

Mikhail Gorbachev gives interview to Soviet and French television

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev described the meeting of the heads of state or government of the member-states of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as a great victory scored by European nations and the world politicians on the road towards a single and secure Europe.

He was speaking in an interview with French and Soviet television before departure from Paris on November 21.

The Paris summit, Gorbachev noted, opened a new epoch in international relations and opened the door to the future. He singled out the fact that documents approved by the summit stressed that the East and the West no longer regarded each other as enemies but as partners.

Asked about new relations with the West, Gorbachev noted that the way towards the present situation in Europe and the world had been very difficult. However, the desire to start moving helped overcome the differences, of which the Paris summit was a result.

Gorbachev said guarantees of the realisation of decisions made in Paris will be provided by the use of political approaches to the solution of newly-emerging problems, by co-operation and interaction, as well as by institutes which will take shape in the process of new policy implementation.

In addition, he said, the transformation of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation "promises changes after which these instruments of the cold war will accomplish tasks of a quite different nature."

On the Gulf conflict, the Soviet President said that the desire to avoid a military solution remained the main yardstick for the approach to this issue.

However, he said, Saddam Hussein should not be permitted to make the world community kneel before him. As regards the possibility of military actions in the region, Mikhail Gorbachev noted that the decision on the way out of the crisis should be made by the UN Security Council.

Asked about his assessment of the Soviet-American dialogue, Mikhail Gorbachev noted

that there existed an accord between the Soviet Union and the United States, which allowed the two countries to interact and decide different questions from the point of view of co-operation.

The Soviet President noted the important role the United States played and continues to play in European affairs. He stressed that the building of a new Europe will depend to a great extent on the contribution by each country, especially since such a major power as the united Germany has appeared in European politics.

Replying to the question about the interrelation between the Soviet foreign and domestic policies, Gorbachev stressed that "without perestroika, without the policy of renewal of our society, its humanisation and democratisation, there would have been no democratisation or humanisation of its international activity."

"Paris is over, what next?" a correspondent asked Gorbachev replied. "We should advance towards it with deeply considered ideas and tested mechanisms for forming new structures, first of all, in the sphere of security on the European continent," he said. □

Final document of Paris CSCE summit

THE era of confrontation and division of Europe has ended, henceforth relations between countries on the continent will be founded on respect and co-operation, the heads of state or government of the 34 states participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe declared in the Paris Charter for a new Europe.

The signatories undertook to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of their nations.

The charter stresses that democratic government is based on the will of the people, expressed regularly through free and fair elections and that democracy has as its foundation respect for the human person and the rule of law.

Freedom and political pluralism are necessary elements in our common objective of developing market economies towards sustainable economic growth, prosperity, social justice, expanding

employment and efficient use of economic resources.

The success of the transition to market economy by countries making efforts to this effect is important and in the interests of all, the charter stresses.

The charter signatories stress their determination to expand and strengthen friendly relations and co-operation between European states, the United States and Canada. They reiterate their commitment to the ten principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the determination to apply these principles in practice in order to maintain and strengthen democracy, peace and unity in Europe.

The charter especially stresses the participating nations' support for the United Nations and their enhanced role in promoting international peace, security and justice, and noted the growing role of the United Nations organisation in world affairs and its increasing efficiency.

Being aware of the urgent needs of a considerable part of the world, the 34 European and North American leaders pledged solidarity with all other countries. They call from Paris on all countries of the world, saying that they are ready to join forces with each and every state to protect and affirm the entire set of fundamental human values.

The changing political and military environment in Europe opens new possibilities for common efforts in the field of military security, the charter says. Proceeding from the important achievements, enshrined in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and reached at the Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM) talks, the participating states undertook to continue the CSBM negotiations and to seek to conclude them not later than the follow-up meeting of the CSCE to be held in Helsinki in 1992.

The Charter calls for the earliest possible conclusion of the convention on a global and comprehensive ban on chemical weapons and the successful completion of the open skies negotia-

tions.

The participating countries expressed readiness to co-operate in protecting democratic institutes against actions infringing on independence and territorial integrity of member-states, and unreservedly condemned, as criminal, all acts, methods and practices for terrorism and expressed their determination to work for its eradication.

They stressed that economic co-operation based on market economy constituted an essential element of their relations and would be instrumental in the construction of a prosperous

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Gorbachev book published

THE presentation of a book of letters that had been sent to President Mikhail Gorbachev took place in the Soviet Embassy in London on Thursday, November 22.

The book entitled *Dear Mr. Gorbachev* and published by the Scottish publishing firm Canning Press, includes letters sent to the Soviet leader by people from all over the world.

The idea of creating such a book belongs to American businessman and writer Lloyd Fishel. In 1988 he asked the Soviet President for permission to look through his correspondence and began work on the book a year later.

At the presentation ceremony Fishel voiced hope that the book would serve to further broaden East-West relations. He said that the letters published in the book show how much a person can do to strengthen peace.

Ram Harijan, the writer of one of the letters published in the book, said that he regards Gorbachev as the world's leading politician and that therefore he prefers to address him rather than the leaders of other countries about problems.

The Soviet President enjoys high prestige in the West, as is confirmed by the huge number of letters sent to him by people from all over the world, Harijan said. □

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Gorbachev on results of Paris CSCE meeting

"THERE are no longer any military adversaries in Europe," Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told the Soviet Parliament on November 26.

He was speaking to the legislature on the results of the Paris summit of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

Even given all the reservations aired by some NATO members, blocs engendered by the cold war "will inexorably by losing their initial functions," Gorbachev stressed.

Opportunities opening as a result will make it easier for the USSR to overcome its current political and economic crisis," he said.

The "new norms of progress for a new Europe" confirmed in Paris, such as human rights, economic freedom for social justice and equal security for all, are mandatory for the USSR as well, Gorbachev emphasised.

"Otherwise, we shall not only break our word and scuttle a cause that owes us more than anyone else, but also deprive ourselves of the benefits and advantages stemming from allegiance to these norms and principles," he argued.

Commenting on the treaty to reduce conventional armed forces, signed in Paris between Warsaw Treaty countries and NATO members, Gorbachev said that it practically rules out the possibility of a surprise attack on a large-scale military operation in Europe.

