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LETTER DATED 3 APRIL 1958 ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET
SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

3 April 1958

I have the honour to forward herewith the text of the Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics dated 31 March 1958, concerning the unilateral discontinuance by the Soviet Union of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests.

I should be glad if you would arrange to have the Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued as an official United Nations document.

I have the honour to be, etc.

(Signed) A. SOBOLEV

Permanent Representative of the
USSR to the United Nations

DECREE

OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE USSR CONCERNING THE UNILATERAL DISCONTINUANCE
BY THE SOVIET UNION OF ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN WEAPONS TESTS

With every passing month and year, the question of the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests is becoming increasingly important for the cause of peace and the welfare of peoples.

Today, the overwhelming majority of the earth's population is demanding that the tests should be discontinued. Although the peoples have been striving persistently for many years now to have these tests discontinued, they continue to be held, with the result that more and more new types of lethal nuclear weapons are being created, the concentration of radioactive elements in the air and soil is being increased, the human organism is being poisoned and the normal development of future generations is being threatened.

The Soviet Union has made persistent and consistent efforts to reach agreement with the Powers possessing atomic and hydrogen weapons for the immediate and unconditional discontinuance of nuclear tests. With this end in view, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Soviet Government have in recent years repeatedly put forward specific proposals concerning the discontinuance of tests on the basis of which agreement in this matter could long since have been reached.

In a message to the Congress of the United States of America and to the Parliament of the United Kingdom dated 10 May 1957, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR called on those bodies to help in promoting an agreement between the Governments of the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom concerning the immediate discontinuance of test explosions of atomic and hydrogen bombs.

At its last meeting, in December 1957, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, expressing the inflexible will and unanimous aspiration of the Soviet people for peace, proposed that the USSR, the United Kingdom and the United States of America should assume an undertaking to discontinue all tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons as from 1 January 1958.

However, the United States of America and the United Kingdom did not respond to all these proposals of the Soviet Union. As a result, experimental explosions of atomic and hydrogen bombs are continuing to be carried out, first in one then in another part of the world, testifying to a further intensification of the race to create even more dangerous types of weapons of mass destruction.

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Prompted by the desire to make a practical start towards a general discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests and thereby to take a first step towards ridding mankind once and for all of the threat of destructive atomic war, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics hereby resolves:

1. To discontinue the testing of all types of atomic and hydrogen weapons in the Soviet Union.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR expects that the Parliaments of the other States which possess atomic and hydrogen weapons will, for their part, do everything necessary to ensure that test explosions of these types of weapons are discontinued by those countries also.

2. To charge the Council of Ministers of the USSR with the task of taking the necessary steps to give effect to paragraph 1 of this Decree and of addressing an appeal to the Governments of the other States possessing atomic and hydrogen weapons to take similar steps to ensure the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests everywhere and for all time.

If other Powers possessing atomic and hydrogen weapons continue tests of these weapons, the Government of the USSR will naturally be free to act in the matter of the carrying out of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests by the Soviet Union in accordance with the above-mentioned circumstances, having regard to the interests of its security.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR sincerely hopes that the initiative of the Soviet Union in the matter of discontinuing nuclear weapons tests will receive due support from the Parliaments of other States.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR is deeply convinced that if, in response to the decision of the Soviet Union, the other States possessing nuclear weapons also discontinue the testing of those weapons in their turn, an important practical step forward will have been taken towards consolidating peace and strengthening the security of all peoples. There is no doubt that such a step would be of great significance in restoring the whole international situation to normal and would help to remove mankind's oppressive anxiety concerning the fate of the world and of future generations.

THE SUPREME SOVIET
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The Kremlin, Moscow,
31 March 1958.
