

STATEMENT BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE
CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE, MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

How does the Soviet Union envisage today, in practical terms, the process of making reductions in nuclear weapons, both delivery vehicles and warheads, leading ultimately to their complete elimination? Our proposals can be summarized as follows.

Stage one: within the next 5-8 years the USSR and the United States will each reduce by one half the nuclear arms that can reach the other's territory. For the remaining delivery vehicles of this kind each side will retain no more than 6,000 warheads.

It stands to reason that such a reduction is possible only if the USSR and the United States mutually renounce the development, testing and deployment of space strike weapons. As the Soviet Union has repeatedly warned, the development of space strike weapons will dash the hopes for a reduction of nuclear weapons on Earth.

This first stage will include the adoption and implementation of the decision for the complete elimination of the intermediate-range missiles, both ballistic and cruise missiles, of the USSR and the United States in the European zone, as a first step towards ridding the European continent of nuclear weapons.

At the same time the United States should undertake not to transfer its strategic and medium-range missiles to other countries, while Britain and France should pledge not to build up their respective nuclear armaments.

The USSR and the United States should agree from the outset to halt all nuclear explosions and call upon other States to join in such a moratorium as soon as possible.

We propose that the first stage of nuclear disarmament should concern the Soviet Union and the United States because it is up to them to set an example for the other nuclear-weapon Powers to follow. We said this very frankly to President Reagan of the United States during our meeting in Geneva.