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July 16, 1986SAMPLE LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV (S/S)

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

I have taken careful note of the interesting proposals your negotiators made during the current round in Geneva. I have also continued to ponder our discussion in Geneva last November and our subsequent correspondence. As you may have guessed from our earlier exchanges, I heartily agree with the statement you made in your recent address to the CPSU Central Committee about the need to "search for new approaches to make it possible to clear the road to a reduction of nuclear arms." That is certainly the most urgent task before us.

In Geneva, you expressed to me the concern that one side might acquire the capability to deliver a disarming first strike against the other by adding advanced strategic defenses to a large arsenal of offensive nuclear weapons. I agree that the "new approach" you have called for should address this problem directly. Neither side should have a first strike capability.

The issue of advanced systems of strategic defense is one on which we have both focused in connection with a "new approach." Research and exploration as the feasibility of such advanced strategic defenses is a subject we have discussed with each other. I want to address it now, at the very outset of this letter, because I am aware that the issue is a matter of great concern to both of us. We both agree that neither side should deploy systems of strategic defense simply to augment and enhance its offensive capability. I have assured you that the United States has no interest in seeking unilateral advantage in this area. To ensure that neither of us is in a position to do so, we would be prepared to immediately conclude an agreement incorporating the following limits:

(a) Both sides would confine themselves for a period of ~~no less than five years~~, through 1991, to a program of research and associated testing to determine whether, in principle, advanced reliable systems of strategic defense are technically feasible. Such research could include testing necessary to establish feasibility. In the event either side wishes to conduct such testing, the other side shall ~~have the right~~ to observe the tests, in accord with mutually agreed procedures.

(b) Following this period of research or at some later future time, either the United States or the Soviet Union may determine that advanced reliable systems of strategic defense are technically feasible. Therefore, either party may then desire to proceed beyond research and associated testing to development and related testing of an advanced strategic defense system. In anticipation that this may occur, we would be prepared to sign a

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agreements

treaty now which would require the party that decides to proceed to develop an advanced strategic defense system to share the benefits of such a system with the other providing there is mutual agreement to eliminate the offensive ballistic missiles of both sides. The details of the sharing arrangement and the elimination of offensive ballistic missiles would be the subject of negotiations for a period of no more than two years.

(c) If, subsequent to two years after either side has offered a sharing plan, the United States and Soviet Union have not agreed on such a plan, either side will be free to deploy unilaterally after six months notice of such intention is given to the other side.

I would also be prepared to have our representatives discuss additional assurances that would further ban deployment in space of advanced weapons designed to inflict mass destruction on the surface of the earth.

I would expect that you would agree that significant commitments of this type with respect to strategic defenses would make sense only if made in conjunction with the implementation of immediate actions on both our sides to begin moving towards our commonly shared goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Towards this goal, I believe we also share the view that the process must begin with radical and stabilizing reductions in the offensive nuclear arsenals of both the United States and the Soviet Union.

In the area of strategic offensive nuclear forces, I remain concerned about what we perceive as a first-strike capability against at least a portion of our retaliatory forces. This is a condition that I cannot ignore. I continue to hope that our efforts in pursuit of significant reductions in existing nuclear arsenals will resolve this problem. We remain committed to the immediate implementation of the principle of a fifty percent reduction, on an equitable and verifiable basis, of existing strategic arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union. The central provision should be reduction (up to 50 percent) of strategic ballistic missile warheads. [However, we are prepared to consider initial reductions of a less sweeping nature as an interim measure.] In this context, we are prepared to limit long-range air-launched cruise missiles to well below our current plan, and to limit the total number of ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers to a level in the range suggested by the Soviet side. [These reductions should be completed within an agreed period of time (for example, five years).]

