

withdrawal of these weapons from East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

In the summer of 1987 the pace toward an INF agreement increased dramatically. On 21 July General Secretary Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union would agree to eliminate all INF missiles rather than maintaining the 100 in Asia. Throughout August, pressure built up on NATO to agree to dismantle 72 West German-owned Pershing 1A SRINF missiles, armed with US-owned nuclear warheads. At the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva on 6 August, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze stated that "72 nuclear warheads stand between us and an agreement on intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles." On 26 August West German Chancellor Kohl announced the Federal Republic's willingness to get rid of the Pershing 1As, given certain preconditions. These included prior ratification of a treaty between the US and USSR to ban INF worldwide, with verification questions resolved satisfactorily and a time-table for dismantling agreed upon. Further, Kohl stated that the threat West Germany faced from SRINF in Czechoslovakia and Poland must be eliminated. The Soviet reaction to Kohl's statement was hesitant but positive.

In a joint statement 18 September, the US and the USSR announced an "agreement in principle to conclude a treaty" on INF. Later, a procedure for dismantling the Pershing 1A missiles was agreed upon. This involved the Federal Republic destroying its missiles by the time all American and Soviet missiles were destroyed.

In Washington on 8 December 1987 President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty, banning all US and Soviet land-based INF. The Treaty is historic for a number of reasons. First, it eliminates an entire class of nuclear weapons, calling for the destruction of 857 missiles with 1,667 warheads, currently deployed by