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October 4, 1983

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 106U.S. APPROACH TO START NEGOTIATIONS - VII ~~(S)~~

We are about to enter the fifth round of START negotiations with the Soviet Union. During the last round, while remaining firmly focused upon our principal objective, a stable nuclear balance at reduced levels of forces, the United States made a number of important initiatives designed to increase the flexibility concerning the details of the U.S. negotiating position and to incorporate the major recommendations of the Report of the President's Commission on Strategic Modernization. As a result, Round IV was, by far, the most useful to date. ~~(S)~~

Even so, in the face of Soviet rigidity, we still have not yet made meaningful progress on the central issues involved in this critical negotiation. The Soviet Union has not yet shown any significant movement in response to the considerable flexibility displayed by the United States in Round IV. In addition, as we approach the period in which NATO will likely have to implement the deployment track of the 1979 NATO dual-track decision, Soviet tactics in opposing the implementation of NATO's decision will likely cause the climate of the START negotiations during the upcoming round, Round V, to deteriorate. ~~(S)~~

Despite these facts, however, I remain fully determined to take whatever steps are necessary to increase the likelihood of real, substantive progress towards an agreement which involves significant reductions in U.S. and Soviet strategic nuclear arsenals, which increases stability, and which, as a result, promotes the national security interests of both sides. Therefore, during Round V, the United States will continue to press for progress and build upon the positive elements noted during the last negotiating round. ~~(S)~~

In Round V, the U.S. Delegation will attempt to extract a more positive response to the flexibility demonstrated by the United States in the last round and will propose a number of additional initiatives, including additional initiatives concerning the limitation of ALCMs, and a proposal for a mutual, guaranteed build-down. ~~(S)~~

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Additional Limits on ALCMs (X)

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During Round V, the U.S. delegation will be instructed to: (X)

a. Inform the Soviets that the United States is prepared to explore ways to further limit the size of ALCM forces in the context of reciprocal Soviet flexibility on items of concern to the U.S. The intent is to make it clear that the U.S. is willing to discuss ALCM limits which are more in line with U.S. programs and that the U.S. START proposal is not aimed at protecting some 8,000 ALCMs as asserted by the Soviets. (X)

(X) b. Propose a ban on ALCMs with multiple nuclear warheads.

Build-Down Initiative (X).

The United States will introduce into the START negotiations in Round V a proposal for a mutual, guaranteed build-down designed to encourage stabilizing systems using variable ratios linked to modernization and a guaranteed annual percentage build-down (approximately 5% mandatory build-down). Build-down will be paced by that rule which produces the greatest reductions on a yearly basis. At the appropriate time during the round, the U.S. delegation will also propose a concurrent, parallel build-down on bombers from agreed SALT II levels and will negotiate limitations on the destructive capability of bombers in frameworks that also address the destructive capacity of missiles and which relate the two in an appropriate manner. Finally, during Round V, the U.S. delegation will propose the establishment of a working group to discuss the U.S. build-down initiative. (X)

The Elements of the U.S. Initiative (X)

The following elements will compose the U.S. build-down initiative: (X)

a. The U.S. delegation will propose 5% annual reduction in the total number of ballistic missile warheads from existing levels to an equal level of 5,000 ballistic missile warheads on each side. (X)

b. The U.S. delegation will initiate discussion of additional build-down provisions which are designed to encourage movement to more stabilizing systems and which are tied to the modernization of the ballistic missile forces of each side using variable ratios. Discussion can begin on a concept involving a network of variable build-down ratios, with 2 existing warheads reduced for each new MIRVed ICBM warhead introduced and 3 existing warheads reduced for each 2 new SLBM warheads introduced. (X)

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c. Definitions and verification rules will have to be developed and finalized before a specific, detailed build-down provision tied to the modernization of ballistic missile forces is added to the U.S. position. Work on developing such definitions and verification rules should continue on a priority basis so that the United States is in a position to offer such a provision before the end of Round V. ~~(S)~~

d. The U.S. delegation will propose that when the additional build-down provision tied to ballistic missile modernization is agreed, if such a provision would result in a greater reduction in a specific year than the 5% annual reduction, then the additional provision would set the level of required reduction that year for the side involved in the modernization activity. ~~(S)~~

e. At the appropriate time, but during Round V, the U.S. delegation will propose a concurrent, parallel build-down provision based upon the number of bombers (not the number of bomber weapons) as a mechanism for reducing that number from existing agreed (SALT) levels down to the limits on bomber numbers proposed by the U.S. in START. ~~(S)~~

f. The specific details of the bomber provision need not be immediately placed on the table in Geneva. However, we must expect that the Soviets will ask how we would apply the U.S. build-down concept to bombers. In response to this Soviet action, the U.S. delegation must be prepared to offer a specific provision. To ensure this is the case, work will continue on a priority basis to finalize the details of such a provision so that it is available for use before the end of Round V. ~~(S)~~

g. The U.S. delegation will initiate discussion/negotiation of an appropriate parallel build-down provision which addresses the destructive capacity of ballistic missiles. The U.S. delegation will also initiate discussion/negotiation of appropriate ways for addressing the destructive capacity of bombers in frameworks that also address the destructive capacity of missiles and which relate the two in an appropriate manner. ~~(S)~~

Trading Areas of Advantage to Reach Agreement ~~(S)~~

Reaching an agreement in START ultimately will involve trade-offs between areas of U.S. interest or advantage and areas of Soviet interest or advantage. Such trade-offs can be accomplished by a number of approaches, but any such approach must be made in a way which enhances and maintains stability and protects the vital interests of the United States and its allies. The United States will continue to explore the asymmetries that exist between U.S. and Soviet forces to look for appropriate ways to trade our advantages and interests for Soviet advantages or interests, providing each side maximum flexibility consistent with movement towards a more stable balance of forces. ~~(S)~~

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Additional Guidance on the Treatment of Bombers ~~X~~

Bomber delivered weapons are clearly retaliatory weapons and inherently more stabilizing than rapidly arriving, non-recallable ballistic missile warheads. Encouraging a greater dependence on more stable systems is a basic U.S. objective and an essential element in the basic U.S. position. ~~X~~

The U.S. has placed both bombers and ALCM limits on the table in START as a part of the basic U.S. package in a manner fully consistent with the basic U.S. objective of encouraging stability. Within the context of the build-down initiative outlined above, the approach to bombers directed also supports that objective. However, the U.S. remains firm on the point that we will not treat the weapons carried by our slow-flying bombers which have to penetrate extensive Soviet defenses, defenses which are not being negotiated on the table in Geneva, in the same way that we treat more destabilizing ballistic missile warheads. ~~X~~

Importance of Verification ~~X~~

Current issues of non-compliance reinforce the requirement that effective verification is an essential part of START and the build-down initiative incorporated into the U.S. START position during Round V. ~~X~~

Previous Directives on START ~~X~~

This Decision Directive supplements NSDD-33, NSDD-36, NSDD-44, NSDD-53, NSDD-78, and NSDD-98. ~~X~~

Ronald Reagan

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