

We understand the concern of the Baltic states about the deadlocked negotiations with Russia on the withdrawal of former Soviet forces. We are also aware of the practical problems facing Russia in removing them. However, these problems must not be allowed to hinder the application of the principle of international law to the effect that military forces may not be stationed on the territory of another state without its consent. It is therefore important to quickly reach agreement in the current negotiations on a timetable for the withdrawal of the troops.

3. Middle East

We reaffirm our unqualified support for the Middle East peace process initiated by the Madrid peace conference. We express the hope that the direct bilateral negotiations between the parties to the conflict, as well as the multilateral negotiations on regional issues, will lead to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

We welcome the progress made by all five multilateral working groups at their recent first meetings. These talks are a major part of the efforts to promote confidence-building between the nations affected on the road to peace in the Middle East. We appeal to all sides to create an atmosphere of confidence and trust.

4. Iraq

We note that Iraq still refuses to comply with all resolutions of the Security Council without reservation. We shall continue to demand the elimination of all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and the release of all prisoners. We warn the Iraqi regime against repressive actions against all the peoples of Iraq in violation of UN Security Council resolution 688.

Iraq must accept the responsibility for the well-being of its citizens and for the equal treatment of its minorities. It is essential for Bagdad to comply with Security Council resolutions 706 and 712 so that food and medical supplies can be distributed on an equitable basis. We condemn any use of force against those who provide help to the population.