

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

observing the ABM Treaty, which is tantamount to scrapping the Treaty régime. In the United States draft the future commitment not to withdraw from the Treaty is hedged about with reservations, which give the United States a whole range of possibilities for unilaterally terminating the Treaty even during the agreed period of non-withdrawal.

I am obliged to say that the United States position also impedes agreement on reductions in strategic offensive arms. For example, it continues to evade agreement on limiting long-range sea-launched cruise missiles on the pretext of difficulties in verification, although the Soviet side has tabled detailed proposals on verification at the negotiations. The United States side is also holding on to what is left of its former pre-December positions on the question of sublimits for ballistic missile warheads.

As a result, the situation at the nuclear and space talks has now noticeably deteriorated. And for the time being, we must frankly inform the Conference that it is difficult to offer a very reliable forecast of how these negotiations will proceed. We hope that United States Secretary of State George Schultz's visit to Moscow in a few days will provide the necessary clarity concerning what the United States Administration intends to do and is able to do as regards the radical reduction of strategic offensive arms and the observance of the ABM Treaty.

As for the Soviet side, it will continue to strive for the realization of the Washington understandings, which are in the interests not only of the USSR and the United States, but also the entire international community. The participants in the Conference can be absolutely sure of that.

The Soviet Union considers that the major task now is to ensure uninterrupted progress along all avenues leading to ridding this planet of nuclear and any other weapons of mass destruction, and decreasing the levels of military capability to limits of reasonable sufficiency.

Our approach to further action involves raising the efficiency of the whole system of disarmament negotiations, both bilateral and multilateral, both within and outside the United Nations framework, on the basis of their complementarity.

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