

Peace and Disarmament

**a short guide to the arms
control negotiations**

'We must work unremittingly for better ways of ordering the world ... Negotiations about arms control are especially important. It is a field where we must be vigorous and imaginative, for nothing is more important than to reduce the vast resources devoted to arms ... What are the principles that should guide us? The fundamental one is that arms control must enhance security. That means that it must limit the forces of both East and West. It must be balanced.'

Extract from Lord Carrington's Churchill Memorial Lecture, *'The Foundations of Peace in Europe'*, Luxembourg, 27 October 1981.

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The Way to Disarmament

Maintaining Peace

1 The first duty of any government to its people is the maintenance of peace. That means preventing all forms of aggression, whether nuclear or conventional. Since the disaster of World War II, successive governments in Britain have taken the view that the way to prevent war is to deter any potential aggressor by maintaining effective defences and so persuading him that he could not hope to profit from attacking our country. We have operated this system with our Western allies in NATO since 1949, and it has helped to keep the peace in Europe for more than a generation.

2 The strategy of deterrence has held firm, despite the increasing international tensions of recent years, because it would be madness for either side to launch an attack on the other. Any military conflict between the super-powers, at whatever level, could lead to a nuclear exchange and consequent devastating damage to both parties. It is this likelihood which reinforces deterrence and inhibits the Soviet Union from launching any attack on the European members of NATO.

3 Talk of fighting a nuclear war is dangerous nonsense, because there would be no winners in such a conflict. Nor does it serve the cause of nuclear disarmament to pretend that the holocaust is imminent. We are not on the brink, because the policy of deterrence is working. Accidental nuclear war is not a possibility, because arrangements between the nuclear weapon states for its prevention are now very effective.

Negotiating Disarmament

4 Mutual deterrence guarantees peace, and that peace is the foundation for arms control and disarmament. A first essential is to reduce both tension and the danger of conflict. This is the subject of Western proposals for a Conference on Disarmament in Europe. It is also the purpose of other diplomatic activities, such as the proposals of the European Community to restore independence and peace to Afghanistan, to bring about a Middle East settlement, and to strengthen UN peacekeeping.

5 The world now stands on the threshold of a most important stage in the arms control and disarmament negotiations, in which the nations of East and West will be trying to reach agreement on reducing the weapons deployed on either side. The United States and Soviet Union have started talks on reducing intermediate-range nuclear missiles. They are expected to resume the negotiations to reduce strategic arms early in 1982. In June 1982 the United Nations is to hold its second Special Session on Disarmament, at which an overall plan for negotiations in the years ahead will be discussed by the 157 member states.

6 The British Government believe the most hopeful route for progress is through the negotiation of specific measures of arms control and disarmament, step by step. That is the essence of the current negotiations, in the Committee on Disarmament and elsewhere. This booklet describes the major international discussions taking place, the problems to be overcome, and the prospects for reaching agreement. Despite the difficulties, we are convinced that arms control and multilateral disarmament by diplomatic negotiation is the key to a safer and more prosperous world.

Nuclear Weapons

Strategic Arms

7 These are the land-based missiles and bomber forces of intercontinental range and the long-range missiles deployed on aircraft or in submarines with which the United States and the Soviet Union could strike each other's territory. Negotiations to limit them began in 1969, at US initiative. In 1972, the first Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) produced the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the interim agreement on limiting offensive strategic arms. The SALT II agreement signed in June 1979 set a range of quantitative and qualitative ceilings on nuclear weapons but, although its provisions are being observed by both sides, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 finally removed any chance of ratification by the US Senate. In November

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces

1981 President Reagan proposed that negotiations should be resumed early in 1982. The US Administration wants these to become Strategic Arms Reduction Talks – hence START as distinct from SALT – and to reach agreement on substantial reductions on both sides. We hope the Soviet Union will respond in the same spirit.

8 There is an equitable basis for SALT/START because broad parity exists between the super-powers at the central strategic level. However, this is not the case with intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) – the missiles and aircraft in the Soviet Union targeted on Western Europe, and those in Western Europe which can reach the Soviet Union. NATO has no missile system in Europe which can strike the Soviet Union and thus no systems comparable to the Soviet SS4, SS5 or, above all, the new mobile SS20 missile; some 280 of these SS20s have already been deployed, each with three independently targeted warheads. In the light of this increasing threat to the security of Western Europe, and the Soviet objective of driving a wedge between the European and North American allies, NATO decided in December 1979 to redress the imbalance by deploying a number of Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe from late 1983 onwards. This was a dual decision: NATO offered at the same time to negotiate limitations on both sides and to adjust its deployment programme in the light of results.

