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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 26 January 1984 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 replies given by
Y. V. Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party
of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the
USSR, to questions from the newspaper Pravda, published on 25 January 1984.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the text as an official document
of the General Assembly under the item entitled "Review of the implementation of
the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

ANNEX

REPLIES BY Y. V. ANDROPOV TO QUESTIONS FROM THE NEWSPAPER PRAVDA

Question: Recently, claims have been put into circulation in the official quarters of the United States and NATO that nothing alarming is happening in the international situation and, that, in short, "the world has become a safer place" with things as they are now. Is that the case?

Answer: There are no grounds for such a conclusion. The main causes of the dangerous tension in the world, of which I have already had occasion to speak, have not been removed. Has Europe become a safer place with the start of the deployment of American missiles? Of course it hasn't. The nuclear danger has grown. This is not just our assessment. It is clearly indicated by the acute alarm of millions of people in Europe. Nor have the American missiles on the continent of Europe strengthened the security of the United States itself. By setting itself the goal of tilting the military balance in its favour, the United States has compelled us to take counter-measures.

The appearance of American missiles in Europe has increased political as well as military tension. The talks aimed at limiting and substantially reducing nuclear arms have been wrecked. Inter-State relations have become dangerously strained.

Full responsibility for this turn of events lies with the leaders of the United States - the American Administration - as well as with the Governments of the NATO countries, which, contrary to the will of their own peoples, have accepted American missiles in their own territories.

And has the world become a safer place now that, in the Middle East, American soldiers have joined the Israeli aggressor in fighting against the Arabs, and United States warships and aircraft are turning Lebanese towns and settlements into rubble?

The situation is tense in Central America, where the United States Administration is encroaching on the independence of sovereign States. Those who contend that "nothing dangerous is happening" in the world apparently also want to erase from the peoples' memories the American aggression against Grenada. For it is clear that the United States wants to break the power of the people and return by force of arms the hated dictators who are placemen of the United States. In the White House, all this is habitually called a "struggle for human rights". It is impossible to imagine anything more cynical.

Imperialist brigandage is also perpetrated in other areas of the world. Such is the real situation. It is acute and dangerous. It should not be underestimated.

One may ask, what is the reason why the present situation in the world is being deliberately distorted in the statements of American leaders? The main reason is to try to dispel peoples' concern, which is mounting daily, at Washington's militaristic policy and to undercut the growing resistance to this policy.

It is unquestionably a very important fact that people everywhere are becoming better aware of the danger to peace and understand where this danger comes from. The struggle of millions of people for peace is another objective reality of our time.

Question: The President of the United States recently spoke out in favour of a Soviet-American dialogue. In his speech it sounded like this: "Strength and dialogue go hand in hand." What is your attitude to this?

Answer: There is no need to convince us of the usefulness and expediency of dialogue. That is our policy. But the dialogue should be conducted on an equal footing, and not from a position of strength, as proposed by Ronald Reagan. The dialogue should not be conducted for the sake of dialogue. It should be directed towards the attainment of specific areas of agreement. It should be conducted honestly, and no attempts should be made to use it for selfish purposes.

The American leadership, as all signs indicate, has not given up its intentions of conducting talks with us from a position of strength, from a position based on threats and pressure. We firmly reject such an approach. And any attempts at all to conduct "power diplomacy" with us will be futile.

We have precisely the same attitude to the idea of conducting talks for the sake of talks. Unfortunately we have already encountered such an approach on the part of the present United States Administration. Remember what happened at the Geneva talks on European medium-range nuclear weapons: it is now an open secret that for almost two years the representatives of the United States in Geneva have been, so to say, beating the air. During that time, preparations were being made in Washington for the practical deployment in Western Europe of new, first-strike nuclear missiles.

We have warned many times what all this would lead to. The American side broke up the talks in Geneva with its own hands, dealing a severe blow to the dialogue between the USSR and the United States. Now the United States President declares that the United States is ready to resume the talks and return to Geneva.

The question arises, could it be that the American side has realized what it has done and, desiring a dialogue, is prepared to change its negative approach? No, that has not happened. The President's speech does not contain a single new idea or any new proposals either on the question of limiting nuclear weapons in Europe or on other questions. There is no sign of this in the American position.

I have already said and I want to emphasize again that we are prepared to use any real chance for conducting talks with the aim of achieving practical agreements on limiting and reducing nuclear weapons on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security. But we will not go to talks for the sake of talks; we will not pretend that in Western Europe there are no new missiles targeted on us and our allies. We will not play that game.

At the same time I want to confirm that the Soviet Union is prepared to solve the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe only on a constructive, mutually acceptable basis. That requires one thing: before it is too late, the United States and NATO should display a readiness to return to the situation that existed before the beginning of the deployment of the Pershing 2 and cruise missiles. We are placing this question before the United States and its NATO allies because we want to avoid yet another spiral of the arms race, this time at a new, still more dangerous level that leads to mounting tension and instability in Europe.

As to whether the United States has serious intentions of conducting a dialogue with us, we shall judge by practical deeds.

Question: What other problems could become the subject of the dialogue?

Answer: The Soviet leadership is convinced that possibilities exist for a serious discussion of a number of problems the solution of which would undoubtedly create a healthier situation in the world and improve Soviet-American relations. We have put forward a broad range of concrete proposals and initiatives directed at strengthening peace and international security. They remain in force.

For instance, were the United States to assume the obligation, as the Soviet Union has done, not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, that would already have a substantial influence on the international climate, on the atmosphere of our relations. What would it mean in practice? The two major nuclear Powers would refuse to use nuclear weapons against each other. That means that there would be neither a first nor a subsequent nuclear strike.

Were the NATO countries to consent to the proposal of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty not to use military force against each other, that, too, would seriously raise the degree of trust in Europe and in the whole world. In practice, it would mean that the opposing military groupings would renounce the use of force for the solution of contentious issues that arose. A broad vista for talks would be opened. Incidentally, quite a lot could also be done in that respect by the conference that has just opened in Stockholm, the first stage of which is devoted precisely to the elaboration of measures for building confidence and strengthening security.

The solution of the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space must not be put off. Otherwise, mankind will be confronted by a new threat the scope of which can hardly be imagined now. The systems of new weapons that are being developed in the United States are making such a prospect quite real. The Soviet Union has made practical proposals on how to avert the danger of the use of force from outer space and in outer space, and calls on the United States to start talks on this question without delay.

Provided there is readiness on the part of the West, it is possible to commence the practical solution of questions discussed at the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces and weapons in Central Europe. Our concrete proposals on this score have long been on the negotiating table. They offer a speedy approach to agreement - provided, of course, there is a mutual striving to reach agreement.

Within the range of measures directed towards lessening the danger of war, we offer the United States as a beginning a simple and at the same time sufficiently effective step - the freezing of nuclear weapons. We should redouble efforts aimed at the speediest attainment of agreement on substantial limitations and radical reductions of these weapons. Peoples have a right to expect the United States Government to display common sense and realism on these questions.

What is needed first of all for the attainment of agreement on all these questions is desire and political will on the part of the United States and the other NATO countries. That would in turn create a favourable situation for tackling other questions as well, moving from one to another. We see it as an earnest of success in the policy of preserving peace.

It is only by advancing along this road, and not by setting hopes on strength and by engaging in rhetoric, that we can make the world in which we live a really safer place. We expect of the Government of the United States of America practical deeds and a readiness to make precisely such a choice. That will find an appropriate response from us.
