

DRAFT LETTER FROM PRESIDENT TO GORBACHEV

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

Since our meetings in Reykjavik I have given considerable thought to the issues we discussed and to the future of the U.S.-Soviet relationship. I think it is clear that we made substantial progress in bridging our positions on a number of important issues. I hope that you will agree with me that our task now is to proceed from the basis we reached in Reykjavik and press on to find solutions acceptable to both of us for the problems which remain.

What strikes me most, as I review our discussions in Iceland, is the way we succeeded in focusing on practical steps to reduce nuclear weapons radically and to move toward a world totally free of them. We, of course, had agreed previously on these objectives in general. But I have the feeling that our meetings in Hofdi House were qualitatively different from earlier discussions, in that, for the first time, we began to agree on concrete and practical steps to move us toward these goals.

Though details remain for our negotiators to work out, it seems to me that we now are essentially in agreement on the basic elements of a treaty to reduce longer-range intermediate-range nuclear missiles to an interim global ceiling of 100 warheads on each side, to be located outside of Europe. We also seem very close to agreeing on the basic elements of a treaty to reduce strategic weapons by fifty percent in five years. [In this instance, the question of sublimits remains an unresolved issue. However, since you have proposed deep cuts in your heavy missiles, and a 50% cut in each leg of the triad of nuclear forces -- both of which proposals imply the existence of sublimits -- our negotiators should be able to work out precise figures which are mutually acceptable if we authorize them to deal with the question in a constructive way.] We also have agreed on the approach to negotiations on nuclear testing. In sum, so far as three of the four key nuclear-related areas are concerned, we should be able to bridge the remaining differences rapidly if we approach the questions with the proper political will.

In the fourth area, that of defensive and space weapons, we also made substantial progress, in particular by agreeing that there could be, under appropriate circumstances, a mutual commitment not to withdraw from the ABM Treaty for ten years. Still, some major points remain at issue, and we should lose no time in seeking to resolve them.

In this connection, I hope you recognize that my proposal to eliminate all ballistic missiles by 1996 was made, among other reasons, to accommodate the concerns you expressed to me in

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Geneva about the danger that strategic defenses could be used as part of an offensive, first-strike strategy. Obviously, if we eliminate our ballistic missiles before deploying advanced strategic defenses, such a strategy would be impossible. You are of course aware that my proposal has been questioned by some American Allies, and even by some of my own specialists, as too forthcoming. In fact, it would require the elimination of some of the most advanced weapon systems in the American arsenal. However, this is a step which I am prepared to take in the interest of genuine and radical arms reduction. Therefore, my proposal remains on the table, and I believe that you will see, after analysis and reflection, that acceptance of it would contribute to the security of both our countries.

As I told you at Reykjavik and earlier, I endorse the goal of ultimately eliminating all nuclear weapons. It is important for us not only to keep this goal in the public eye, but to develop a practical strategy for moving toward it. This is why I welcomed your comprehensive proposal in January. However, I believe we must recognize that our ability to eliminate nuclear weapons will depend not only on steps to reduce nuclear weapons as such, but also on creation of an overall international security environment which makes nuclear weapons unnecessary. A reasonable conventional arms balance, the absence of threatening international behavior (including, of course, the aggressive use of conventional arms), the existence of trust based on openness and demonstrated willingness to settle disputes peacefully, and the development of effective non-nuclear defenses will all be essential elements of a world in which nuclear weapons can be eliminated. This is why I have made so many proposals to deal with these matters -- and it is why I will continue to do so.

Nevertheless, we both must recognize that progress has been very slow, and in some important areas there has been none at all. For example, I see no sign that the Soviet Union is making any genuine practical moves to end its colonial war in Afghanistan.

In mentioning this, my purpose is not to revive at this time our debate on Afghanistan and other regional conflicts. Rather, it is to explain why I believe we must find ways to take the first steps toward nuclear arms reduction, without attempting to settle all the key issues between our countries at once. If we try to do everything at once, we will probably find that we are able to do nothing. As we both have noted, history expects and deserves better of us.

Of course, either of us can condition our proposals any way we wish. From the American point of view, it greatly complicates the conclusion of major arms reduction agreements while Soviet forces are still fighting in Afghanistan, while families remain divided despite commitments made in Helsinki as far back as 1975,

and while the Soviet Union is constructing a large phased-array radar forbidden by the 1972 ABM Treaty. Nevertheless, important as it is to resolve all these (and many other) issues eventually, the United States has tried to minimize rigid linkages in the arms reduction area, because of its commitment to rapid progress in reducing the levels of nuclear arms.

If the Soviet leadership approached these questions with the same constructive attitude, then I believe that we would have grounds for substantial optimism, since we seem so close to agreement on some of the most important nuclear weapons issues. Concluding agreements in these areas would unquestionably provide momentum for settling other issues. I assumed that this was precisely what you meant to do when you suggested, in your letter dated September 15, that we meet to work out instructions "for negotiation of two or three draft agreements."

Well, as I have mentioned, we did reach substantial agreement on three of the four topics we discussed most intensively. But what are we hearing now from the Soviet side? That everything discussed in Iceland has suddenly become an indivisible "package."

Mr. General Secretary, I do not dispute your right to change your position anytime you wish. Nor do I dispute that it is highly desirable to resolve as many contentious issues in U.S.-Soviet relations as we can. However, I must be frank to say that your apparent reversal of one of the achievements in our negotiations at Geneva -- when we agreed that some arms reduction steps would be possible on an interim basis before we had settled all the nuclear issues -- is not designed to hasten the day when we can begin the substantial reduction of nuclear weapons which we have promised our peoples.