At the same time, we could deal with the question of intermediate-range nuclear missiles by agreeing on the goal of eliminating this entire class of land-based, LRINF missiles world-wide, which is consistent with the total elimination of all nuclear weapons, and by agreeing on immediate steps that would

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lead toward this goal in either one step, or, if you prefer, in a series of steps. Your comment regarding intermediate range nuclear missile systems suggests to me that we were heading in the right direction last November when we endorsed the idea of an interim INF agreement. An immediate agreement leading to the elimination of long range INF missile systems in Europe and in the rest of the world as well is the best possible outcome. If it is not immediately possible, however, to reach agreement on the complete elimination of these missiles, then a partial, i.e., interim approach may prove the most fruitful path to achieving early reductions in these systems.

Both sides have now put forward proposals whose ultimate result would be equality at zero for our two countries in long range INF missile warheads. If we can also agree that such equality is possible at a level above zero, we would take a major step towards the achievement of an INF agreement.

Finally, I agree that we should seek to achieve an interim outcome without delay. I would be interested in any specific suggestions that you may wish to offer towards this end. Once again, however, we should agree that reductions begin immediately and that significant progress be achieved within an agreed period of time.

Of course, I would hope that we could also agree now that once we have achieved a fifty percent reduction in the U.S. and Soviet offensive nuclear arsenals and the progress we seek in eliminating intermediate-range nuclear missiles, we would continue to pursue negotiations for further reductions in strategic offensive nuclear arsenals, inviting other nuclear powers to participate. Such negotiations could focus on the reduction of the size of nuclear arsenals then held by the negotiating powers. The overall aim should be the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Associated with the program to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons, we would be prepared to agree to a parallel program to achieve progress in effectively limiting and ultimately eliminating nuclear testing in step-by-step fashion. This program could begin by our prompt agreement on verification procedures to permit ratification of the treaties signed in 1974 and 1976. Upon ratification of these treaties, we could then establish a process of further reductions in the number of nuclear tests which each side would be permitted to conduct annually. For example, we could agree to reduce, from that time, the number of nuclear tests in relationship to the scale of reductions in strategic nuclear arms actually implemented. *qu*

With regard to conventional and chemical forces, I fully agree that the existing fora and channels should be used more actively. These areas differ in several ways from nuclear matters. As you have pointed out, a major difference is the

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number of relevant states -- much larger in both conventional and, potentially, in chemical armaments than the nuclear area. I could, however, envision fruitful confidential exchanges between us at the level of experts, away from the glare of publicity. I would suggest that such discussions could first profit by preliminary exchanges to clarify and focus the agenda of such experts' meeting. When our experts have been able to make some preliminary progress, we might also wish to consider our respective ambassadors to MBFR, CDE, and the CD getting together in capitals for bilateral exchange.

Mr. General Secretary, I hope that you will notice that I have tried explicitly to take into account the concerns you expressed to me in Geneva and in our correspondence, as well as key elements of your most recent proposals. I believe you will see that this approach provides complete insurance that neither country would be able to exploit research on strategic defense to acquire a disarming first-strike capability, or to deploy weapons of mass destruction in space. The framework I propose should permit us to proceed immediately to reduce existing nuclear arsenals as we have agreed is desirable, and to establish the conditions for proceeding to further reductions toward the goal of total elimination.

With respect to those aspects of the above subject to negotiation at the Nuclear and Space Talks, I will be instructing our negotiators to present this proposal, along with appropriate implementing details, when the next round of negotiations begins in Geneva in September. I hope that your negotiators will be prepared to respond in a positive and constructive fashion so that we can proceed promptly to agreement. We also look forward to the beginning of expert level discussions on the related area of nuclear testing.

Sincerely yours,

as arranged

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LANGUAGE CONSISTENT WITH ADMINISTRATION POLICY ON TESTING

"With respect to nuclear testing, as you know, we believe a safe, reliable and effective nuclear deterrent requires testing. Thus, while a ban on such testing remains a long-term United States objective, we are unable under present circumstances to contemplate a proposal for a complete ban on such tests or other limitations beyond those involved in existing treaties in this area. We are, however, hopeful that, with the initiation of discussions between our respective experts, we can make progress toward eliminating the verification uncertainties which currently preclude ratification of the TTBT and PNET."

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