He assured Parliament that even after the cuts, the nation will have enough defence capabilities to protect itself. "In addition, one should not forget that the Soviet Union retains its

strong nuclear shield."

Gorbachev declared that the Soviet leadership favours closer involvement by deputies in the resolution of problems of security and co-operation in Europe.

Recalling the Conference's declaration for a pan-European parliamentary assembly, he said that deputies should help decide its form.

Speaking of interaction between European processes and the situation in other regions, Gorbachev stressed the need, as singled out in Paris, to substantially cut and then discontinue supplies of weapons and new military technologies to third-world countries.

"Developments in the Persian Gulf make one take a look at the entire problem in a new light," he said. "Resolving it is in our own interests, in the interests of Europe, the United States and developing nations themselves."

Commenting on his Paris talks with US President George Bush, Gorbachev said they had borne out "the stability and new quality of Soviet-American dialogue and increased even further our mutual trust and readiness for co-operation in the interest of peace and security."

Turning to economic issues, he said that in order to take advantage of the increased common European market place, the Soviet Union should take part in creating equal conditions for the market's functioning throughout this space.

"From the standpoint of both our domestic interests and the need to be organically integrated into the world economy, we should firmly proceed to a market economy," Gorbachev said.

He specially stressed that all Soviet partners abroad proceed from the premise that "Europe,

the United States and Canada are dealing, and will continue to deal, with a great state, a great and integral country.

"Everyone counts on it being a cementing, constructive and authoritative factor rather than a catalyst for disintegration or destabilisation in the world," Gorbachev explains.

This explains, in his words, the readiness expressed by CSCE countries in Paris to support the USSR at a difficult juncture in its development.

Gorbachev expressed hope that the results of the CSCE summit and its documents would be given their due by Soviet politicians, parliamentarians and the public.

A political solution remains to be the chief Soviet goal in the Gulf crisis, Gorbachev told Parliament.

He called for joint efforts within the framework of the United Nations, saying that all actions should be based "on decisions by the United Nations and the Security Council."

The Soviet Union will continue to co-operate with other countries to show Saddam Hussein that there is no hope that he can break international unity, Gorbachev said.

"We cannot allow this since we have just started moving away from the cold war," he said.

"We are developing new mechanisms to seek political solutions to any situations," he said.

"We should prove to ourselves and to all nations that we can solve the most acute conflicts by political means characteristic of the new epoch," he said.

After Gorbachev's speech, Parliament passed a resolution approving the work of the Soviet delegation at the Paris summit. □

Soviet President meets Iraqi Foreign Minister

ON November 26 Mikhail Gorbachev met the Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz. The Iraqi leadership responded to the need to hold such a meeting prior to a UN Security Council meeting to consider a new resolution on the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait.

The President described the feelings of participants in the European Conference, with whom he had contacts in Paris. Their position has hardened as a result of the Iraqi leadership's unwillingness to heed the opinion of the world

community and demands of the United Nations.

Aziz was firmly told that if Iraq really wants a settlement in the entire region and seeks to avoid the worst, it must now openly declare and show in deeds that it will pull out from Kuwait, release the hostages and generally refrain from preventing foreigners leaving Iraq. Otherwise, the UN Security Council resolution will be passed — a tough resolution.

Aziz's discourse that "Kuwait is Iraqi land," Iraq was threatened, "the head of its leader was demanded," and other issues must be tackled as a complex, non of these arguments or assertions would convince anyone nor be taken seriously. An aggression has been committed. It must be stopped. Only then will it be possible to address other issues of Middle Eastern settlement.

As for foreigners, Gorbachev continued, it is against the norms of ethics that people are being let out in groups of several dozen in some kind of trading. He resolutely posed the question that promises must be fulfilled and all Soviet specialists, wishing so, should be immediately allowed to return home.

Gorbachev asked Aziz to convey to Saddam Hussein an urgent appeal to evaluate everything once again, because the fate of Iraq is in the hands of its leaders. Time is running out.

In reply Aziz repeated the well-known arguments without saying anything new. As regards Soviet specialists, there are no obstacles, he said, except for misunderstandings of a "bureaucratic nature." He promised to inform President Hussein and the Iraqi leadership on the position expressed in Moscow.

Eduard Shevardnadze attended the meeting.

Gorbachev meets delegation of parliamentarians

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev met a delegation from the international organisation Parliamentarians for Global Action on November 26.

The delegation is meeting Soviet, British and US leaders in the run-up to a UN conference on a complete ban on nuclear tests, to open in New York in the beginning of January.

Gorbachev praised the role of parliaments in the disarmament process. He said considerable progress has been made in averting the threat of war, especially at the recent pan-European summit in Paris.

He also spoke about problems prompted by conversion of military industries and arms cuts.

Special attention was paid to the growing threat of the proliferation of nuclear arms, the elimination of which is directly linked with the problem of ending nuclear tests, Gorbachev said. The need to step up verification on the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to make all sides join it was stressed. Developments in the Gulf are a serious sign for international politics in this respect.

The parliamentarians raised the question of possible new initiatives that could be presented during the opening of the New York conference — in order to give an added impetus to the movement for the banning of nuclear tests, represented by parliamentarians from 40 countries.

Gorbachev assured the visitors that the policy towards a nuclear-free world, proclaimed by the Soviet leadership in January 1986, has not changed.

The Soviet Union would be prepared to stop its tests tomorrow if other nuclear nations would follow suit, Gorbachev said. □

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Soviet President's press conference

DEVELOPMENTS in the Soviet Union should be regarded with "guarded optimism," President Mikhail Gorbachev told a press conference in Moscow on November 23.

Commenting on the parliamentary debate on ways out of the current crisis, Gorbachev said it was necessary to tap people's initiative and stabilise the country.

The Soviet Parliament today set a time frame for the implementation of my proposals, presented on Saturday, November 17, he said.

In addition, proposals to reorganise the executive power in the country and make it more efficient will be submitted in the near future, he continued.

The new executive will be controlled by the President and will include the posts of Vice President and head of a cabinet of ministers, Gorbachev said.