In addition to this apparent change in your approach, I have also noted a disturbing tendency in recent weeks for some Soviet spokesmen to denigrate the importance of what we achieved in Iceland and to present aspects of our meeting in terms which an objective observer can only regard as bizarre. For example, I have been accused of coming with "empty pockets" to the meeting you proposed -- when the record shows that I made very substantial concessions in each of the negotiating areas. Frankly, this comment reminds me of someone who invites a friend to dinner and then complains that the friend brought no more than half the dinner with him!

The shifting approaches and distorted comments that we have been hearing from some Soviet officials are not encouraging, since they place in question the seriousness of the Soviet leadership's commitment to lowering the levels of arms and

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improving relations with the United States on the basis of parity and reciprocity.

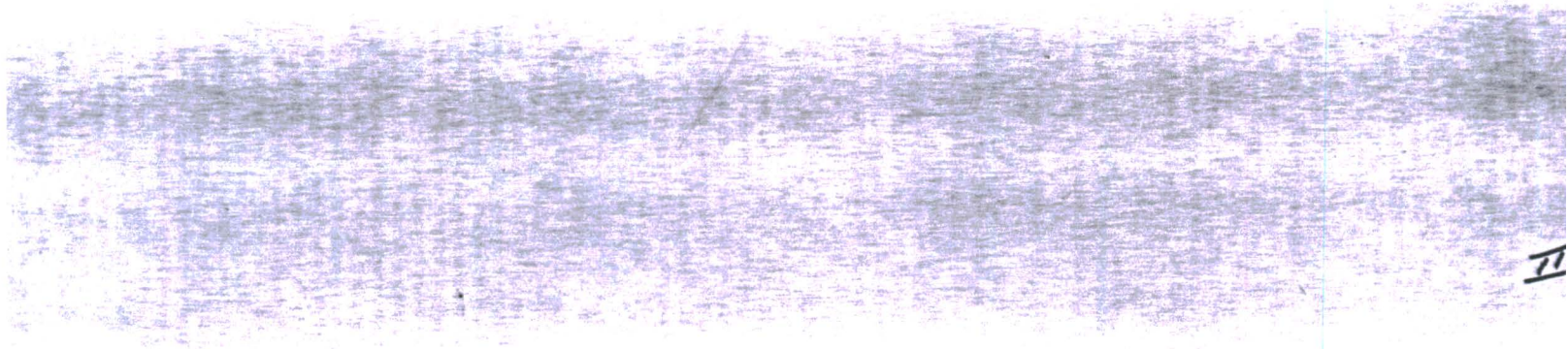
I hope that these discouraging signs are the result of transitory factors in the Soviet Union, and that you will soon be in a position to join me in efforts to bridge the remaining gaps in our respective positions. For nothing that has happened since our meetings in Reykjavik has shaken my judgment that we both can be proud of what we achieved, and that we should continue the process precisely from the point we reached in Iceland.

Whenever you are willing to join me in this effort, you will find me ready to press ahead. I look forward to any comment or further suggestions you may have on these matters.

With personal regards,

Sincerely,

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NOTIONAL PLAN FOR ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Three phases, lasting minimum of 5 years each, but of a sufficient duration to achieve the objectives of each. (Second and third phases are likely to take longer than five years, since they will require basic changes in Soviet habits and practices.) Nevertheless, if plan is issued, public position is that it could be done by the Year 2000 if we start now and keep up momentum.

Phase One:

- 50% reduction of strategic nuclear weapons;
- INF reduced to 100 warheads world-wide (Reykjavik formula);
- Agreement to reduce SRINF, following conclusion of INF agreement;
- Verifiable CW ban;
- BW verification regime;
- Expanded CBM's;
- Compliance with all agreements to satisfaction of both parties;
- Reduction of superpower military involvement in regional conflicts, including withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan;
- Effective international actions against terrorism, including quarantine of states sponsoring terrorism and of groups committed to it, and ban on military supplies or military training to such countries and groups.
- Agreement on verification measures to limited nuclear testing; further limitations on testing as nuclear weapons are reduced.
- Tightened non-proliferation regime;
- Substantial improvements in citizen-to-citizen contacts and the flow of information across national boundaries; end to all radio jamming and increased facilities for sale of foreign publications.
- MBFR agreement to establish verification measures during time-limited freeze, or other significant agreements to reduce conventional forces in Europe.

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Phase Two:

- Further reductions on conventional weapons, world wide;
- Agreed, verifiable limits on use of military force outside national boundaries;
- Termination of direct or indirect superpower military involvement in regional conflicts; peaceful settlement of major regional conflicts;
- Establishment of free contacts and information flow across national borders, including:
 - a. No restrictions on travel of one's own citizens to foreign countries;
 - b. No restrictions on travel of foreigners in one's own country;
 - c. No restrictions, legal or administrative, on contact of one's citizens with foreigners;
 - d. Reserved access in the mass media for foreign opinion;
 - e. Right to establish cultural and information centers, and outlets for periodical, book and VCR sales, in the other country, at the sole discretion of the "sending" country;
 - f. Elimination of national legislation which makes the expression of divergent opinion a criminal act; effective guarantees of the freedom of speech.
- Substantial additional reduction of offensive weapons, particularly ballistic missiles.
- Negotiations on conditions for a CTB, to take effect in third stage.
- Reduction of strategic controls on trade when arms reduction agreements are consummated.
- Agreements on role to be played by defensive weaponry.

Phase Three:

- Fine-tune and extend various verification measures developed in previous stages;
- Establish in practice the habits of openness and restraint from use of military force negotiated earlier;
- Eliminate all strategic and political controls on trade;
- Negotiate a legal enforcement regime for a world free of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons, and for the control of the level and use of conventional weapons;
- Deploy agreed systems of strategic defense;
- As these measures go into place and are proven in practice, proceed to the total elimination of all nuclear weapons in final stages.