

STATEMENT BY M.S. GORBACHEV, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

On 15 January 1986, the Soviet Union put forward an historic programme, a programme for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons. In suggesting it, we proceeded from the firm conviction that future security is nuclear-free security. The Soviet leadership and the country's Defence Council, which it is my function to head, have the problems of the security of our country, of the security of our allies and of universal security constantly at the centre of their attention. We have not the slightest doubt that the security of the world and the survival of humanity must be ensured by joint efforts and political means, not by weapons.

The common sense of peoples, the overwhelming majority of parties and movements and the natural instinct of self-preservation refuse to accept the logic of the suicide of humanity. Guided by awareness of a great responsibility to the world, the Soviet Union is in favour of finding mutually acceptable solutions in the interests of a nuclear-free, non-violent world.

At the recent Forum in Moscow, we once again felt the expectations, concerns and intense quests of outstanding representatives of science, culture, politics and religion, we were once again acutely aware of the crucial nature of our times.

Reykjavik showed that nuclear disarmament is an entirely realistic policy. In the Icelandic capital, we were one step away from agreement on a whole range of decisions that would, in sum, have meant a deep breakthrough on the front of nuclear danger. Therein lie the greatness and the tragedy of Reykjavik. Greatness because there was opened up the attainable prospect of a nuclear-free world. Tragedy because powerful forces still held captive by a mentality of nuclear strength opposed accords.

Everyone knows what has happened since Reykjavik. The American Administration has backed away from what was achieved. Despite our efforts to impart to them dynamism and specificity, the Soviet-American negotiations are again being deliberately blocked. And those same leaders who considered it logical to examine in Reykjavik the entire package of proposals covering strategic offensive arms, medium-range missiles, space weaponry and nuclear tests are now engaged in sabotaging agreements in each of these areas, pleading that the Soviet Union insists on their resolution as a package. In actual fact, the negotiations are being blocked by narrow, selfish interests, by unwillingness to forgo counting on military and technological superiority, by illusory calculations about being able to get ahead, primarily through outer space.

To us, such an approach is alien and, more than that, it is unacceptable. Our policy of principle is tirelessly to seek solutions that will open up the way to mutually acceptable agreements, to equal security.

The Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee, having recently considered the package of issues connected with the implementation of the programme for a nuclear-free world, has decided to make yet another major step in this direction.