

STATEMENT MADE BY M.S. GORBACHEV, GENERAL SECRETARY OF  
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(Foreign policy section)

Distinguished comrades! The age in which we live is confronting us with difficult, not to say brain-racking questions concerning the fates of peace and of the future of humanity.

The interdependence of the modern world is such that all peoples are like climbers roped together on a mountain slope. They can either climb on together, towards the summit, or fall together into the abyss. If that is not to happen, political leaders must rise above narrowly-perceived interests and realize how dramatic the present situation is. That is why the need for a new political outlook in the nuclear era is so acute. Only such a new outlook can bring all the participants in international relations to take urgent measures to prevent the nuclear disaster that threatens to destroy humanity.

It cannot be said that the idea of a new outlook has not elicited any response. On the contrary, the number of people in the world who share it is growing. They include scientists, doctors, the representatives of many other professions, and artists, as was demonstrated yet again during the international forum "For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Humanity" held recently in Moscow.

In these and other matters we are seeing evidence of a new approach to international issues on the part of a number of leading Western politicians and statesmen too. But those are only the first shoots. In the West, old stereotypes are still strong and are leaving their imprint on foreign policy. Truly to say that the new political outlook has become a real force will be possible only when the disarmament process has finally been set in motion.

Can we hope for that? What are the prospects today?

I will say at once that there is hope, the danger of war can be reduced. That conviction is based both on the growing realization around the world that a nuclear conflict would have fatal consequences for humanity and on the chances revealed at Reykjavik of reaching agreement on drastic cuts in and the elimination of the most destructive types of nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union has, conscious of what its action entails, been declaring its desire to seek mutually-acceptable solutions to the entire range of nuclear disarmament issues. The fundamental problem remains radical cuts in offensive strategic weapons. We, as is well known, are ready to take the most resolute steps in that respect, including both a 50 per cent cut in such weapons over five years and complete elimination over 10 years -- on, of course, the indispensable condition that the ABM Treaty is strictly complied with and that no arms race begins in outer space.

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