

informal work structure was adopted in October, which for the first time, provided the means for actual drafting. It was not until February 1986, however, that a first provisional text was agreed and noted.

1985 did not end on an optimistic note. The conference was stalemated on the naval and air issue (the mandate interpretation issue) and the East refused to negotiate any other measures until that issue was solved. The East also indicated that progress on CSBMs was linked to progress on the non-use of force, and the West threatened a reverse linkage. One measure, however, observation, thanks to effective corridor work by the Finnish coordinator, did show some prospects for the future.

In 1986 the tempo of events increased. In a January speech, General Secretary Gorbachev offered to postpone the question of naval activities to the next stage of the conference. He also emphasized in the same speech and repeated at the 27 February Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) meeting, the importance of verification in disarmament. The foreign Ministers of France and the Federal Republic of Germany, on a visit to the Stockholm Conference, stressed the importance their countries attached to the conference as a key instrument for enhancing European stability and security.

In February 1986 Anatoly Shcharansky, a founding member of the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group, was allowed to leave Moscow and emigrate to Israel. While linkage between the Stockholm Conference and the 'Third Basket' had no direct role in the negotiations, it was present in subliminal form as part of the overall CSCE process. Moreover, the follow-up meeting, in Vienna, scheduled to begin 4 November 1986 would review and weigh the results of all the meetings as well as the implementation record of the Helsinki Final Act. With lack of progress at some meetings important to the West¹⁹, the Soviets may have been concerned that the West could withhold agreement at Stockholm. Shcharansky's release therefore may have been seen as a useful political signal to make to the West.

At the time, however, Shcharansky's release did not appear to have a direct impact on the negotiations as the East and the West continued deadlocked on notifying participation of airforces. In the wider mosaic of consensus making, however, Shcharansky's release probably made a contribution.

Having made a gesture to one part of the CSCE process, in April Mr. Gorbachev unveiled a new initiative in East Berlin. With an eye to the future he expressed Soviet readiness to pursue conventional force reductions from the Atlantic to the Urals. This new arms control initiative appeared so important to the Soviets that the US anti-terrorist air raid on Libya, also in April, did not result in any discernible rhetoric or increased pressure on the West to notify independent air activities.

In response to General Secretary Gorbachev's statement on conventional disarmament in Europe, the NATO foreign ministers released a communiqué in Halifax, in May, advising that a High Level Task Force would examine issues related to conventional arms control. The communiqué also indicated that in order for there to be progress in reductions of any kind, Stockholm would have to achieve results. In June the Soviets responded with more detailed reduction proposals.²⁰

In the same month at the Stockholm Conference the West signalled it was ready to consider thresholds above the previous NATO proposal of a 6,000 troop level and indicated a willingness to put aside the notification of mobilization provided reciprocal steps were taken by the WTO with respect to Western concerns, namely the functional approach* to notification and on-site inspection provisions for verification.

The Stockholm Conference remained a "cliff-hanger" until the opening of the last session in August. Three weeks before the conference ended, the threshold and notification stalemate became unblocked by the striking of a bargain and other outstanding problems sequentially fell into place. For notification of certain military activities the West accepted a numerical threshold rather than the preferred structural threshold based on ground force divisions. The threshold agreed was higher than that wished for by the West (6,000 versus the agreed 13,000). Neither independent naval or air activity as desired by the East would be notified except as part of a notifiable activity on land. The last problem to be solved was on-site inspection. To ensure completion by the agreed deadline, the clock had to be stopped.

One of the unique achievements of the Stockholm Conference was the agreement on compliance and verification based on the concept of on-site inspection on demand. The East had consistently dismissed the idea of an independent verification measure and treated the proposal as tantamount to spying. The West held to its position and argued that on-site inspection provided equal opportunity for all. The NNA had a much weaker verification proposal which would have the effect of exempting some of their activities from inspection. In the end the Western proposal provided the main structure on which the present measure is based. There was no movement on the issue however, until Marshal Ahkromeyev, Chief of the General Staff of the USSR, made a statement at a plenary meeting accepting on-site inspections. The West's preference would have been to provide its own transportation means. Ahkromeyev called for the inspected state to provide vehicles and aircraft to be used by inspectors. Encouraged by the West, the NNA, in a last minute

* See page 4.