9 If NATO abandoned its modernisation programme it would remove the major incentive for the Russians to negotiate; they wouldn't need to. Conversely, pressing on with the NATO decision has induced the Russians to negotiate, because this offers them the prospect of reducing the number of missiles to be deployed in Western Europe. In November 1981 President Reagan proposed the so-called 'zero option' – no ground-launch Cruise or Pershing IIs to be deployed in Western Europe and all SS20, SS4 and SS5 missiles to be dismantled on the Eastern side. President Brezhnev, in response, repeated his call for a moratorium on new missile deployments, coupled with the withdrawal of some Soviet systems. Negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union began in Geneva on 30 November

1981. Britain and other NATO members played a full part in the close consultations in the Alliance on the US negotiating position, and will continue to be involved during the negotiations.

Comprehensive Test Ban

10 A comprehensive ban on nuclear tests (CTB) would curb the development of new warheads by the nuclear weapon states and make it less likely that countries not already possessing nuclear weapons will be able to acquire them. A policy review by the new United States administration has however meant that the tripartite negotiations with the United Kingdom and Soviet Union on the cessation of nuclear weapons tests have not been resumed since November 1980. The duration and verification of a treaty remain two of the outstanding issues. Success in the INF and START negotiations would improve the prospects for reaching agreement on a CTB.

Non-Proliferation

11 In parallel with these nuclear arms control negotiations, Britain played a leading part in the second Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1980. We have worked with other nuclear exporters to ensure that civil nuclear industries can be sustained without the risk of spreading nuclear weapons technology. We have advocated strengthening the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the transfer of fissionable materials. To reduce one of the main incentives for the acquisition of nuclear weapons, we have given security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon states about their freedom from nuclear threat or attack.

12 We have supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas where this could contribute to security. We were the first nuclear weapon state to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco setting up such a zone in Latin America. But we see no value in a European nuclear-weapon-free zone 'from the Atlantic to the Urals', as has been suggested. Such an arrangement would take no account of the role which nuclear weapons have played in preserving peace in Europe, in the face of the overwhelming Soviet predominance in conventional forces. It would also leave Western

Europe vulnerable to Soviet long-range missiles which could still hit European capitals from launch sites east of the Urals. One-sided disarmament of this kind would be destabilising and thereby increase the danger of war.

Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

Biological Weapons

13 The possession of biological weapons for use in 'germ warfare' was completely barred under the 1972 Convention which Britain initiated in 1968. We took the lead in organising the first Review Conference in 1980 and our initiatives were instrumental in achieving a successful outcome. We have supported efforts to improve the procedures for ensuring compliance with the Convention, but the Soviet Union has opposed this. The Soviet authorities have so far been unwilling to discuss a disturbing outbreak of anthrax which took place in the city of Sverdlovsk in 1979, even though the 1972 Convention provides for consultations in just such a case. No satisfactory explanation of the incident has been given.

Chemical Weapons

14 The ban on the use of poison gas in armed conflict was confirmed in the 1925 Geneva Protocol. However, a number of countries have interpreted it as a ban on first use against parties to the Protocol. While countries such as the Soviet Union possess large stocks of chemical weapons, and actually conduct training exercises in chemical warfare, a danger to mankind will continue to exist. Britain has therefore given priority to a ban on the development, production and possession of chemical weapons. We tabled a draft convention for this purpose in the Committee on Disarmament in 1976. Bilateral discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union began immediately afterwards and have made some progress.

15 Verification of non-production remains a key problem. To increase understanding of the possibilities of checking compliance with an international convention, the United Kingdom invited experts from the Committee on Disarmament to visit British chemical

establishments in March 1979. The Committee set up a working group on chemical weapons in 1980 to operate in parallel with the bilateral negotiations and facilitate an agreement. It is continuing to work on the technical aspects of verification, including the problem of 'binary' weapons which bring together two chemical agents to produce a lethal mixture on impact. Meanwhile persistent reports of the use of chemical weapons in South East Asia – which are the subject of an independent enquiry by the UN Secretary-General's team of scientific experts – underline the importance of reaching early agreement on an international convention.

