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MESSAGE DATED 8 JANUARY 1987 FROM MR. MIKHAIL GORBACHEV,
GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION,
TO MR. JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

The attached text of a message sent by Mr. M. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to Mr. J. Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, is herewith circulated to all Member States at the request of the Resident Representative of the Soviet Union.

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MESSAGE SENT BY MR. M. GORBACHEV, GENERAL SECRETARY
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE
SOVIET UNION, TO MR. J. PEREZ DE CUELLAR,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Esteemed Mr. Secretary-General,

The year 1986, proclaimed the International Year of Peace by the United Nations, is over. That decision of the United Nations reflected mankind's interest in breaking the chain of years gripped by the accelerating arms race.

Was that goal achieved? Regrettably, it was not, because not all the Member States of the United Nations were seeking an end to the arms build-up in deeds rather than in words.

It is farthest from our thoughts, however, that 1986 failed to live up to its political symbolism. Perhaps, never before had the attention of the world community been concentrated to such an extent on the vital problems of war and peace.

One idea comes to mind in this context: now that the International Year of Peace is becoming history, should it not be the duty of every State to submit, in response to the unanimously adopted United Nations resolution, an account to the world community on what it did to ensure that the Year of Peace lived up to its name. Anyway, we for our part consider it our duty to report to the entire United Nations through you, if only in a general outline, on what the Soviet Union did concretely in 1986 for that year to justify the hopes pinned on it.

To begin with, in the very first month of the International Year of Peace, on 15 January, the Soviet Union put forward an initiative of unprecedented scope and goals by formulating a programme for building a nuclear-free world and eliminating weapons of mass annihilation of every type, including chemical weapons, by the end of the current century. Throughout the year we were concretizing that programme in individual areas and backing it with practical deeds.

When the Soviet Union entered the Year of Peace, its nuclear test sites had been quiet already for five months. We kept extending our moratorium on nuclear explosions throughout the year, although others continued to upgrade deadly weapons which were already devastating. The Soviet Union's extension of its moratorium beyond 1 January 1987, till the first American explosion, offers another chance to raise an effective barrier in the way of the nuclear arms race.

Developments last year were such that extraordinary efforts had to be made to break the vicious circle of the accelerating arms race. Being aware of this, we put all business aside and had a meeting with the United States President to find solutions to the key problems of the nuclear-space complex. The results of that meeting are public knowledge. The hopes that it would lead to practical results did not materialize.

The Reykjavik meeting, however, led the cause of nuclear disarmament to an unprecedentedly high plateau, which offered a view of fresh horizons. Mankind is regarding those new prospects in the hope that persevering efforts to achieve radical reductions in and the eventual total elimination of nuclear weapons will at long last yield positive results. The Soviet Union for its part repeatedly reaffirmed and is reiterating anew its desire to follow that road.

Regrettably, our negotiating partners do not show readiness to find accords effectively to contain the arms race. Moreover, they are chipping away at and subverting the existing agreements, including the SALT-2 Treaty, which put limits on nuclear arsenals, seeking to undermine strategic stability, building up nuclear weapons in excess of the ceilings agreed upon earlier and heading for the introduction of weapons into outer space.

The opponents of nuclear disarmament often claim that the Soviet Union is advocating the abolition of nuclear arsenals in order to secure superiority in conventional armaments and armed forces. These claims are nothing short of a political ploy. Together with our allies in the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, we put forward at a conference in Budapest in June 1986 a proposal for comprehensive and deep cuts in the armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. Yet the NATO countries have not yet agreed to discuss our proposals in detail.

We are prepared to advance in every area towards real measures to limit and stop the arms race; and we consider it essential to have at every stage and in every area strict verification of accords to the point of on-site inspection. Yet measures of most thorough and dependable verification, just like disarmament measures, should be reciprocal -- but here, regrettably, we do not have a proper response from the other side. Recently we made proposals for adequate verification of the termination of nuclear tests, a ban on chemical weapons, reductions in conventional armaments and the non-militarization of space. We are prepared to open our laboratories -- but all this should be on a reciprocal basis. Meanwhile, we do not have a positive response from those who not so long ago stridently clamoured for the strictest verification.

