DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR

Working paper of a group of socialist States

At the 1983 session of the Committee on Disarmament the socialist countries stated their views on the reasons for the increasing threat of nuclear war and on the practical steps to be taken for its elimination, as well as on the organization of the consideration of the issue in the Committee (working papers CD/355 of 21 March 1983 and CD/406 of 4 August 1983). Recent developments in world events confirm the correctness of the judgements and the significance and timeliness of the proposals contained in those documents.

The 1984 session of the Conference on Disarmament is taking place under conditions of marked aggravation of the international situation and increased danger of nuclear war caused by the militarist policies of the United States.

These policies find expression, above all, in attempts by the United States of America and their NATO allies to destroy the existing military balance. The large-scale programmes of development of strategic and other nuclear weapons adopted in the United States of America, the spreading of the arms race to outer space, and the deployment in Western Europe of new medium-range United States missiles are clearly designed to provide a material basis for these adventurist policies. These actions are intensifying the very real danger that the United States of America will bring catastrophe upon the peoples of Europe and the whole world.

By deploying its new nuclear missiles in European countries the United States of America has created obstacles both to the Soviet-United States talks on nuclear-arms limitations in Europe and to the talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic weapons.

The socialist countries have declared more than once that they will under no circumstances tolerate military superiority over them. At the same time they remain committed to the principled course which they have jointly adopted towards
the cessation of the arms race, above all the nuclear-arms race, and towards the reduction and ultimate complete elimination of the threat of nuclear war.

The prevention of nuclear war is, in the full sense of the word, the number one global problem. Not only the solution of other problems affecting all mankind but the very existence of life on Earth depends on whether this threat can be successfully eliminated.

That is precisely how the matter is seen by the overwhelming majority of States, as the results of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly confirmed. In a whole range of resolutions the General Assembly spoke out in favour of the adoption of urgent measures for the prevention of nuclear war.

Of particular importance among them are the Declaration on the Condemnation of Nuclear War and the resolutions on the renunciation of first use of nuclear weapons, on the nuclear-weapon freeze, on starting nuclear disarmament negotiations and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The socialist countries are convinced that the problem of prevention of nuclear war should now take a central place in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. This is further supported by the fact that in a number of resolutions, including its resolution 38/183 G, the General Assembly addressed a request to the Conference on Disarmament to undertake, as a matter of the highest priority, negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war and to establish an ad hoc working group for that purpose. The socialist countries fully support that recommendation and are in favour of its earliest implementation. They propose that efforts towards the prevention of nuclear war should be concentrated in the following areas.

1. The policy of States possessing nuclear weapons is of special significance for solving the problem of prevention of nuclear war. The vital interests of the whole of mankind require that relations between those States should be regulated by certain norms which they could agree among themselves to recognize and which should be given a mandatory nature. The socialist countries draw attention to the specific proposals in that connection contained in document CD/444.

2. With the emergence of new types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery which facilitate the establishment of a nuclear first-strike potential it is urgently necessary to create a moral and political atmosphere in which any attempt to unleash nuclear war would be doomed to failure.

(a) The socialist countries consider it essential that all States, and especially the nuclear-weapon States, should regard the prevention of nuclear war as the main objective of their policy, should prevent situations fraught with nuclear conflict and, in the event of such danger, should hold urgent consultations to prevent a nuclear conflagration from breaking out.
(b) As a development from the provisions of the Declaration on the Condemnation of Nuclear War adopted at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the socialist countries propose that all States should be recommended to consider the question of including provisions condemning nuclear war in the appropriate unilateral and joint statements or declarations of a political nature.

(c) The socialist countries also consider it necessary that all States, and particularly nuclear-weapon States, proceeding, inter alia, from United Nations decisions on the prohibition of war propaganda, should renounce propaganda for nuclear war in any of its variations, either global or limited. In particular, it is necessary to renounce the elaboration, advancement, dissemination and propaganda of political and military doctrines and concepts designed to support the "legitimacy" of first use of nuclear weapons and, more generally, the "permissibility" of unleashing nuclear war. They are convinced that no aim whatsoever can justify the first use of nuclear weapons.

(d) The socialist countries reiterate their proposal concerning the renunciation by all nuclear-weapon States of the first use of nuclear weapons. Obligations to that effect could be assumed unilaterally by each nuclear-weapon State which has not yet done so. This method, which does not involve holding special talks or reaching agreement, would help to strengthen confidence and reduce the level of nuclear danger. At the same time the undertakings by nuclear-weapon Powers to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons could also be incorporated in a unified instrument of international law, which, in practice, would be equivalent to the complete legal prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. The socialist countries again declare their support for the proposal for the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons with the participation of all nuclear-weapon Powers.

