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MEMORANDUM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN OCTOBER 2 MEETING

FROM: DENNIS B. ROSS *DR*  
SUBJECT: US-SOVIET WORKING GROUP ON "DETERRENCE, REASSURANCE, AND STABILITY"

You've all been invited to a meeting in the S/P conference room (Room 7311, Department of State), at 11:15 am, Wednesday, October 2, to talk about the US-Soviet Working Group on "Deterrence, Reassurance and Stability". I'd like to use the meeting to discuss the goals and substantive agenda of the group, as well as to get preparations underway for its initial meeting (which may be in mid-November).

Several of you have asked how this working group relates to other US-Soviet working groups in the security area. The attached draft is an attempt to provide an answer. We can discuss it on Wednesday.

Attachment:

As stated.

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### ROLES OF VARIOUS U.S.-SOVIET WORKING GROUPS

With a full agenda of bilateral security discussions coming up this fall, questions have arisen about how to delineate the responsibilities of U.S.-Soviet working groups functioning in the security area -- especially the Arms Control Working Group, the Nonproliferation Working Group, and the Working Group on Deterrence, Reassurance, and Stability (soon to be renamed). Following is an effort to distinguish among their purposes and responsibilities.

The main conceptual distinction is between the first two groups listed above and the third:

- The Arms Control Working Group (ACWG) and Nonproliferation Working Group (NPWG) are relatively formal, operational groups generally dealing with current problems and seeking to reach solutions. They are both senior-level steering groups that will meet periodically to: (a) review progress being made in various "expert" negotiations/deliberations in their areas (e.g., D&S, START follow-on activity, CWC and so forth for the ACWG; Australia Group, MTCR, nuclear suppliers' group, five-power discussions for the NPWG); (b) chart policy directions in their areas; (c) review any problems in the implementation of existing agreements in their areas; and (d) explore possible new initiatives in their areas or reach agreement in principle on problems unable to be resolved in lower-level negotiations. Meeting periodically and at a senior level, the two steering groups may devise specific solutions to problems or they could agree to direct (or to recommend that Ministers direct) groups of experts to perform specific tasks (e.g., adjustment of START ceilings, carry out dialogue on nuclear safety, etc.).
  
- The Working Group on Deterrence, Reassurance, and Stability (Stability WG) is an informal, brainstorming, future-oriented discussion (i.e., non-negotiating) group. Among its purposes are: (a) to provide a window on the evolution of center-republic and civilian-military relationships in the former USSR; (b) to facilitate identification of and contacts with key military and civilian personnel at the center and in the republics who will be playing leading roles in security affairs; and (c) to identify future security problems and threats facing the "two" sides and to discuss the implications of those problems and threats and appropriate means of responding to them. Its goal is to produce better mutual understanding rather than agreements, although it might identify particular tasks that one of the operational groups could later be asked to perform. The group's substantive focus would be broad -- essentially the full range of stability/security concerns facing the two sides.

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The question of which group should handle a particular matter will often be obvious. For example:

- The ACWG will deal with follow-on START limits, SNF arms control, nuclear testing "next steps," problems in INF implementation, etc.
- The NPWG will talk about harmonizing the WMD-related export policies of the leading suppliers, devising a strategy for dealing with South Asian proliferation, etc.
- The Stability WG will conduct a broad survey of the security threats both sides see arising in the future and may discuss each other's strategic doctrine and attitudes towards the future of nuclear deterrence.

Responsibility for some subjects may be more complicated and even shared:

- The Stability WG will examine the threat to both sides posed by ballistic missile proliferation. The ACWG will discuss how limited defenses constrained by arms control can deal with that threat. The Defense and Space Group will be the venue for developing the specific arms control constraints, although difficulties in reaching agreement will undoubtedly be referred back to the ACWG and to Ministers.
- The Stability WG could discuss how nuclear command and control arrangements between the republics and the center are evolving and would consider the extent to which there is a risk of inadvertent or unauthorized nuclear use that needs to be addressed and reduced through some sort of joint action. The NPWG could discuss this question from the standpoint of avoiding proliferation (e.g., adherence of fully independent former republics to the NPT, export controls, etc.). The ACWG could pursue any remedies that were deemed desirable (e.g., briefings, discussions, etc.).

A common feature of the three working groups discussed above is their interagency character. These groups will seek to complement, and not replicate, the work carried out in the Pentagon's separate channels with the Soviets -- the SecDef/MOD channel and various military-to-military contacts. Like the Stability Group, these defense channels are intended mainly as discussion and information-exchange forums rather than as negotiating bodies. Moreover, they do not deal with current arms control issues. Instead, taking advantage of the common professional responsibilities and areas of expertise of the participants on both sides, these channels tend to focus on a defense-oriented substantive agenda (e.g., military transparency, civilian control, defense conversion, etc.).

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