Radiological Weapons

16 In November 1976 the United States proposed that a convention should be negotiated banning radiological weapons. These would rely for their effect on the deliberate, widespread and indiscriminate dispersal into the environment (without any nuclear explosion) of highly radioactive materials stored in the weapon. A joint US/Soviet draft convention tabled in 1979 has been the basis for useful discussion in the Committee on Disarmament. The United Kingdom supports efforts to ban such weapons as a modest but useful step in the arms control and disarmament process.

Conventional Forces and Weapons

Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions

17 Reductions in and limitations on conventional forces are being discussed at the Vienna talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR). The agreed principal objective is to establish parity at a lower level between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in Central Europe on the basis of a common collective manpower ceiling. A Phase I agreement would cover US and Soviet forces in the reductions area. The major obstacle to progress is disagreement between East and West over the size of existing Warsaw Pact forces in Central Europe. Western figures indicate an Eastern superiority of some 150,000 men; the East claims broad parity of numbers already exists. But Western efforts to persuade the Warsaw Pact to analyse the figures in sufficient

detail to explain the reasons for this difference have so far been fruitless. There is also disagreement over the means of verifying reductions and subsequent ceilings. The Alliance has put forward proposals to resolve these problems.

Conference on Disarmament in Europe

18 At the Madrid follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), we have continued to urge the Soviet Union to accept the French proposal for a Conference on Disarmament in Europe. This would negotiate in its initial stage a system of confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) of real military significance which would be binding, verifiable and applicable to the whole of Europe up to the Urals. Agreement on such measures would make an important contribution to reducing tension and the danger of armed conflict in Europe. The chief obstacle is the Soviet Union's insistence that there should be some 'corresponding' extension of the zone of CSBM application westwards beyond Europe. The West has offered to include those military activities in adjoining sea area and air space that are integrally related to military activity in Europe. However, at the end of 1981 the Eastern side had still not agreed to a clear mandate for a Conference.

'Inhumane' Weapons

19 The United Kingdom has been active in international moves to place further curbs on the use of conventional weapons which in the UN definition cause unnecessary suffering or are indiscriminate in their effects. New prohibitions designed principally to protect civilian populations were agreed at the UN Conference on Inhumane Weapons in September 1980. The Convention finally adopted is based on a joint Anglo-Dutch draft and covers the use of weapons producing fragments not detectable by X-ray, mines and booby-traps, and incendiary weapons. The UK signed the Convention in April 1981 and is now moving towards ratification. This is a most significant step forward in humanitarian law on the use of weapons in armed conflict.

Conventional Arms Race

20 While deterrence has kept the peace in Europe, millions of people have been killed or maimed in other parts of the world in conflicts fought with conventional weapons. Western Governments have consistently

pressed for discussion at the United Nations on the problem of the conventional arms race. All proposals have been thwarted because the non-aligned countries are opposed to restraints in conventional arms transfers which they consider might interfere with their sovereign right under the UN Charter to acquire arms to defend themselves.

21 In 1980 the subject was placed on the agenda of the UN Disarmament Commission – a deliberative body of the whole UN membership. Britain supported a Danish proposal that the UN should study all aspects of conventional forces and weapons. A resolution was adopted at the 35th UN General Assembly 1980, despite opposition from the Soviet Union and its allies, and the UN Disarmament Commission was asked in 1981 to determine the terms of reference of the study. However, the Soviet Union continued to block agreement on this, and the study has thus been further delayed. An effort to relaunch it at the 36th UN General Assembly was successful, but the study cannot now begin before the second Special Session on Disarmament in 1982.

Military Expenditure

22 A reduction in military budgets would bring down the level of armaments in the world and release funds for other purposes such as economic and social needs. But regular and verifiable reporting of military expenditure in a standardised form must be the foundation of any agreement. A group of experts set up by the UN Secretary-General produced in 1976 a standardised system for reporting military expenditure. The 'matrix' has been completed by a representative sample of Western and non-aligned states, but the countries of the Warsaw Pact have refused to participate. At the UN Disarmament Commission in 1981 the Soviet Union again obstructed progress on this important work.

