

Question: How does the present state of Soviet-American relations affect the general international situation? How can the coming negotiations change this situation?

Answer: Unfortunately, the situation between the Soviet Union and the United States is not ideal. This must, of course, be reflected in the general international situation which remains complex and tense.

Agreement has been reached between the USSR and the United States to conduct negotiations on the central issues concerning general security. This step naturally met with approval and gave rise to hope throughout the world. However, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that the factors causing the tension in the world today have not been eliminated.

Has the United States abolished even one of its programmes aimed at achieving military superiority? No. On the contrary, the arms production line is working at full capacity to achieve this goal. Or has the deployment of new American nuclear missiles in Western Europe stopped? No again.

Nor has the United States refrained from using methods of diktat in relation to other States. The international situation today is characterized by the undeclared war against Nicaragua, support for Israeli aggression in the Middle East and complicity in the racist terror in southern Africa, i.e. political phenomena rejected by the overwhelming majority of people in all continents. The peoples of the world do not accept such policies -- they condemn them and demand that they be stopped.

To sum up, I will say this: mankind has reached a turning point in its history. The very future of human civilization depends on whether solutions can be found to the major questions facing the world today, and above all on whether it is possible to eliminate the threat of nuclear war, to prevent the militarization of outer space and ensure its use solely for peaceful purposes and to combine the efforts of all peoples with a view to resolving global economic and ecological problems.

This, I think, is also the reply to the second part of your question. A favourable outcome to the new Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear and space weapons would have a positive effect on the situation in the world and would represent a major step towards the solution of the crucial problems of today.

The Soviet Union will be working to this end and towards achieving significant and concrete results in Geneva. But everything does not depend solely on the Soviet Union.

People not only recognize the dramatic nature of our time, they perceive more and more clearly the dividing line between the two main policies -- the policy of peace and the policy of preparing for war. Peoples and Governments are firmly in favour of improving the international situation, halting the arms race, ensuring peace in outer space and removing nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

This was rightly stated in no uncertain manner by the Heads of State and Government of India, Mexico, Sweden, the United Republic of Tanzania, Argentina and Greece in the declaration just adopted in Delhi.

Our countries are committed to this course because of the great responsibility they bear in relation to present and future generations.