

We are abandoning the primitive concepts asserting that human and state entities are inherently aggressive.

We are taking a different view of the problem of force, becoming aware that it cannot help solve even the most trivial disputes, to say nothing of intricate conflicts. We understand that, to acquire the resources needed for development, it is cheaper and easier to buy them on the market than to seize them, that technology cannot be captured by force and made to work.

In the final analysis, anything open, whether skies or land, begins with open thinking. It alone is capable of recognizing and establishing as a norm the vital need to exchange information and openly seek to identify the truth and the universal, national and personal interests.

Over the past few years, progressive thought has made major advances in understanding openness as the principal factor of any progress -- intellectual, material and social. This process has also affected the area of security, in which for many years both sides played a game of hide-and-seek.

The historic threshold was crossed when, at the Stockholm Conference, all European states accepted the principle of on-site inspections.

Now this principle is being practically applied in verifying the destruction of nuclear missiles and as part of confidence-building measures. We have, thus far, not heard a single complaint that inspections and verification have impinged on anyone's security.

The success and usefulness of verification are so obvious and its sphere of application has expanded so much, covering not only military matters but also environmental, humanitarian, economic and other problems, that there is even a risk of complacency.

But it is too early to become complacent. Therefore, speaking of the Open Skies concept, one could logically ask: Do we need another type of verification when there are satellites and inspector teams working on the ground?

Here we must say, quite firmly: In verification, no excess is too much. And this is more than just a political statement. If we intend to continue moving as we have been doing until now, reducing troops and weapons, dismantling huge structures of military confrontation, adopting defensive doctrines and limiting military capabilities to levels of minimum sufficiency for defence, then we need an even more effective and multi-optional system of verification having a great margin of dependability.

I would even venture to propose this formula: sufficiency in