(e) Such measures as the renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons and ultimately the complete prohibition of their use would be an active means of preventing nuclear war and would represent the concretization, in a manner applicable to present-day conditions, of norms of international law and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Proposals by socialist countries for the general exclusion of the use of force, both nuclear and non-nuclear, from international relations pursue the same purpose. At the global level, that could be done by concluding a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. An important step in the same direction is also the proposal put forward by a number of socialist countries in January 1983 to conclude a treaty on the mutual renunciation of the use of military force and on the maintenance of peaceful relations between the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO member States, whose core would be the commitment of the States members of the two alliances not to be the first to use nuclear or conventional arms against one another.

(f) The creation of conditions for the prevention of a nuclear conflict would be assisted by the adoption by all nuclear-weapon Powers of an undertaking not to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances against non-nuclear countries in whose territory there are no such weapons, to respect the status of the nuclear-weapon-free zone already created and the encouragement of the creation of new nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world.
(g) The socialist countries reaffirm their readiness to consider other appropriate measures, such as the prevention of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, the avoidance of the possibility of surprise attacks, etc., as was proposed, *inter alia*, in document CD/406. At the same time they consider it necessary to stress that various confidence-building measures can contribute towards the removal of the nuclear threat only in conunction with far-reaching political undertakings in that field. The confidence-building measures should be genuinely large-scale ones aimed first and foremost at the prevention of nuclear war.

3. Of no less importance would be measures of a material nature designed to ensure that various kinds of doctrines and concepts justifying the unleashing of nuclear war should not be supplied with a material basis in the form of new armaments systems.

(a) One of the most effective and relatively easily applicable measures towards that end could be the freezing, under appropriate verification, of nuclear weapons in quantitative and qualitative terms. This step should be taken by all nuclear-weapon Powers or, in the first instance, only by the USSR and the United States of America on the understanding that the other nuclear-weapon States would follow their example.

To agree to a freeze would mean:

- To cease the build up of all components of nuclear arsenals, including all kinds of nuclear weapon delivery systems and all kinds of nuclear weapons;
- Not to deploy nuclear weapons of new kinds and types;
- To establish a moratorium on all tests of nuclear weapons and on tests of new kinds and types of their delivery systems;
- To stop the production of fissionable materials for the purpose of creating nuclear weapons.

A nuclear-weapon freeze would significantly improve the general political atmosphere and facilitate agreement on the reduction of nuclear arsenals.

(b) The cessation of the qualitative refinement of nuclear weapons and the development of new models and types of such weapons would be assisted by the earliest completion of the preparation of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and, until the conclusion of such a treaty, by the proclamation by all nuclear-weapon States of a moratorium on all nuclear explosions.

(c) Another important obligation of nuclear-weapon States which bears a direct relationship to the prevention of nuclear war is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form. That means, first of all, not handing over such weapons or control over them to anybody. It is also essential
not to deploy them on the territory of countries where there are none. Another pressing task is that of preventing the spread of the nuclear-arms race to new spheres.

(d) The socialist countries continue to hold that nuclear disarmament and the complete liquidation of nuclear weapons is the most effective guarantee against the threat of nuclear war and the use of nuclear weapons. They call once again for efforts to achieve, step by step and on the basis of the principle of equal security, the reduction of nuclear weapons until they have been completely eliminated in all their forms.

(e) Side by side with measures directly relating to nuclear weapons, the prevention of nuclear war would be greatly assisted by the cessation and prevention of the arms race in other high-risk areas. Of particular significance in that connection would be the prevention of the arms race in space, which is fraught with the further increase of the risk of nuclear war. The programmes of development of a large-scale anti-missile system being elaborated at present in the United States of America cannot remove the threat of further nuclear arsenals hanging over the world but will only make their use more probable.

The socialist countries draw attention to the fact that the USSR has given an undertaking not to be the first to place any type of anti-satellite weapons in space, which is to say that it has imposed a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for as long as other States, including the United States of America, refrain from placing anti-satellite weapons of any kind in space.

To prevent an arms race in space altogether would, of course, be a still broader and more far-reaching measure. That purpose would be served by the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth.

4. The socialist countries are also prepared to consider other measures aimed at the prevention of nuclear war. The time has come to proceed from words of a general nature about the threat of nuclear catastrophe to specific deeds, namely, to constructive negotiations on the above-mentioned proposals with a view to the conclusion of appropriate international agreements.

The socialist countries reaffirm once again their resolute desire to embark upon the elaboration of urgent and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war and the establishment, to that end, of an appropriate subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament.

They appeal once again to all participants in the Conference on Disarmament whom it may concern to show political good-will and to adopt a constructive position on the vitally important problem of the prevention of nuclear war.