

SECTION I - ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

1. NUCLEAR AND SPACE ARMS: STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TALKS (START)

BACKGROUND

On 8 January 1985, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to begin negotiations "concerning space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate-range, with all the questions considered and resolved in their interrelationship." Known as the Nuclear and Space Arms Talks (NST), the discussions were divided into three distinct negotiations, involving: strategic nuclear arms, intermediate-range nuclear arms, and defence and space weapons.

Significant progress was made in the NST with the signing of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in Washington on 8 December 1987. The Treaty banned all US and Soviet land-based INF missiles (those with ranges of between 1,000 and 5,500 km). For the Soviet Union this meant the destruction of 1,846 missiles; for the United States, 847. Short-range INF, namely SS-12/22 and SS-12/23 missiles on the Soviet side and Pershing 1A missiles on the American, were to be destroyed within eighteen months of the ratification of the Treaty. Long-range INF, including SS-4, SS-5, and SS-20 ballistic missiles and SSC-X-4 cruise missiles (stored, but never deployed) on the Soviet side and Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) on the American, were to be destroyed within three years of ratification. The instruments of ratification were exchanged by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at the Moscow Summit on 1 June 1988.

Both sides began inspecting each other's bases and factories to verify the information contained in the Treaty in July 1988. On 1 August, the Soviet Union destroyed the first of its missiles, four SS-12s, while the US began destruction of its Pershing IIs on 8 September. By early May 1990 the USSR had destroyed 1,615 missiles and the United States, 486. Generally speaking, both the US and the Soviet Union were satisfied with each other's record of compliance with the Agreement. However, American consternation was aroused when in March 1990, SS-23 missiles were discovered in the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Director Ronald Lehman said on 7 March that the United States was "working on the theory that it was just a mistake, that the Soviets just lost or forgot about those missiles."¹ The Soviets claimed that the missiles were transferred without authorization prior to the signing of the INF Treaty and that they bore non-nuclear warheads. In spite of the Soviet claim that the newly discovered SS-23s were not covered by the INF Treaty, arrangements were made to destroy them.

¹ *Arms Control Reporter* (1990), p. 403.B.745.