production Amalgamation. The statute says that enterprises, groups and organisations of one or several industries can be included in a production amalgamation, which is the biggest organisational structure in the national economy at the production level and which operates on the basis of full cost-accounting and self-financing. A state production amalgamation can be all-union or regional. An amalgamation will be managed on a democratic basis by a board of directors and a director-general elected by the board. The enterprises, groups and organisations making up the amalgamation will set up a council of representatives of work collectives.

The meeting discussed and approved measures to further improve management of branches of the country's chemistry and timber complex. It was decided to form a permanent governmental body — the USSR Council of Ministers' Bureau for the Chemical and Timber Complex. Its most

important tasks will be to expand the use of chemicals in the economy and fully satisfy the country's requirements in advanced products of the chemical, petrochemical, pulp-and-paper, wood-working, medical and microbiological studies.

A resolution of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers 'On Switching Scientific Organisations to Full Cost-Accounting and Self-Financing' was studied and adopted in the main.

It is intended to move from financing the upkeep of scientific organisations from ministries and agencies to financing research and development from clients by way of concluding direct contracts and payment upon conclusion of the R&D.

At the meeting the Politburo outlined additional measures to perfect external economic activity in the new conditions of economic management with the aim of invigorating the work of ministries, agencies, union republics, amalgamations, enterprises, state farms and collective farms with the organisations of socialist, developing and capitalist countries. Support was given to proposals to expand considerably the rights of organisations in making independent decisions in the field of external economic co-operation.

The Politburo approved the results of the work of the Soviet Party and state delegation, headed by Lev Zaikov, which took part in the celebra-

tions on the occasion of the proclamation of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It was stressed that the formation of the PDRE, the transition to constitutional forms of government and to rule by the people is an historic event in the life of the Ethiopian people and heralds a new stage in the Ethiopian Revolution's development.

It was noted with satisfaction that the conversations with President Mengistu Haile Mariam, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, and other Ethiopian leaders passed in an atmosphere of comradely mutual understanding and confirmed the common stands on key problems of the present-day world and their mutual striving to develop relations of friendship and co-operation between our countries.

The Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee also discussed some other questions of Soviet society's economic and social development and of the Soviet state's foreign policy activities. □

British parliamentarians for wider bilateral contacts

THE British were pioneers in the development of contacts with the Soviet people. They were the first in the West to set up a society for cultural ties with the USSR in 1924.

This historical fact was mentioned with satisfaction at a meeting between Eduard Sarkisov, Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies, and Kenneth Warren, Chairman of the British-Soviet Parliamentary Group, in Moscow last Thursday.

Kenneth Warren is staying in Moscow at the invitation of the Parliamentary Group of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Sarkisov told the British MP that the USSR-Britain Friendship Society now has more than 200 grassroot organisations and that sixteen Soviet cities are twinned with cities in Britain.

Speaking of the need to widen bilateral contacts, he said they open up broad opportunities for better mutual understanding.

Kenneth Warren said that the Memorandum on Mutual Understanding signed during British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's visit to Moscow this year is a bridge allowing free two-way traffic between the two countries.

He said the British side wants to continue exchanges in literature, films, art groups and sport teams, as well as tourism.

Warren regretted the small volume of bilateral trade which he said needs drastic growth.

Warren touched on the issue of human rights in the Soviet Union. He agreed with Sarkisov that the main human right is the right to life, without which all other rights are impossible to exercise.

The British MP said both sides fear war, but by extending bilateral co-operation they could contribute greatly to removing that threat.

A human being can be killed by a nuclear bomb and by a conventional bullet, he said. That is why disarmament should follow diverse roads.

Kenneth Warren favours an early Soviet-US agreement on eliminating medium- and shorter-range missiles, which he says will promote the disarmament process. □

Conference at CPSU Central Committee

SOME questions connected with fulfilling the resolution of the CPSU Central Committee on preparations for the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution were studied at the CPSU Central Committee at a conference with senior mass media and propaganda officials last week. It was addressed by Yegor Ligachev, Member of the Politburo

and Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.

The Soviet press, he noted, is actively helping the process of restructuring, democratisation and openness, vigorously struggling against everything that is obsolete and negative, and asserting in life what is positive. The CPSU Central Committee is giving every assistance and support to the press and the literary community. Resolutions of the CPSU Central Committee have been adopted on a number of publications. Any attempts both in the centre and in the provinces to silence businesslike criticism will continue to be dealt with resolutely.

But some publications, as is noted by the public, failed to correctly find their bearings and organically blend a truthful portrayal of our history with the solution of present-day problems of the renewal drive. At times different periods of history are covered one-sidedly.

Attention was drawn to the following. In ideological work one must take into account that our opponents abroad are substantially changing their tactics and re-forming their ranks. Realising that the Soviet Union will emerge from the restructuring even stronger than it is now and that the attractive force of socialism is growing, these opponents have started gathering into a single front all reactionary forces with the aim of impeding or, if possible, torpedoing our policy of acceleration, renewal and democratisation. Special hopes are being pinned on rekindling nationalistic sentiments.

Yegor Ligachev devoted part of his speech to the attainment of the economic tasks facing the country in the current year. It was stressed that supplying the population with foodstuffs in sufficient quantities and of a high quality in the next few years should be one of the most important results of the restructuring. □

Mikhail Gorbachev

For a "Common European Home"
for a New Way of Thinking

Speech at Czechoslovak-Soviet

Friendship Meeting

Prague, April 10, 1987

The above speech is available as a Novosti booklet from Soviet Booklets, 3 Rosary Gardens, London, SW7 4NW (01-373 7350).

