

On 9 April, the Warsaw Pact called upon NATO nations to begin negotiations on freezing and reducing military spending. A similar offer was made by the Warsaw Pact in 1983.

On 8 May, Poland presented a four-part plan calling for conventional and nuclear disarmament in central Europe. The proposal calls for the reduction and withdrawal of nuclear and conventional weapons from Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Denmark. (See the article by Michael Tucker on the Stockholm Treaty in this issue of Peace & Security.)

Nuclear and Space Arms Talks (NST)

■ President Reagan provided Secretary of State Shultz with new negotiating instructions for his visit to Moscow on 13-16 April. President Reagan changed the time frame for strategic reductions of fifty percent from five years to seven years. A seven-year period (reduced from ten) was also proposed for a joint agreement of non-withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. At that point (1994) both sides would be free to deploy defences.

A US draft treaty on these issues was presented on 8 May during the eighth round of the NST. The general structure for reductions of strategic nuclear weapons by fifty percent remains the same – both sides would reduce to 1,600 strategic delivery vehicles and 6,000 nuclear warheads or charges. In an apparent concession to the Soviet Union, the US raised the sub-ceiling on warheads that can be put on ICBMs from 3,300 to 3,600. This raises the level of the sub-ceiling to sixty percent of the total

warheads (6,000) previously proposed by the Soviet Union. The US also continues to call for a ban on mobile missiles.

Intermediate Range Forces (INF)

■ There has been considerable activity in this area since Gorbachev offered to negotiate limits on INF as a separate package (28 February 1987). Both sides have agreed, as they had previously at Reykjavik, to eliminate all intermediate-range missiles from Europe and maintain one hundred each outside of Europe on their national territory.

Two draft treaties have been presented. The US presented one on 4 March followed by a detailed verification annex on 12 March; the Soviets presented a draft in response on 27 April. The texts of the draft treaties have not been made public but statements by negotiators from both sides suggest that the two sides have moved closer to agreement. Some issues still remain to be worked out. The US wants the right to convert its Pershing II missiles into shorter range missiles and deploy them in Europe. The Soviets have refused to accept this saying that the missiles can easily be converted back to their longer ranges. The question of where exactly the one hundred remaining INF warheads will be deployed on either side also remains to be solved.

According to reports from Geneva the verification annex in the US draft calls for the broadcast of uncoded data from missile tests and the exchange of detailed information on the characteristics of missiles. In terms of monitoring the treaty, inspectors would go to the missile sites to verify the number of missiles deployed and then would be present to monitor the elimination of the missiles.

Permanent inspectors would be placed at the sites of the one hundred remaining missiles. In order to ease the verification requirements, the US has also proposed that INF missiles be completely eliminated. The Soviets have rejected this offer however, stating that they need to maintain the one hundred warheads in Soviet Asia to counter-balance the threat posed by US forces in South Korea and Japan.

The major sticking point in the negotiations has been the issue of short-range (500 to 1,000 kilometres) intermediate forces (SRINF). Both sides agreed at Reykjavik to include language dealing with SRINF in an INF treaty. The Soviets, however, vacillated and at one point seemed to retreat to their previous position of not negotiating on SRINF until after an INF treaty was signed. At the time of the US draft treaty, early in March, the Soviets stated their willingness to deal with the SRINF issue in parallel with negotiations on INF. Finally, during a visit to Prague, Czechoslovakia, General Secretary Gorbachev suggested the Soviets would be willing to completely eliminate SRINF in Europe and this offer was formally presented to Secretary of State Shultz, during his visit to Moscow on 14 April.

Gorbachev has consistently stated his willingness to remove Soviet SRINF from East Germany and Czechoslovakia as soon as an INF deal was signed, regardless of other progress on SRINF. However, the offer to completely eliminate these missiles from Europe has created political problems in Western Europe.

Gorbachev's surprise offer has generated renewed concern about Soviet conventional superiority in Europe. Although many have questioned whether Warsaw Pact superiority is as great as some claim it to be, Western European leaders have expressed concern that a Europe free of nuclear missiles will leave them vulnerable to the conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact. Coupled with that fear is the fear that elimination of the INF and SRINF missiles would

cripple NATO's strategy of flexible response and effectively "decouple" Europe from the nuclear guarantee of the United States.

The Soviet offer has caused particular problems for the West German coalition government. West German Defense Minister Manfred Wörner favours keeping SRINF and building up to the level of the Soviet Union. His cabinet colleague, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, is in favour of accepting the Soviet offer.

A NATO meeting originally scheduled for 4 May was postponed because of West German inability to forge a consensus on the issue. Added pressure has come from an announcement by the British government on 15 May that it is prepared to accept the Soviet deal provided certain conditions are met. Britain has stated that SRINF must be part of an INF deal and a deal on SRINF must be applicable world-wide; it must also stipulate that British and French forces, along with the Pershing I missiles in West Germany, would not be affected by the treaty. The Pershing I missiles are deployed by the West German air force but the US controls the use of their warheads. The Soviets have, therefore, adopted the position that they be included in an INF-SRINF deal.

Since the original offer by the Soviets in February, the United States has insisted on the right to convert the Pershing II missiles into shorter range missiles. The US has made it clear to the West German government through conversations between President Reagan and Chancellor Kohl that if it does not accept the SRINF deal it must be prepared to accept the converted Pershing II missiles on its territory.

The US is waiting until it has heard from all NATO allies before forming its own final position and presenting it to the Soviets as negotiations progress. □

- JANE BOULDEN

Early Warning

June – August	Summer session of the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva.
22 June – 2 July	Meeting of UN Ad Hoc committee on the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace, New York.