Along with verification, an important concomitant measure in the process of arms limitation and disarmament should be the utilization of funds saved in this way to meet the needs of socio-economic development.

The Soviet Union is prepared to co-operate in every way with all States which advocate stronger international peace and security. It responded positively to the Harare Appeal, in which the non-aligned movement urged firmly and strongly an end to the arms race, the abolition of nuclear weapons and a firm linkage between the problems of disarmament and development. It also responded with full understanding and readiness for practical steps to the appeal of the six States of four continents for an early end to the nuclear arms race and the prevention of the introduction of arms in space.

The Delhi declaration on principles for a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world was signed at the Soviet-Indian summit meeting in November 1986. It is a document of new political thinking, a document proceeding from the priority importance of common human values and the need to pool efforts to build a world that would be free from nuclear weapons, violence, hatred, suspicion and fear.

The Soviet Union's constructive co-operation with the other participants in the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe contributed to the successful completion of the Conference. We have strongly called and continue to call for the results achieved in Stockholm to be developed in Vienna, at the regular meeting of representatives of the States participating in this European conference.

The Soviet Union vigorously supported a number of proposals aimed at lowering the level of armed confrontation in individual parts of Europe, such as the initiative of Bulgaria and Romania for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans, the call of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia for the abolition of chemical weapons in the centre of the continent and Finland's initiative for a nuclear-free Nordic Europe.

The Soviet Union is known to be in favour of the proposal of the non-aligned countries on establishing a zone of lasting peace and co-operation in the Mediterranean. We for our part voiced a number of ideas, such as the withdrawal of the Soviet and United States navies from the Mediterranean.

Last year we kept working vigorously for the early implementation of the United Nations declaration on turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and for the immediate convocation of an international conference for this purpose. New Soviet initiatives call for a substantial reduction in the naval activity in the Indian Ocean, the application of confidence-building measures and guarantees for the safety of sea and air communications in that region.

A series of major initiatives were put forward by us to achieve security in such an important part of the world as Asia and the Pacific. We consider that more dynamic bilateral relations, the settlement of the existing regional problems and a lower level of military activity offer a sure way to the development of an atmosphere which will eventually make it possible to convene a conference like the Helsinki one and work out a complex of dependable measures on security and peaceful co-operation in Asia and the Pacific.

Concerned over the growing militarization of the southern part of the Korean peninsula, the Soviet Union resolutely voiced support for the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the peaceful reunification of the country and its proposals for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the whole of the Korean peninsula.

We are trying to do whatever we can to deblock crisis situations, which generate tension in the world, and to avert new conflicts.

To break the deadlock over a Middle East settlement, we proposed that a preparatory committee be established with the participation of all the permanent members of the Security Council to convene a peace conference. The Soviet Union stands for an end to the senseless Iranian-Iraqi war and for an early solution to the Cyprus problem. The Soviet Union is seeking an immediate settlement of the situation related to Afghanistan and is strongly demanding an early termination and prevention of outside interference, which would expedite the return home of the Soviet troops staying in that country at the request of its Government. It is fully supporting the efforts made by the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to achieve national reconciliation.

The Soviet Union is prepared to contribute in practice to the development of favourable conditions for a fair political settlement in Central America. We are in solidarity with the statement, made by the foreign ministers of the Contadora group and the Contadora support group on 1 October 1986, that peace in Central America was possible but that it called first and foremost for the termination of interference in the affairs of the sovereign States of the region and for practical respect for their right independently to choose their roads of development. We also are in favour of Brazil's proposal for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic.

The Soviet Union supported the idea of a number of Pacific States regarding the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific and signed protocols 2 and 3 to the Rarotonga Treaty.

