

When Western group concerns were expressed in Washington, the United States moved in early 1982 to support the establishment in the CD of CTB and CW working groups.

THE PERIOD OF EVOLUTION 1982-1986

During this period the CD edged away from politicized debates toward its negotiating role. Increasingly, however, and in a useful fashion, it took on the functions of a deliberative body. The underlying reason for this change in the overall atmosphere of the Geneva forum lay in the external environment, in the fitful but perceptible shift in Soviet-American relations from a posture of antagonism and distrust toward an adversarial partnership mildly reminiscent of their *détente* era. A disposition toward bilateral agreement on arms control measures emerged, signalled by President Reagan's 1982 Berlin speech, the subsequent modernizing of the Soviet-American hotline, and the initiation of dialogues over strategic and intermediate range nuclear forces. These provided the chief medium for the expression of mutual superpower interests in renewing their limited process of accommodation.

Arms control multilateralism became a principal beneficiary of movement in the bilateral sphere. New proposals were put forward to sustain the diplomatic life of the long stalemated Vienna MBFR talks; a Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE) was established in Stockholm in 1984, to reach agreement by late 1986 on militarily significant CBMs; and the CD was to witness the establishment, in August 1983, of a CW working group with a negotiating mandate and, in March 1986, of an outer-space working group with an exploratory mandate. These latter measures, and the establishment of the CW group in particular, signified that the CD did have the potential to negotiate arms control measures. Perhaps the principal accomplishment of the CD in this period was its facilitation of an evolution in the strategic and arms control thinking of a number of its non-nuclear power members, principally but not exclusively from within the Group of 21. As the West German delegate observed in 1986, the idea at UNSSOD I "that nuclear disarmament could be achieved over the heads of the nuclear powers has been increasingly receding, and a new and more sober approach has