Initially, Gorbachev planned to reorganise the executive branch only after the signing of a new union accord, however, "the situation forces us to act immediately," he went on.

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and united Europe. They reaffirmed the need to continue to support democratic countries in transition towards the establishment of market economy and the creation of the basis for self-sustained economic and social growth.

The participating states pledged to intensify their endeavours to protect and improve the environment in order to restore and maintain a sound ecological balance in air, water and soil.

The CSCE member-countries recognised the essential contribution of their common European culture and their shared values in overcoming the division of the continent. They stressed the growing importance of the Krakow symposium which plans to consider stepping up co-operation in the field of culture in Europe and invited the Council of Europe to contribute to the efforts.

The participating countries stressed that they were concerned with the continuing tension in the Mediterranean region and renewed their determination to "intensify efforts towards finding just, viable and lasting solutions, through peaceful means, to outstanding crucial problems, based on respect for the principles of the Final Act."

Efforts to ensure respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, to strengthen peace and contribute to unity in Europe require a new quality political dialogue and co-operation and hence the evolution of the CSCE structures, the Charter says.

In this context, the sides noted that more active consultations on all levels are of significance for forming future relations. For this purpose, the heads of state or government of the CSCE member-countries shall meet next time in Helsinki on the occasion of the CSCE follow-up meeting in 1992. Other meetings were also planned.

The ministers of foreign affairs will meet, as a council, regularly and at least once a year. The first meeting of the council will take place in Berlin.

The Charter sets out the member-countries' intention to create a number of new CSCE bodies and structures. In order to provide administrative support for these consultations they established secretariat in Prague. A conflict prevention centre will be created in Vienna to assist the Council of Foreign Ministers in reducing the risk of conflict.

An office for free elections will be established in Warsaw to facilitate contacts and the exchange of information on elections within participating states. □

In order to stabilise the situation in the country authorities will take food resources under control. Food stockpiles are at last year's level, he said. Authorities will boost the efficiency of railways and the energy industry.

"The USSR Supreme Soviet was very alarmed by the problems of strengthening order and discipline. All proposals introduced by the President in this connection, were supported," Gorbachev said.

Administrative measures will have to be taken to stabilise the situation in the country.

In addition, the parliament will soon discuss bills to develop a market economy – denationalise property, promote entrepreneurship, anti-monopoly laws – and will take measures to normalise finances and the consumer market.

Asked about foreign credits, Gorbachev said they would help ease the transition to a new economic system.

Asked if Soviet reforms would succeed, Gorbachev said: "It won't be easy, but we will make it."

Commenting on the status of the rouble Gorbachev said the Soviet Union is going to make the rouble convertible "in the next few years."

The first step in that direction has been made by changing its exchange rate against the dollar, he said.

"Economic co-operation can hardly be normal if the rouble is not convertible," Gorbachev stressed.

Initially, it was thought that transition to the convertibility of the national currency would take up to ten years.

President Gorbachev went on to praise the outcome of the Conference on security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) summit in Paris.

The summit was a crucial turning point and would lead to positive changes in the world if all

went well, he said.

The process, however, had run into some difficulties from the start, he said.

The summit paved the way for "a radical restructuring in international relations and a return of all parts of our civilisation into a united family," he said.

The meeting has set an example for other continents.

Some participants used the occasion to laud their ideology. There were hints that in the past some were "the only democrats and peace supporters" and that the cold war was a result of scheming by the other side, Gorbachev said.

"All that happened during that period, we did together," he said.

It is important that "the sides had courage to tune to impulses prompted by life itself," Gorbachev said.

"I am happy that I took part in the Paris meeting and was greatly satisfied that our policy greatly contributed to its implementation," Gorbachev said.

"We should now move further, despite possible obstacles," he said.

The Gulf crisis is one of the obstacles facing the new policy, the Soviet leader said.

Commenting on the resignation of Margaret Thatcher the Soviet President described her as "a major phenomenon in world politics, not only in the life of Britain."

The Soviet leader voiced the conviction that history "has yet to do justice to this politician." Gorbachev said that although they argued over very important issues, she exerted "a great influence on the development of her country and made a major contribution to international relations and European policy."

Gorbachev said he received a message from the British Prime Minister yesterday and replied to her letter today. □

Gorbachev urges Parliament to act quickly

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev in a speech to Parliament on November 23 urged Soviet legislators to accelerate their decision on measures to stabilise the country and strengthen state power bodies, which he proposed last week.

Parliament began to discuss a draft resolution on the President's proposals.

Gorbachev took the floor after some deputies called for rejecting the resolution as being not specific enough. He agreed with the need to specify the draft's provisions that cover food supplies and measures to establish law and order.

But, he said, he needed the parliament's instruction and consent to prepare specific proposals to reform power structures within two weeks.

Gorbachev expressed satisfaction that legislators supported his proposal to "push through the new union treaty, but – before this – to carry out strong radical measures to improve political and economic stability in the country, establish public order, strengthen discipline, normalise ethnic relations and, most important, reform and strengthen state power structures without delay."

Commenting on his speech of November 17, Gorbachev said "it was not easy" for him to make his proposals. He explained that his radical measures might have been understood as an "attempt to impose my own concepts, contrary to democratic procedures" even before the new union treaty was concluded.

At the same time, Gorbachev emphasised that "during this stage of decisive changes in the country, executive power at all levels, above all in the centre, cannot remain paralysed."

"However, after parliament approved the essence, the main approaches of my proposals, some are beginning to say that this is diktat and attempts to step on the throat. So, shall the paralysis of power continue?"

"People would like us to believe that someone here is seeking a dictatorship and wants to usurp power and smash the process of sovereignty and perestroika."

Gorbachev called on legislators for "vigilance". He described the "unfolding struggle" over his proposals as an "order from certain forces that do not want the situation to normalise." □

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Soviet Parliament considers plan and budget for 1991

THE Soviet Parliament on November 26 began discussing the state plan for the country's economic and social development and budget in 1991.

In his opening address at the session, Parliament Chairman Anatoli Lukyanov said that the plan and budget for the next year were of special significance as instruments for implementing emergency measures to stabilise the economy and the consumer market.

First Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Maslyukov introduced the plan and stressed that the situation in the economy has considerably worsened due to the centrifugal political and economic processes and the struggle by republics for the supremacy of their laws, budgets and banks.

Inter-ethnic strife and strikes are having a negative impact on the situation. "We have a crisis in the management system, instability is besetting the economy in all republics and the country as a whole," he said.

Maslyukov set out the key target figures of the plan (a detailed account of these will follow shortly).

The main difficulty in restructuring the budget, Soviet Finance Minister Viktor Pavlov told Parliament in his report on the 1991 budget plan, consists in the fact that the country enters 1991 with a production slump and the devaluated rouble.

During the first nine months of this year, 13 billion less national income was produced than in the previous year, while the wage fund increased by 31 billion roubles.

The Finance Minister said that this year's budget revenues are expected to reach 452 billion roubles and spending 508.1 billion roubles.

Pavlov drew Parliament's attention to the fact that the government was submitting for their consideration a draft federal budget for 1991.

Proceeding from the new federation concept, the Council of Ministers for the first time divided the state monetary fund, which had until now been concentrated in the country's single budget.

Materials handed out to the deputies envisage

a total of 248 billion roubles in federal revenues for the coming year. The spending from the federal budget in 1991 is expected to amount to 261.2 billion roubles. According to government estimates, the federal budget share will account for about 46 per cent of all budgetary spending in the country.

The present financial situation, the government believes, calls for austerity measures aimed at strengthening the rouble. It proposes a temporary moratorium of 50 per cent of all monetary resources that enterprises fail to use before December 1. Enterprises will not be permitted to use these resources as credit resources, and 5 per cent interest rate will be imposed on them. These resources may be transferred to work collectives to buy shares in the enterprise. In this way, between 50 and 60 billion roubles will be 'bound.'

Budget expenses will be cut considerably. The issue of credits to other countries will be cut by half, as compared with 1990. Gratuitous assistance to foreign countries will be cut by 75 per cent, as compared with the current year.

The government was also guided by the need for austerity measures in planning the military budget and the outlays for administration and management. In comparable prices, the 1991 budget envisages defence spending at 63.9 billion roubles - 7.1 billion roubles, or 10 per cent, less than in 1990.

Spending on the upkeep of bodies of state authority and management will be cut by 30 per cent.

Deputy prime Minister Leonid Abalkin, the third official to speak, dwelled on the key aspects of market formation. He stressed that in 1991 the transition to a market will only just begin. It will take two to five years to form the major market structures. He added that it will take an entire generation to create a really modern market with a flexible economy, receptive to innovations.

Abalkin noted that it was planned to considerably expand goods and services on offer to the population in 1991. Real estate, shares, currency and other resources will be offered for sale

on the market for the first time.

Abalkin said that the principal mistake made by the present government in managing the economy consisted in giving in to the populist demands by the parliament and trade unions and loosening control over monetary incomes and circulation.

Speaking about price reforms, Abalkin said that it would be carried out stage-by-stage, in line with measures to curb inflation.

It is proposed to introduce income indexation, taking into account the growing retail price index for consumer basket goods. Employees with fixed salaries will receive up to 70 per cent in compensation for losses, depending on the size of their salaries.

Cost-accounting enterprises will compensate their employees for losses from inflation proceeding from their financial potential.

Setting out the government employment policy, Abalkin said that unemployment was an objective process, but its negative consequence should be reduced to the minimum. With this in mind, it has been decided to set up a state employment service. A system of public works will develop, financed from local budgets. A system of allowances is envisaged for temporarily unemployed people. □

Soviet Premier addresses foresters' congress

SOVIET Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov has called on Soviet foresters to rationally use the country's forest wealth, learn to make money and turn Soviet forestry into a highly profitable branch of the economy.

He spoke at the first all-union Congress of Foresters, which ended in Moscow on November 24. In his speech Ryzhkov concentrated on some key questions of the regulations of the country's forestry and prospects for its development in connection with the transition to a market economy.

Under the conditions of a variety of forms of ownership, the single policy in managing forests is of great importance. This policy should be translated into life by the single national service of professional foresters, subordinate only to the rule of law.

Speaking about problems in the use of forests, the Prime Minister noted that in the country which possesses the world's biggest stocks of timber, three times less products are manufactured from each cubic metre than in the United States.

With this in mind, Ryzhkov said, the government plans to increase the deep processing of timber without expanding tree felling. Under market relations, he said, better pricing for timber should be introduced, taking into account prices for timber materials both on the domestic and the world markets.

Congress delegates stressed that a single forest and forestry management system should be created in the country, subordinated to councils of people's deputies and superior bodies within the branch. They favoured the creation of the necessary economic prerequisites for the development of forestries by raising a forest tax, rent for the right to use of resources, damages and compensation for violating rules of forest use.

The congress approved the all-union regulations of the forester status and the code of honour of the Soviet forester. □

State of the union resolution passed

THE Soviet Parliament passed a resolution on the state of the union on November 23 in the wake of the report on measures to stabilise the economy and ease political tensions presented by President Mikhail Gorbachev on Saturday November 17.

The situation in the country is deteriorating and is near critical, the resolution said.

Ethnic tensions are dangerously high and all government structures are crumbling. A lack of co-ordination between the USSR Supreme Soviet and republican parliaments contributes to the disarray, it said.

The document criticised the Soviet, republican and local governments, calling for their structural renewal.

Within the next two weeks, the President will prepare urgent measures to improve the food situation and ensure that all republics and regions meet their obligations as regards food sales to the state.

The Federal Council will distribute food delivered from abroad, it said.

The KGB security service will combat economic sabotage, especially in the distribution of

imported goods, according to the resolution.

If human rights are violated or there is a threat to citizens' life, health and property, the Parliament agreed that Gorbachev should take emergency actions.

Gorbachev is expected to set up an agency to co-ordinate the work of law-enforcement bodies and a service to combat especially dangerous crimes.

Taking into consideration statements by republican representatives about a new union treaty, the Parliament offered Gorbachev to prepare and sign temporary agreements with the republics within a month to ensure stability in the country.

