

ARMS CONTROL DIGEST



NPT Review

■ The Fourth Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), meeting in Geneva from 20 August to 15 September, failed to agree on a consensus final document, as the result of a dispute over the issue of a comprehensive test ban (CTB). Mexico and Iran objected to a last-minute draft paragraph by the conference President that merely noted the differences of opinion on this issue. Earlier, proponents of immediate negotiations on a CTB had blocked a US attempt to insert a reference to its agreement with the USSR to proceed with "step-by-step negotiations on further intermediate limitations on nuclear testing, leading to the ultimate objective of the complete cessation of nuclear testing as part of an effective disarmament process."

Nevertheless, most delegates described the conference as largely successful. Agreement was reportedly reached on about ninety-five percent of the issues under discussion, including the need for full-scope nuclear safeguards as a condition for "significant" nuclear supply, and tighter export controls on nuclear technology. Some states, led by the US, called for an indefinite extension of the Treaty after its first term expires in 1995, but many non-aligned states insisted that this depended on progress towards a CTB. Meanwhile, a conference to amend the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 by transforming it into a CTB is scheduled for January 1991. Its proponents, while not expecting the US and Britain to agree to

such a move, are nevertheless hoping that it will raise public awareness and increase the pressure on those governments to begin negotiations on a CTB. (For more on the review conference see *To New York – A Message From Geneva*, on page 8).

Conventional Forces in Europe

■ In New York in early October, US Secretary of State Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze announced that they had reached an agreement in principle on all the major issues remaining in the negotiations for a Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. They predicted that the Treaty would be ready for signing at the 19 to 21 November Paris CSCE Summit – a document ready for signature has been a long-standing Western condition for convening the summit.

The two countries had previously decided to drop the limits on personnel in Central Europe agreed to in Ottawa last February, noting that they had become obsolete as a result of the announced Soviet withdrawal of all of its forces from Germany by 1994. Instead, personnel reductions are to be discussed in follow-on "CFE-IA" negotiations which they have agreed will begin on the basis of the same membership and mandate, after the Paris Summit.

As the result of consultations in late September and early October, the two alliance leaders were able to agree to a ceiling of 5,550 on Soviet aircraft, including a politically-binding limit of 400 on land-based naval aviation (not including maritime patrol aircraft); "sufficiency rules" that would limit the USSR to an average of 33.6 percent of the European total in ground forces; and the destruction, rather than conversion, of the vast majority of equipment to be reduced. NATO and the Warsaw Pact will each be allowed 20,000 tanks, 20,000 artillery pieces, 30,000 armoured combat vehicles (ACVs), 6,800 combat aircraft, and 2,000

helicopters. Within these ceilings, no one country can have more than 13,300 tanks, 13,700 artillery pieces, 20,000 ACVs, 5,150 combat aircraft, and 1,500 helicopters. NATO will destroy about 4,000 tanks, compared to 19,000 for the Warsaw Pact (the latter figure is lower than previous estimates because of the recent transfer of large Soviet forces to the east of the Urals). In addition, because of the existing disparity in numbers between East and West, the Pact will have to destroy thousands of armoured combat vehicles, artillery pieces, and aircraft.

Meanwhile, as part of a "Treaty on the Final Settlement With Respect to Germany" signed by the "two-plus-four" countries in Moscow on 12 September, Bonn formally agreed to reduce the military personnel of a united Germany from over 600,000 at present to 370,000 within three to four years, of which no more than 345,000 will belong to the ground and air forces. It also agreed that no foreign armed forces or nuclear weapons and their carriers would be stationed in former East German territory after Soviet military withdrawal. The restriction would not apply to dual-capable weapon systems, however, as earlier demanded by the Soviets.

Nuclear Testing

■ The US Senate on 25 September ratified the 1974 Threshold Test Ban and 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions treaties, by a vote of 98-0. The USSR Supreme Soviet followed suit on 9 October by a vote of 347-0, with 3 abstentions.

The two bilateral agreements, which limit the yield of underground nuclear explosions to 150 kilotons (kt), had been held up by US insistence on the strengthening of their verification provisions, by means of Protocols agreed to at last June's Washington Summit. Under the new Proto-

cols, the US will be able to use its favoured "CORRTEX" method to measure the yield of every Soviet explosion planned to exceed 50 kt. In addition, on-site inspection will be permitted for all other explosions with a planned yield of over 35 kt.

While the Soviets are eager to proceed immediately with further "intermediate" testing limitations in the absence of a CTB, the current US position is that the resumption of such negotiations must await the putting into practice of the new Protocols. In a UN speech on 26 September, Canadian External Affairs Minister Clark called for the US-Soviet commitment to further restrictions on nuclear testing to "be followed up immediately."

Short Notes

■ US and Soviet officials continue to express the hope that a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) will be completed before the end of the year and ready for signature at the next Presidential summit, planned for Moscow. In early October, Foreign Secretaries Baker and Shevardnadze reported "substantial progress" on the outstanding issues, which were said to include non-circumvention (especially Soviet concerns about the transfer of US weapons and technology to Britain) and US concerns about the Soviet Backfire bomber. However, President Bush suggested that the next Moscow summit – with a START treaty as its centrepiece – was unlikely before 1991.

■ In his 26 September UN speech, External Affairs Minister Clark announced that Canada, in support of efforts at greater "transparency" of arms transfers and procurement, this year for the first time will be releasing an annual report on its exports of military goods. □

– RON PURVER