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Dear George:

I wish to inform you in strictest confidence of a Soviet proposal conveyed to Secretary Shultz yesterday by Ambassador Dubinin.

Dubinin began by saying that Foreign Minister Shevardnadze had been thinking hard about how to make the forthcoming ministerial meeting as substantial and productive as possible. Shevardnadze therefore asked Dubinin to see Secretary Shultz privately to float the following ideas.

Dubinin said that, in view of the fact that the U.S. side had showed its interest in concluding agreements on individual aspects of START, Foreign Minister Shevardnadze suggested reaching agreement on not increasing the number of warheads on existing types of ICBMs and SLBMs. Dubinin gave Secretary Shultz a draft letter (text follows at end) which could form the basis of a U.S.-Soviet agreement through an exchange of letters.

The heart of the agreement is that, in the period until entry into force of a START treaty, the U.S. and the USSR shall not increase the number of reentry vehicles on their existing ICBMs and SLBMs in excess of the number attributed to each type of such missiles under the joint Soviet-U.S. statement of December 10, 1987, and shall not flight test ICBMs and SLBMs of the type flight-tested as of December 10, 1987, with a number of reentry vehicles greater than the number attributed to them under that statement.

Explaining the Soviet rationale for the proposal, Dubinin said it was clear a full-scale treaty was not in the cards, although the Soviet side hoped for an early treaty on strategic arms in the next administration. It was clear also that the two sides needed a good basis for continued dialogue. The step Shevardnadze was proposing, Dubinin said, reflected the idea of a partial step forward. It would testify to the purposeful efforts of the sides to arrive at comprehensive reductions and would aid the further progress of the negotiations. It would constitute a first practical step toward the goal of 50 percent reductions. It would have a broad response in the world and be assessed positively.

The Rt. Hon. George Younger, M.P.,
Secretary of State for Defense,
Ministry of Defense,
Whitehall

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Secretary Shultz told Dubinin he would not try to answer the proposal on the spot. He said that it was a bit different and we would have to study the Soviet proposal before commenting. Dubinin also confirmed that the Soviet proposal was being made confidentially and would not be made public the next day.

I wanted to inform you in confidence of this proposal. Our people are just now beginning to look at it and we have made no decisions. I also wanted to assure you that, whatever we were to decide on this proposal, we will strictly assure that there would be no impact on US/UK nuclear cooperation.

I know that you will keep the contents of this letter in strict confidence. I would welcome any views on the Soviet proposal which you may wish to convey. An identical message is being provided to Foreign Minister Howe from Secretary Shultz.

With best wishes,

/s/

Frank C. Carlucci

Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
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SHEVARDNADZE-SHULTZ LETTER
(Soviet Unofficial Translation)

Dear Mr. Secretary of State:

With reference to the exchange of views that took place on September , I propose the following:

1. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America reaffirm their intention to continue purposeful efforts for an early completion of a treaty of the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms.

2. In the period before the entry into force of the treaty, referred to in paragraph 1 above, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America shall not increase the number of reentry vehicles on their existing ICBMs and SLBMs in excess of the number attributed to each type of such missiles under the joint Soviet-U.S. statement of December 10, 1987, and shall not flight test ICBMs and SLBMs of the type flight-tested as of December 10, 1987, with a number of reentry vehicles greater than the number attributed to them under that statement, i.e., for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, ICBMs and SLBMs of the types known as:

SS-11 - 1
SS-13 - 1
SS-17 - 4
SS-18 - 10
SS-19 - 6
SS-24 - 10
SS-25 - 1
SS-N-6 - 1
SS-N-8 - 1
SS-N-17 - 1
SS-N-18 - 7
SS-N-23 - 4
SS-N-20 - 10.

For the United States of America, ICBMs and SLBMs of the types known as:

NX - 10
Minuteman III - 3
Minuteman II - 1
Trident I - 8
Trident II - 8
Poseidon - 10.

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3. At the same time, the sides agree that during flight-testing of any ICBM or SLBM of the type referred to in paragraph 2 above, the number of procedures for releasing or for dispensing may not exceed the maximum number of reentry vehicles established for ICBMs and SLBMs of corresponding types as provided for in paragraph 2. In this agreement "procedures for releasing or for dispensing" are understood to mean maneuvers of a missile associated with targeting and releasing or dispensing its reentry vehicles to aim points, whether or not a reentry vehicle is actually released or dispensed. Procedures for releasing anti-defense penetration aids differ from those for releasing or for dispensing reentry vehicles.

4. Verification shall be carried out by national technical means and on-site inspection.

I also propose -- if the United States agrees with the above -- that this letter and your reply letter, Mr. Secretary, containing such agreement, constitute an agreement between the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Government of the United States of America on this question. This agreement would enter into force on the day of your reply letter and would remain in force for the duration of the NST negotiations until it is replaced by a treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms.

Each side would have the right to withdraw from this agreement by giving notice in writing of its decision to the other side six months prior to withdrawal from the agreement.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Eduard Shevardnadze

September , 1988.

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