Soviet lawmakers told Supreme Soviet Chairman Anatoli Lukyanov to consult heads of republican parliaments and introduce a draft temporary agreement in order to overcome legislative contradictions between the union and republics in line with declarations of sovereignty, passed by the republics.

The Parliament gave Gorbachev two weeks to change the powers of the state arbitration service and the Soviet Supreme Court in order to promote law and order in economic relations and protect the interests of property owners. □

First session of new Georgian Parliament

THE session of the Georgian Parliament on November 22 approved 12 new ministers presented by Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua, reports the Sakartvelo news agency.

The number of ministers is cut, some of them were merged. For instance, the session established the Ministers of Public Health and Social Insurance and of Science, Technology and Long-term Planning.

The Georgian Parliament repealed all acts adopted by the recently proclaimed 'Soviet Democratic Republic of South Ossetia', since they run counter to the current Georgian Constitution and the USSR Constitution as well as to a decision by the Presidium of the previous Georgian Parliament of September 21.

At the same time the session confirmed the previous decision by the Georgian Parliament that the republic would protect the rights of national minorities in the republic, as is guaranteed by the principles of international law.

The republican parliament again confirmed its attitude to a new union treaty.

An address to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev says that the Georgian Parliament unanimously adopted a law on declaring a transition period in the republic, leading to the restoration of its full state independence and sovereignty.

The Georgian Parliament believes it impossible to sign a new union treaty and to assume any obligations in the conditions when political, economic and legal structures operating in the Soviet Union presuppose extreme dependence on the centre and deprive the republic of the attributes of a truly sovereign state.

Parliament set up a commission led by its President Zviad Gamsakhurdia to draft a new constitution of the Georgian Republic.

The session made several amendments to the current constitution, adopted a law on amnesty and approved the composition of permanent commissions of the republic parliament. □

★ ★ ★ Lithuanian cabinet was on verge of resignation

THE government of the Lithuanian Republic, headed by Kazimiera Prunskiene, found itself on the verge of resignation, following the discussion in the Lithuanian Parliament of the government plan for economic reform, reports TASS correspondent Nazys Uscila on November 23.

The parliament has held lengthy discussions on the plan. It showed itself sharply critical of it, and although the discussion led to the approval of some basic provisions for reforming the economy, the plan as a whole was called into question.

A vote was proposed. If the returns proved negative, the parliament would face the choice between asking the government to finalise its proposals or to resign.

After a heated debate, the parliament adopted a statement, describing the government plan as "abstract and proposing no specific solutions to the problems of privatisation, banking, pricing and taxation, as well as money, credit and the introduction of a market mechanism."

The plan as a whole was not approved, but only a small majority voted for the return of the plan to the government to finalise.

Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene addressed the Parliament after that. She said that in order to finalise the economic reform plan, it is necessary to begin with the revision of the economic chapter of the Lithuanian Constitution.

She stressed that in order to create a specific plan and a schedule, "clarity is needed as to the prospects for Lithuanian-Soviet negotiations."

She said that the reform rate would depend on this. □

A group of deputies today issued a statement, claiming that "the activity of the government is pernicious for Lithuania's independence."

The group demanded that the head of the government be replaced. However, these charges were seen as being unfounded, and the parliament refused to discuss them. □

★ ★ ★ Estonian Parliament opposes Baltic address

ON Thursday, November 22, the Estonian Parliament approved a Baltic Council address to the Soviet Parliament, passed in Yurmala on November 21, despite opposition from four deputy groups, reports TASS correspondent Alexander Kharchenko from Tallinn.

Parliamentary factions 'For Equal Rights', 'Co-operation', 'Virumaa' and the Communist caucus opposed the move.

Their members said they did not want to be associated with over-zealous politicians and bear responsibility for their decisions.

The address, in fact, signifies an end to the republic's "Eastern policy", and could worsen ethnic tensions, parliamentarian N. Zolin told TASS.

The four factions supported President Mikhail Gorbachev's November 17 statement in the Soviet Parliament in which he called for a moratorium on political decisions deepening the crisis between the Soviet authorities and Estonia.

The deputies called for the setting up of a group of observers in the Estonian Parliament to study preparations for the signing of a new union treaty.

On the same day, the pro-Moscow Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party passed a resolution approving Gorbachev's statement and the initiative of the four parliamentary groups. □

Inter parliamentary council created in Baltic republics

AN interparliamentary council of people's deputies was set up in Riga on November 24 by representatives of parliament factions and groups of people's deputies of the Soviet Union, the Byelorussian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian and Russian parliaments and the Moscow and Leningrad councils, reports Galina Kuchina, TASS correspondent from Riga.

The interparliamentary council aims to promote the signing of a new union treaty.

Late on Saturday, November 24, the council adopted its major documents. The creation of a union of sovereign states will guarantee reasonable social, economic and ethnic policy to stabilise the situation in the country and reach civil accord in society, the council's declaration reads.

The declaration supports progressive forces aiming to strengthen republics' real sovereignty. Radical measures are necessary in conditions of the deep crisis. Deputies of all levels supporting the idea of a federation and maintenance of the union, should join their efforts.

"We believe," the declaration reads, "that the union will guarantee equality of all citizens in accordance with the general declaration on human rights, irrespective of their nationality, language, belief, political convictions and the term of residence in republics."

The council also adopted a statement, expressing concern over the fact that the Baltic republics' parliaments and governments categorically refute the idea of participation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in a union treaty. Such a refusal does not reflect the opinions and the interests of the majority of residents of these multinational republics, council members believe. □

The council insists on holding referendums in the republics to determine their status, under the observation of the Soviet Parliament and the United Nations. "We consider evident the facts of violations of the general declaration on human rights in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia," the statement continues.

"We call on the international community to send their representatives to examine legislative acts adopted by parliaments and local authorities, discriminating a considerable part of residents of the Baltic states."

Latvian Parliament equality faction leader Sergei Dimanis said the interparliamentary council will be an alternative to the Baltic council. Factions and deputy groups, which sent their representatives to Riga, number 2,600.

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Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister on results of Arab talks

SOVIET deputy foreign ministers and presidential envoys Vladimir Petrovsky and Alexander Belonogov toured a number of northern African countries and countries of the Arab east, during which they visited over a dozen Arab countries, reports TASS correspondent Viktor Lebedev from Abu Dhabi on November 23.