Outer Space

23 The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 banned military activities on the moon and other celestial bodies, the orbiting or stationing of weapons of mass destruction in outer space, and interference with other countries' peaceful activities in space. It did not specifically ban the deployment or testing in space of weapons other than those capable of mass destruction. Since 1968 the Soviet Union has been carrying out tests in space on

weapons designed to destroy another country's satellites. Satellites are important not only for such purposes as military and civil communications, surveying and navigation but also to verify arms control agreements. The development by one power of a significant anti-satellite capability would have serious and potentially destabilising consequences. The United Kingdom co-sponsored a resolution at the 36th UN General Assembly with the aim of preventing an arms race in space.

Peacekeeping

24 Maintaining international peace and security is the primary purpose of the United Nations, as stated in Article I of the UN Charter. Over the years continuous efforts have been made to encourage the use of UN machinery for peacekeeping and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Memorandum on Peacekeeping Operations put forward by the UK and its Western partners in the Special Political Committee in 1978 was accepted by most states, but not by the Soviet Union. As a Permanent Member of the Security Council, the USSR has the power to block the deployment of peacekeeping forces by its veto. Whereas the British contribution to UN peacekeeping in 1978 was \$25 million, the Soviet Union provided only \$7 million.

The Problems

25 There are enormous problems which face us as we work to achieve substantive measures of arms control and disarmament, especially in the East/West context. A major example is verification. The difficulties here spring from the differences between open and closed societies. Things which are taken for granted in the West – such as the publication of detailed information on defence budgets, armed forces and military equipment – are closely guarded secrets in the East. And whereas Western states have offered to accept all kinds of verification measures necessary to ensure that parties to arms control agreements are not cheating, the Soviet Union has traditionally rejected them, and in particular has resisted any sort of on-site inspection arrangement.

26 Further difficulties arise from the asymmetry in the East/West military balance, meaning that the West is often in the position of having to negotiate from inferior strength. As the Final Document of the first UN Special Session in 1978 acknowledged, in order to maintain undiminished security for all states and to avoid destabilisation, it is essential to work for measures of conventional arms control in parallel with nuclear disarmament. So far the Soviet attitude has not allowed progress in this field.

27 A further major difficulty arises from the increasing use of Soviet military power to serve its political objectives, as the invasion of Afghanistan has so vividly demonstrated. It is not surprising that this Soviet aggression – condemned by 116 members of the United Nations as a threat to international peace and security – has cast a shadow over the prospects for early progress in arms control and disarmament negotiations.

28 But in the Government's view it is nevertheless essential to maintain the East/West dialogue. East and West have to live in the same world, and there are economic and security advantages to be gained from restraint and balanced reductions in military capabilities. We must continue to work for agreement on measures to ensure a secure and peaceful future.

The Future

UN Special Session on Disarmament

29 The second UN Special Session on Disarmament – UNSSD II – will take place in New York from 7 June to 9 July 1982. Among its tasks are to review developments since the first Special Session in 1978, to assess why progress has been so slow, and to discuss a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament for the years ahead. The United Kingdom and four other Western states have put forward a draft programme as a contribution to this discussion.

30 The British Government sees UNSSD II as an occasion to take stock, to discuss the problems, and to find ways of speeding progress in the negotiations

taking place both within and outside the UN framework. The Special Session is a forum for discussion, not for the negotiation of treaties, and it has to operate by consensus. The first Special Session was disappointing in that it paid insufficient attention to nuclear non-proliferation and to conventional arms control. We should like to see a better balance at UNSSD II. We should also like a greater emphasis on regional arms control measures, to take account of the different security needs of various regions.

31 Progress in the negotiations will depend on several factors. Firstly, of course, an improvement in the international political climate – related to the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan and the persistent pressure on Poland. Second, the re-opening of the strategic arms talks (hopefully with the emphasis on substantial cuts). Third, a positive Soviet response to the radically new proposals which NATO has put forward to reduce intermediate-range nuclear forces. Fourth, a change in the Soviet attitude to verification and international control – a major obstacle to many of the negotiations.

32 It would be unwise to expect a breakthrough in the near future. But there is a new mood in favour of balanced disarmament and new proposals are on the table. To abandon these efforts would be irresponsible. The path of patient and serious negotiation is the only way to international peace and security.