The Soviet Union stands for the earliest possible implementation of the United Nations resolutions on granting genuine independence to the people of Namibia and on the abolition of the racist system of apartheid in South Africa. We are in solidarity with the fight waged by the "front-line States" against the aggressive actions of the Pretoria regime and fully support the demands for the application by the Security Council of full-scale sanctions against South Africa.

As you know, Mr. Secretary-General, the Soviet Union stands for a higher role and efficiency of the United Nations, for the broad application of the methods of settling disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the United Nations Charter, for a better use of the potentialities of the Security Council and the United Nations General Assembly, and for your efforts of mediation.

We note with satisfaction that awareness is growing all over the world of the need to settle disputes and conflicts by political means, with unconditional respect for the right of every people to an independent road of development. This is forcefully illustrated by worldwide outrage over the barbarous United States attack on Libya last April. It was condemned everywhere, including the United Nations General Assembly.

We fully support the efforts of the United Nations to ensure peaceful uses of nuclear energy and outer space and environmental protection. We support the just demands of the Group of 77 for a new international economic order, including the solution of the problem of foreign indebtedness, which has both economic and political consequences. We for our part proposed the convocation of a world congress on economic security, which could discuss all the problems of world economic contacts in their entirety. Two conventions laying the foundations of an international regime for the safe and stable development of nuclear power were concluded on our initiative in the International Atomic Energy Agency.

We stand for dragged-out humanitarian problems being resolved in a humane way, in a truly humanitarian spirit. To this end we proposed that a representative conference on the development of humanitarian co-operation be convened in Moscow within the framework of the all-European process. We are prepared to discuss on a serious and sound basis every aspect of human rights and basic freedoms. The Soviet Union firmly stands for guaranteeing man the right to life, to work and to equality before the law.

We support the efforts of the United Nations and progressive international organizations against racial or any other discrimination, against the excessive enrichment of some at the expense of others, and for a fairer and more civilized world. We stand for practical efforts to eradicate such an abomination as international terrorism, which claims innocent lives and mars relations among nations.

It can be said without exaggeration that the approval by the General Assembly of the concept of a comprehensive system of international security, proposed by a group of socialist countries, a concept covering every sphere, including the military, political, economic and humanitarian spheres, constitutes an important step towards the consolidation of the foundations of peace with regard to the United Nations. A framework has thus been created for a broad and constructive dialogue on the nature of a new philosophy of security in the nuclear-space age and practical ways of restructuring international relations on its basis.

Support from such a large number of countries for the idea of establishing security for all shows that a new mode of thinking and actions of States and a tendency for the democratization of international relations are confidently gaining ground. We intend to continue constructive exchanges of opinion on a system of all-embracing security so as to have basically developed foundations of such a system ready for submission to the next session of the General Assembly.

Speaking in general about the recently closed forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, we think we can draw the conclusion that its proceedings and the resolutions passed by it reflected the peoples' awareness of peace as the highest value to the whole of humanity and their striving to ensure that a new mode of political thinking, a new style and approach to the solution of international problems become asserted in the United Nations, which, under its Charter, is a centre co-ordinating the activities of States. Mankind is under the pressure of time, and this was manifest in that the world body called for the dynamic development of international relations and for a search for new, fresh approaches.

The International Year of Peace was a difficult, involved year. An arduous road was covered. I started by commenting on the political symbolism of the International Year of Peace. But it also gave an impetus to practical action for ridding mankind of the threat of nuclear war and creating foundations of all-embracing security that would be equal for all. We intend to strive for that goal, from the Reykjavik frontier, under the flag of openness and democratism so that peace should be eternal.

It is my conviction, Mr. Secretary-General, that, with your energetic participation, the possibilities of the United Nations will continue to be used efficiently under the humane motto of the International Year of Peace: "to safeguard peace and the future of humanity."

Please accept, Mr. Secretary-General, best wishes for success and well-being in the new year.

Mikhail Gorbachev