The visits were part of the Soviet effort to find a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis. The Soviet diplomats sought to acquaint themselves with Arab countries' positions on the crisis and their assessments of the current situation in the region and discuss directions for further actions.

Belonogov, who visited Yemen, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, said that countries in the region rejected the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and were against allowing Iraq to enjoy the fruits of its aggression. They intend to do everything possible to liberate Kuwait.

"There is a conviction in the region that justice will triumph. There are only some slight differences in their positions. At the same time, a very hostile attitude prevails here towards the Iraqi rulers' manoeuvres to drag on the conflict and evading the responsibility for its aggression," Belonogov said.

"The manoeuvres generate increasing concern. Gulf countries do not support attempts to link the Kuwaiti and Palestinian problems and do not see any connection between them. They denounce Baghdad's cynical bargaining with hostages. There is a high degree of correlation between their positions on the aggression and on

the world community's actions to settle the crisis," Belonogov said.

In a bid to avoid a military solution, regional countries believe that only energetic efforts will help solve the crisis by peaceful means, without recourse to arms.

Belonogov is firmly convinced that the adoption by the UN Security Council of a resolution sending a strong signal-warning to Saddam Hussein would be welcomed in the region. Chances for a peaceful settlement are still open and the goal of this decision would be a move towards a settlement and avoid a military conflict.

The Iraqi military machine gives rise to serious concern in Arab capitals, Belonogov said. People are thinking about how to rule out the possibility of violence with the help of a regional security system once the crisis is settled. Regional leaders believe that the Security Council and its five permanent members could play a useful role here.

Belonogov noted that visiting Iraq was not in his plans. He will return home on Saturday, November 24. □



Shevardnadze on Gulf

SOVIET Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze held a series of talks with US Secretary of State James Baker in Paris on the situation in the Gulf region. This theme was also discussed by the Soviet and American presidents.

Assessing the results of the discussions, the Soviet Foreign Minister told Novosti that their main result was the understanding that the UN Security Council should resume the discussion of the implementation of the adopted resolutions and that its members should jointly analyse mea-

asures to implement these decisions. "In fact," said Shevardnadze, "the Security Council's most important resolutions are not being implemented and Iraq's aggression against Kuwait continues."

"Naturally," the Soviet Foreign Minister continued, "there is the need to take more resolute measures. This is not to say that peaceful settlement ceases to be our priority choice. As before, we are for peaceful political settlement. But we must seek more effective solutions for restoring justice and Kuwait's independence, and for making the aggressor withdraw from that country."

"Does this position imply the Soviet Union's support for the Security Council's possible new resolution that would encourage the use of force against the aggressor?" Novosti asked.

"This will be decided by the Security Council. Its members – permanent and non-permanent – are now holding intensive consultations. I think on a collective basis we must develop effective measures ensuring the implementation of its decisions. One can't rule out a resolution of this kind. Let me repeat: our choice is a political solution, but we really need to settle the conflict – effectively and on a collective basis." □

Soviet and Chinese Foreign Ministers discuss Gulf

A WORKING meeting took place between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen in Urumqi, China, on November 23.

The ministers thoroughly discussed the current situation in the Gulf and exchanged information on this score.

Both sides expressed deep concern over the unabating tension in the Gulf area. They stated once again that respective UN Security Council resolutions should be scrupulously implemented.

The USSR and China favour a political settlement of the Gulf crisis on the basis of earlier UN Security Council resolutions and support the vigorous efforts taken by Arab countries to defuse the crisis.

The sides decisively demand that Iraqi troops be unconditionally withdraw from Kuwait as soon as possible. They believe that as long as there is a gleam of hope for a peaceful settlement, the international community should continue unremitting efforts to prevent the outbreak of a war.

The ministers stated that, as permanent members of the UN Security Council, China and the USSR bear high responsibility for preserving global peace. There are many common elements in the two countries' positions on the situation in the Gulf area. Both sides qualified the meeting as positive.

The Soviet Union and China will continue to hold regular consultations with regard to the Security Council's adoption of additional measures to ensure scrupulous fulfilment of its resolutions. Together with other members of the UN Security Council, they are prepared to exert every effort to resolve the crisis.

The ministers also discussed bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction with their positive and stable development after their normalisation. They favoured deepening good-neighbourly and mutually beneficial ties between the two countries in a variety of areas. □

Soviet Foreign Ministry on events in El Salvador

THE situation has drastically deteriorated in El Salvador in the past few days, says a statement by the Soviet Foreign Ministry circulated in Moscow on November 22.

In response to anti-insurgent combat operations by government troops, detachments of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front launched a major military operation in many Salvadoran districts.

There are casualties, including civilians.

The statement notes that the present escalation of the armed struggle was prompted by serious differences between the sides, which have not been resolved during the talks between the government and insurgents (going on since

last April) on a settlement of the civil conflict in that country.

But no matter what the reasons and tactical considerations of the sides are, they cannot justify the new round of violence.

The very logic of developments in El Salvador shows that attempts to put pressure on the other side lead the talks up a blind alley, increase mutual mistrust and bring to naught gains achieved during the dialogue.

Such actions are rejected by the international community, which is becoming increasingly convinced of the need to promote a political settlement of the conflict.

A UN General Assembly resolution, which was adopted by consensus and which contains support for a peaceful settlement in Central America, reflects this will of world nations.

The Soviet Union hopes that the warring sides will eventually come to an understanding that the solution of political problems by force has no future, the statement stresses.

Serious talks, mutual restraint, readiness to conclude a compromise and political realism are needed for the earliest possible settlement of the crisis.

The Soviet Union is a consistent supporter of a peaceful settlement in El Salvador on the basis of understandings between the Salvadoran Government and the Farabundo Marti Front which were reached with the mediation of the UN Secretary General.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry called on both sides to stop the bloodshed and take new efforts in the interest of the earliest possible achievement of political agreements and a ceasefire. □

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TASS COMMENT:

Soviet conventional arms reductions

By Vladimir Chernyshev, TASS military news analyst:

THE signing of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty in Paris is a major contribution towards attaining a goal shared by all countries: to build security and enhance stability in Europe.