Annex A: UN Disarmament Machinery

In seeking to fulfil its responsibilities for arms control and disarmament over the past 36 years, the United Nations has used a variety of methods and techniques. A constant element has been the work of a smaller body specifically established to consider the many political and technical problems relating to disarmament and international security, and to negotiate multilateral

agreements. Progress in these negotiations is the subject of an annual review in the UN General Assembly. The text of each multilateral treaty negotiated goes to the UNGA for approval.

The most noteworthy landmark in the history of the UNGA was its first Special Session on Disarmament in 1978 (UNSSD I). This was a non-aligned initiative designed to involve all countries in the disarmament debate and to work out an acceptable disarmament strategy. The Final Document which the member states adopted by consensus was the most comprehensive statement on disarmament ever accepted by the world community. Its conclusions remain valid and will form the starting point for the second Special Session in 1982.

UNSSD I endorsed arrangements for an expanded 40-member Committee on Disarmament (CD), with the participation of all five nuclear-weapon states, as the 'single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of limited size taking decisions on the basis of consensus'. The chairmanship is rotated on a monthly basis, and non-member countries are able to take part in discussions. The CD meets for about five months of the year at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. At the conclusion of its summer session the CD submits a report to the General Assembly, which forms the background to the disarmament debate in the First Committee.

The First Committee of the UNGA meets in New York from the middle of October to the end of November each year. Its session is divided into two parts – a three week general debate on disarmament questions, with the remainder of the time devoted to discussing and voting on some 40 resolutions. These resolutions of the UNGA are only recommendations and have no binding force on governments.

Another decision of UNSSD I was to re-establish the UN Disarmament Commission as a 'deliberative body of the whole UN membership'. This provides a forum for discussion of disarmament proposals when the UN General Assembly is not in session. It meets in New York for a month in the spring. Its primary function

has been to consider subjects which are not already under negotiation in the CD, such as the reduction of military budgets and the limitation of conventional forces and weapons.

The United Nations also encourages bilateral negotiations (eg the US/Soviet talks on strategic arms limitation) and regional efforts (eg the MBFR talks in Europe and proposals for nuclear-weapon-free zones in other continents). It has set up an Ad Hoc Committee to search for agreement on ways to implement an Indian Ocean Peace Zone. Separate UN conferences may be convened on specific issues (eg the 1979-80 Conference on particularly 'inhumane' conventional weapons). The Secretariat services the Committee on Disarmament and also manages the review conferences to consider the implementation of existing treaties at regular intervals.

Membership of the CD	Nuclear Weapon States		
	China France	Soviet Union United Kingdom	United States
	Non-Nuclear Weapon States		
	Algeria Argentina Australia Belgium Brazil Bulgaria Burma Canada Cuba Czechoslovakia Egypt Ethiopia German Democratic Republic	Germany, Federal Republic Hungary India Indonesia Iran Italy Japan Kenya Mexico Mongolia Morocco Netherlands Nigeria	Pakistan Peru Poland Romania Sri Lanka Sweden Venezuela Yugoslavia Zaire

Annex B: Major Arms Control and Disarmament Agreements

- 1925 *Geneva Protocol* prohibiting the use of poison gas and bacteriological weapons in war.
- 1959 *Antarctic Treaty* prohibiting military activities, nuclear explosions and disposal of radioactive waste in the area.
- 1963 *Partial Test Ban Treaty* banning nuclear-weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.
- 1967 *Outer Space Treaty* banning military activities on celestial bodies and the placing of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space.
- 1967 *Treaty of Tlatelolco* establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America.
- 1968 *Non-Proliferation Treaty* preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to further countries and calling for steps to end the nuclear arms race.
- 1971 *Seabed Treaty* prohibiting the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the seabed.
- 1972 *Biological Weapons Convention* banning the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological and toxin weapons.
- 1972 *SALT I Interim Agreement* (US/Soviet) on the limitation of offensive strategic nuclear arms.
- 1972 *ABM Treaty* (US/Soviet) limiting deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems on their territory.
- 1974 *Threshold Treaty* (US/Soviet) limiting underground nuclear tests to a yield of 150 kilotons.
- 1976 *PNE Treaty* (US/Soviet) limiting underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.
- 1977 *ENMOD Convention* banning the use of environmental modification techniques for military or other hostile purposes.
- 1979 *SALT II Agreement* (US/Soviet) imposing a ceiling on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and limiting certain new types.
- 1981 *Weaponry Convention* restricting the use of particularly inhumane conventional weapons such as napalm and mines.