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Member States

Berlin, May 28-29, 1987

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Soviet Premier's greetings to IAEA Conference

Here follows the full text of Nikolai Ryzhkov's message of greetings to the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the organisation:

ON behalf of the Soviet Government I greet the participants in the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency which gathered for the session in the year of its 30th anniversary.

The IAEA is rightly considered one of the most authoritative international organisations and recognised centre for the coordination of states' efforts in peaceful uses of atomic energy and in exercising control over proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The agency's entire 30-year history convincingly shows that its establishment was a major landmark in developing international co-operation with a view to using the energy of the peaceful atom for the needs of social and economic development.

Its practical assistance to countries in such areas as nuclear power engineering, use of radioactive isotopes and irradiation in industry, agriculture, medicine and science deserves high appraisal.

Co-operation of states in the peaceful use of atomic energy will enter a qualitatively new phase if real progress is achieved in the field of nuclear disarmament and universal security.

Our country regards co-operation in this field as an alternative to the nuclear arms race and the channelling of mankind's immense material and intellectual resources to the development of ever more dangerous and refined means of annihilation.

Proceeding from the premise that the use of atomic energy should be directed exclusively for the benefit of construction, the Soviet Union advanced a whole complex of initiatives opening up real prospects for advancement towards a more secure and ultimately non-violent world.

This is specific confirmation of our readiness to strive by practical deeds for the transformation of the principle — the atom should be only peaceful — into a universal standard of interstate relations.

The IAEA is making considerable practical contribution to strengthening international security and creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding among states.

Control exercised by the agency over non-conversion of nuclear materials and civilian installations for military purposes is an effective barrier in the way of the proliferation of nuclear weapons around the world.

Today, this is the only international

mechanism of control in the sphere of restricting nuclear arms. The IAEA's experience in that field can be used for handling other problems of nuclear disarmament.

The Soviet Union, one of the initiators of founding the IAEA, is ready to continue rendering all-round support to the agency on key issues of its activity.

We stand for further broadening its functions and imparting to them greater scope. The USSR's proposals for establishing an international regime for the safe development of nuclear power engineering welcomed and backed by the IAEA go in the same direction.

Recognising the great importance of the agency's activity in the field of control, the Soviet Union helps enhance the effectiveness and reliability of its system of safeguards. In strict compliance with the standards and principles of the agency's charter, the USSR is prepared to share its experience and technical capabilities with the countries which use atomic energy exclusively for peaceful purposes, thus facilitating their prosperity and progress.

I wish success to the work of your forum.

Nikolai Ryzhkov □

Chemical weapons destruction facility

A FACTORY under construction in the area of Chapayevsk, near the city of Kuibyshev in the Volga region, is to destroy rather than make products, reports TASS.

It is a facility to convert chemical munitions into ordinary chemical compounds, acids and salts, using a specially-devised, almost waste-free technology.

First Soviet-Italian joint venture set up

On September 18 the Soviet Union and Italy signed a contract setting up their first joint enterprise.

The contract was signed at the international exhibition 'Chemistry-87' in Moscow.

The enterprise Sovplastital has been formed by the Italian firm Alma Rose from Robbio Lombardia and the Soviet research-and-production amalgamation Uzbyplastik based in Tashkent.

Sovplastital will market household goods. □

The Lessons of Chernobyl are Important for All

Valeri Legasov,
Member of the Presidium
of the USSR Academy of Sciences

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The first factory in the history of mankind to be working towards disarmament, it will be completed in 1988.

"The prime mission of the new enterprise," said Colonel-General Vladimir Pikalov, Chief of the Chemical Forces of the USSR Defence Ministry, "will be to test newly-developed scientific and technological ideas which in the future are to form the basis of a facility that will make it possible to destroy Soviet munitions within the time frame to be set by a convention on a complete prohibition of chemical weapons."

Soviet scientists have accomplished a challenging research and engineering task by coming up with a unique technology for ridding toxins of their toxicity. Their reproduction from the compounds that will result from the process is impossible. The solid and liquid wastes are to be burned in a special installation.

Only scrap metal will remain after all these operations, and that will be recycled for use in the national economy.

While the USSR is making efforts to foster an international atmosphere of trust, a fact underlined, among other things, by the construction of the factory for destroying chemical weapons, in the United States it is provided to spend more than 12 billion dollars to produce such weapons over the next ten years.

The recent invitation to representatives of the 40 nations involved in talks on a convention to ban chemical weapons and the ten observer countries to visit the military facility Shikhany, outside the city of Saratov in the lower reaches of the Volga, to take a look at standard Soviet chemical munitions and the technology for their destruction has been another Soviet step to enhance trust.

The Secretary-General of the Disarmament Conference, representatives of Switzerland and

Senegal, and foreign journalists have also been invited to Shikhany.

The USSR plans to invite foreign guests after some time to the facility where chemical weapons will be destroyed as well.

The technology to be used at the factory makes it possible to ensure a high degree of safety for its staff and the nearby populated localities. Instruments will detect any deviation from the processes involved and prevent any toxic leak. All this will simplify international verification. It is with account taken of its requirements that the Chapayevsk factory is being built. □

Expert Opinion

- Restructuring Begins With Each One of Us, by Tatyana Zaslavskaya, Member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and prominent Soviet economist 40p
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