A new era is beginning in the life of European peoples. More than 120,000 units of various armaments will be reduced to eliminate dangerous military confrontation in Europe.

But some people in the West are now trying to question the importance of the newly signed treaty. In particular, they maintain that the Soviet Union began to move military hardware beyond the Urals in advance, so that it would not fall under the provisions of the CFE Treaty. Soviet news media also raised the topic.

However, detailed explanations were forthcoming at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Recent changes in the amount of Soviet armaments in Europe were called forth not by a desire to somehow circumvent the CFE Treaty that was being elaborated in Vienna, but were prompted by quite realistic goals long put on the agenda by the Soviet leadership and regarded with approval both in the West and East.

What is meant is, firstly, the implementation of the Soviet Union's new military doctrine, which envisages basing the armed forces on reasonable sufficiency for defence and, secondly, carrying out large-scale unilateral troop and arms cuts, announced by President Mikhail Gorbachev in December 1988.

To 'overlook' these two major circumstances

when reporting changes in the amount of Soviet armaments in Europe and interpreting them in one's own way is, to put it mildly, not being responsible.

In addition, is it advisable to eliminate in Europe the armaments and combat hardware which are more up-to-date than those available to the armed forces and units stationed in the Asian part of the country?

It seems natural to eliminate outdated weapon systems in Asian and those that have exhausted their service life, replacing them with those that were previously in Europe.

The possibility of selling arms subject to cutbacks to third countries should not be discarded either.

The United States is guided by the same motives. It already supplies tanks to Egypt, moving them from Europe, and is planning to transfer its latest weapon systems subject to cutbacks to NATO allies to replace obsolete weaponry. Unfortunately, prior to the signing of the CFE Treaty, the United States did not make unilateral cuts in its armaments on the European continent.

What actually happened to Soviet armaments in Europe? As of July 1, 1988, the Soviet Union had 41,580 tanks in Europe. Within the context of measures to implement the new doctrine and effect unilateral cuts, the number of tanks was substantially reduced: by 70 tanks in armoured divisions and by 105 tanks in motorised divisions.

As a result of the cuts, as well as in view of the new pattern for the Soviet Armed Forces, slight-

ly more than 20,000 tanks remained on European territory (according to data as of the end of September 1990). The number was cut approximately by half.

Four thousand tanks were scrapped, converted into training facilities or exported. About 8,000 tanks will be used to re-equip and complete the provision of Soviet forces and units stationed in the Asian part of the country. The other tanks will be eliminated.

The number of armoured cars and artillery systems has changed similarly. Over the past two years, 15,900 armoured cars and 18,000 artillery systems were moved from Europe to beyond the Urals. Out of that amount, 500 artillery systems were eliminated and 11,200 armoured cars and 1,100 artillery systems were used to re-equip and complete the provision of forces and units stationed in the Asian part of the country.

Depots in Siberia and Central Asia now have available 4,700 armoured cars and 16,400 artillery systems, brought from Europe. They are intended for the gradual replacement of armaments and combat hardware that exhaust their service life.

As old weapon systems are replaced by new ones, the antiquated models will be eliminated. So, there is no arms build-up in Asia by the Soviet Union.

The USSR will fully meet all its commitments under the newly signed treaty. Moreover, the Soviet Union deems it necessary to carry on talks on further troop and arms reductions in Europe and to launch similar talks in the Asia-Pacific region. □

Soviet Defence Committee discusses military budget

THE Soviet Parliamentary Committee on Defence and State Security, which held a meeting on November 22, continued to debate the military budget for 1991.

Speakers noted that it is planned to slash appropriations for defence industries as the country switches to a market economy. This will entail a substantial decrease in the volume of armaments production, above all, tanks, missiles and ammunition.

It is planned to stop the production of dozens of outdated items, replacing them with fewer of the latest models.

At the same time the production of aircraft and ships for civil industries will rise thanks to cuts in the output of warplanes, helicopter gunships and warships.

The share of civil production at defence enterprises will top 50 per cent as a result of the conversion of the munitions industry.

The committee recommended that work on drafting the defence budget should be continued, taking into account the laws on Soviet enterprises and on taxes from enterprises, amalgamations and organisations, and that the draft bud-

get be submitted for the consideration of the Soviet Parliament. □



Soviet Western Army Group begins pullout

THE Soviet Union has begun a planned stage-by-stage pullout of its Western Army Group from territory of the former German Democratic Republic.

This year, two tank divisions and some 80 other formations will be moved to the Soviet Union, Western Army Group Commander-in-Chief General of the Army Boris Snetkov told a news conference in Berlin on Saturday, November 24.

Last year, two tank divisions were withdrawn from German territory, in accordance with the decision to cut Soviet Armed Forces by 500,000 servicemen, he said.

Troops movement is an involved task and not only in its technical aspect. It has also a social aspect, as many servicemen are accompanied by their families. Sixty per cent of officers and non-commissioned officers of the Western Army Group have no accommodation in the Soviet Union, Snetkov said.

The Soviet Government is currently working on the programme to ensure social protection of this category of servicemen, and the Western Army Group Command make its contribution to resolving the problem, he said.

Snetkov called on correspondents to give objective information about the Western Army Group and said he was ready to establish and broaden business contacts with the German mass media. □

Ryzhkov - TV interview

SOVIET television on November 25 broadcast an interview with Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov. The interview took place on Saturday, November 24. It was given by him after his speech at the first all-union Congress of Foresters, that ended on that day. He dealt with some important issues dealing with the situation in the sphere of forestry and prospects for its development in conditions of the transition to a market-oriented system.

Touching upon President Gorbachev's speech at the session of the Soviet Parliament, specifically, his proposal on changing the management structure of the national economy, Ryzhkov said that it has "some outlines, some principles put forward by the President, but the practical meaning is not yet clear. It is not clear what kind of a management structure they will be, what rights and obligations they will have. All this should be defined most clearly." According to the Soviet Constitution, the Council of Ministers is now the supreme executive authority. A cabinet of ministers will probably be formed. In any case, this should be decided by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. If it supports the new scheme, it will have to amend the Constitution.

