

the conditions of peace in detail is above all the affair of the conflicting sides themselves. The Soviet Union, however, as co-chairman of the Geneva Conference and a state immediately adjacent to the region concerned, has its own opinion regarding the main principles and directions of the future peace settlement.

We consider, in particular, that the final document (or documents) on peace in the Middle East ought to be based on the principle of the impermissibility of acquiring territory by means of war and the right of all states of this region to independent existence and security. Of course, the inviolable rights of the Palestinian Arab people should be ensured, including its right to self-determination and creation of its own state.

We consider it beyond any debate that the documents on peace should provide for withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967. This withdrawal could be carried out not all at once, but by stages — over several months, for example — in a strictly defined period. The relevant borders between Israel and its Arab neighbors participating in the conflict, should be clearly defined. These borders should be declared finally established and inviolable.

We proceed from the standpoint that from the moment of completion of the withdrawal of Israeli troops, the state of war between the Arab states participating in the conflict and Israel will cease and peaceful relations be established. All sides will accept mutual obligations to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability and political independence from one another, and to resolve their conflicts by peaceful means.

On both of the established borders, there could be created — with the agreement of the states concerned, of course — demilitarized zones, without unilateral advantages for anyone. Within these zones would be located, for some clearly defined period, either extraordinary armed forces of the U.N., or U.N. observers.

Obviously, the final documents of the conference should also contain an article on the freedom of passage for the ships of all countries, including Israel (after termination of the state of war) through the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba, and a statement by Egypt on the passage of ships through the Suez Canal, which is entirely under Egyptian sovereignty.

Implementation of the conditions of the peaceful settlement could, in our opinion, be guaranteed, if the agreeing sides wish, by the U.N. Security Council, or possibly by individual states such as the Soviet Union, the United States, France, England. The guarantor states would have their observers in the U.N. contingents in the appropriate zones.

Such, comrades, in the briefest summary form, are our preliminary ideas on the possible basis of a just peace in the Middle East. We are not forcing them on anyone, but considered it useful to speak out about them, just as, it goes without saying, we will be prepared to become acquainted with the ideas of others.

We have already spoken about how, in connection with a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, the relevant states could consider the question of helping stop the arms race in this region. In general, the problem of international weapons trade obviously merits an exchange of opinions.

*Brezhnev recalls the history of the SALT talks and says that success in limiting nuclear proliferation is dependent on good will and trust.*

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I will give a concrete example. Four years ago, negotiations began about the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. About the *reduction*. It would seem that nothing could be more logical and natural than for the participants in these talks to refrain at least from increasing their armed forces in the given region, for the duration of the negotiations. The USSR and its allies have repeatedly proposed exactly this. For several years we have not increased the combat strength of our armed forces in Central Europe. How have the NATO countries reacted to our example? They have continued to build up their armed forces.

What should we do now? Should the Soviet Union follow the example of the Western powers? But this is a negative example, and frankly speaking, we would not like to follow it.

We are prepared, right up to the achievement of an agreement on reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe, not to increase the number of our troops in this region. On the condition, of course, that the NATO forces will not grow either. Accept this proposal, respected negotiating partners, accept it as a first real step on the path of reducing armed forces. No one will lose from this, while the cause of peace and security of peoples will only gain.

## Hindsight

*India, and its ruling Congress Party, have been a cornerstone of Soviet policy in the "Third World" for many years. The Soviet Union's government daily Izvestia commented March 22 as follows on the defeat of the Gandhi government:*

...Summing up the first results of the elections, local observers are remarking that the loss by the Indian National Congress of significant numbers of the places it had gained in the National Assembly after the 1971 elections is not coincidental. Mistakes and excesses in the implementation of measures arising from the laws passed after the introduction of the state of emergency in 1975 took their toll. Agrarian reform proclaimed by the leadership of the Congress Party came to a standstill because of the opposition of the landed gentry. The leadership of the Congress Party antagonized part of the working class by cutting back wage increases.

In left circles they are pointing to the negative role played by the disunity of the democratic and patriotic forces in the elections. The leadership of the ruling party, unlike in past elections, refused cooperation with the Communist Party of India in the majority of states. This played into the hands of the bloc of opposition parties, the Janata Party, which had defied the National Congress.

It is indicative that the candidates of the Congress Party were most successful where there existed pre-election agreement between the Congress and the Communist Party of India or where, without official agreements, the CPI actively supported progressive candidates from the Indian National Congress.