Ryzhkov again praised the main guidelines of the transition to a market-based system, approved by the Soviet Parliament. "They are more flexible, they give greater opportunities to republics and greater rights to the government," he said. Ryzhkov believes that the main guidelines should be the basis of activities of any government, any authority that the country will have. □

GENNADI LISICHKIN

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Soviet republics' invitations to CSCE summit

SOVIET Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitali Churkin spoke on November 26 about the participation of Soviet republics in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) summit in Paris.

All Soviet republics have equal constitutional rights and there should be no discrimination against any of them, Churkin said.

In legal terms, all Soviet republics, and not only those situated in the European part of the Soviet Union, have the right to take part in the CSCE process, since the Soviet Union signed the Helsinki Final Act on behalf of all constituent republics, he said.

However, parts of a federation or confederation have never taken part in the CSCE process, including as observers, and a change in this practice would require the revamping of basic CSCE rules, he said.

Since this question requires a consensus of all 34 nations, "we consulted governments of several states with a multinational structure and

federative or confederative units," he said.

On November 16, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on President Gorbachev's orders officially invited representatives of the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Moldavia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia to take part in the work of the Soviet delegation at the CSCE summit in Paris on November 19-21, Churkin said.

"The possibility of their coming to Paris for the summit as guests of the Soviet Embassy in France was not excluded," he said.

"It was stressed that in this case we would render the necessary assistance," he said.

Shevardnadze's letter said that by taking part in the work of the Soviet delegation, representatives of the union republics would be able to make a constructive and appropriate contribution to the pan-European process, according to Churkin.

In accordance with decisions by republican authorities, the Chairman of the Russian Parliament's Council of Nationalities, the foreign ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldavia

and Byelorussia's permanent representative at UNESCO were included in the Soviet delegation, he said.

The Chairman of Georgia's Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs visited Paris as guest of the Soviet Embassy in France and to take part in the work of the Soviet delegation at the Paris summit, he said.

The Ukrainian Foreign Minister announced that the Ukraine would not send its representative because a delegation of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs had left for Paris before Shevardnadze's invitation had arrived, according to the spokesman.

The foreign ministers of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia did not reply to the invitation, he said.

"During the forming of a new union accord, that will dot the i's and cross the t's in terms of the separation of powers between the union and republics, the Soviet Foreign Ministry will help republics realise their sovereignty in foreign policy," Churkin said. □

Soviet Afghan policy

STATEMENTS by some Pakistani leaders that the Soviet Union pursues a policy of double standards in Eastern Europe and Asia, particularly with respect to Afghanistan, are "groundless", Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitali Churkin told a briefing in Moscow on November 26.

Churkin noted that in its international policy, including in its relations with East European countries and Afghanistan, the Soviet Union proceeds from the same principles. "There is no double standard here," he said. "Our main aim is to let peoples freely express their will and reject confrontational approaches."

Pakistan itself is using double standards with respect to Afghanistan, he said. Recognising the opposition's right to decide on Afghan affairs, Pakistan denies the Afghan Government such a right and nakedly interferes in Afghanistan's domestic affairs.

Churkin believes such statements in Pakistan apropos of the Soviet policy aim to "disguise their own, far from seemingly intentions with respect to Afghanistan."

Speaking of Soviet policy with respect to Afghanistan, Churkin said all steps made by the Soviet Union over the past years, first and foremost the signing of Geneva agreements and Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan aim to reach a settlement in Afghanistan with a broad and active participation of various political forces in the interest of the majority of Afghans.

The Soviet Union believes that the road to a settlement in Afghanistan is through a dialogue between Afghans, a ceasefire and democratic elections under international control to form a government on a broad basis, Churkin said.

These principles are the basis of the course of the Afghan Government and President and are supported by the Soviet Union, Churkin said. □

The new treaty on conventional arms: disproportion and parity

The following is a Novosti interview with Lieutenant-General Fyodor Ladygin, chief of the headquarters of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, who advised the Soviet delegation at the Paris summit meeting.

NOVOSTI: How do you see the treaty on European-based conventional arms signed in Paris in the overall military and political context and in terms of maintaining military parity in Europe?

LADYGIN: The world is no longer split into two opposing blocs. The aim now is to reduce armories in order to enhance security. From this point of view, the treaty is of immense significance.

Strategic parity was achieved earlier, but there remained disproportions in some defence areas. Specifically, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty as a whole had an advantage in conventional weapons in service with land forces. Rough parity existed in air forces, but NATO and the US had significant superiority over the Warsaw Treaty and the Soviet Union in naval capabilities. This preponderance is still there.

Given the doctrine of non-offensive defence and further qualitative improvement in our armed forces (the task set by the President of the USSR as Supreme Commander), and following

the cuts required by the treaty, our forces and resources will be sufficient to guarantee fool-proof defences.

The defensive military doctrine seeks smaller yet efficient and adequately trained and equipped armed forces that would be able, in the event of attack, to guarantee security predominantly through defensive actions. In this sense, the treaty signed in Paris does not diminish our security in military terms.

What can be done about disparities in naval forces?

We have always been saying that the military capabilities of the sides generally should be reduced in parallel. Yet the NATO countries, the US above all, would not agree to this arrangement.

In an attempt to give fresh impetus to the process of disarmament, we agreed to redress conventional arms imbalances in land and air forces, with a view to scaling down naval capabilities.

We are going to insist on talks to sort out the naval force issues, even though the US, backed by some of its NATO allies, would not like them to figure in the negotiating process. For all that, there are reasons to believe that such talks will take place after all.

To what extent is NATO going to change, in your opinion?

Signs of change are most certainly there, yet not to the degree as would match the realities in Europe. Unfortunately, some of the old military stereotypes still endure. Evidently, it will take some time for the new trends to prevail definitively in NATO as well as the Warsaw Treaty. Anyway, it is to be hoped that the pace of change regarding NATO's doctrines and military structure will quicken.

How do you see the future of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO?

I think the military-political alliances will ultimately cease to exist, dissolving in a new system of European security. We will do our best to make sure that a new kind of Europe provides equal security for all countries without exception. □

(Lieutenant-General Ladygin was interviewed by Vladimir Markov and Viktor Onuchko)

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