

Translation

Declaration on Freedom from Nuclear Weapons

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In 2007 Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, William Perry and Sam Nunn issued an appeal for a world free of nuclear weapons. As Secretaries of State and Defense and Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee under Republican and Democrat Administrations, they earned respect both in the US and beyond. Their knowledge and experience gives their concerns about the growing nuclear threat special weight. Being realists, they know that the abolition of all nuclear weapons can only be achieved gradually, and therefore they propose urgent practical steps aimed at realizing this necessary vision.

This appeal met with broad approval and prominent support in the US; as far as we know no supporting decisions by European governments were issued.

Our answer takes into account Germany's expectations of the incoming Obama Administration. Our century's keyword is cooperation. No global problem, be it the issue of environment and climate protection, providing for the energy needs of a growing world population, or tackling the financial crisis, can be resolved by confrontation or the use of military force. America bears a special and indispensable responsibility.

This is all the more true when the number of countries possessing nuclear weapons or acquiring the capability to produce such weapons, and thus the raw material for terrorism on a catastrophic scale, is increasing. At the same time the nuclear-weapon States are developing new nuclear arms.

We unreservedly support the call by Messrs. Kissinger, Shultz, Perry and Nunn for a turnaround on nuclear policy, not only in their country.

This applies in particular to the following proposals:

- The vision of a world free of the nuclear threat, as developed by Reagan and Gorbachev in Reykjavik, must be rekindled.

- Negotiations aimed at drastically reducing the number of nuclear weapons must begin, initially between the US and Russia, the countries with the largest number of warheads, in order to win over the other countries possessing such weapons.
- The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) must be greatly reinforced.
- America should ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- All short-range nuclear weapons must be destroyed.

From Germany's point of view it must be added: the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty expires this year. Its extension is the most urgent item on the agenda for Washington and Moscow.

- It will be vital to the credibility of the 2010 NPT Review Conference that the nuclear-weapon States finally keep their promise under Article VI of the NPT to reduce their nuclear arsenals.
- The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty must be restored. Outer space may only be used for peaceful purposes.

Cooperation in the interests of shared security enabled Presidents Bush and Gorbachev to eliminate the mutual threat posed by medium-range nuclear missiles at the end of the Cold War and, in 1990, to undertake the largest-ever conventional disarmament effort. During the more than 18 years since then, what we now call the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) has become the basis for Europe's stability. To this day it addresses the interests of all concerned.

That stability has been strong and reliable enough to withstand German reunification and the end of the Warsaw Pact, to survive the implosion of the Soviet Union, to enable Baltic States to regain their sovereignty, and to stand up to NATO and EU enlargement and the realities at the beginning of 2009.

It would be jeopardized for the first time by the American desire to station missiles and a radar system on extra-territorial bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, on NATO's eastern border. A return to the era of confrontation, leading to a new arms race and tension, can be best avoided by an agreement on missile defence which also serves the interests of NATO and the EU, i.e. a restored ABM Treaty. This would at the same time make it easier to adapt the CFE Treaty and pave the way for a greater dimension.

Barack Obama called in Berlin for Cold War mindsets to be overcome. This ties in with the ideas discussed following the end of the Cold War under the motto of security stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Gorbachev was unable to realize his vision of a European house; Russian President Medvedev has now called for a new pan-European security structure.

We recommend giving this opportunity careful consideration. Security and stability for the northern hemisphere can only be achieved through stable and reliable cooperation between America, Russia, Europe and China. This cooperation would respect existing NATO, EU and OSCE agreements and, if necessary, take its own institutional shape. Stable security in the northern hemisphere would certainly defuse global crises and make them easier to resolve. Serious endeavours by the US and Russia towards a nuclear-weapon-free world would make it easier to reach an agreement on adequate behaviour with all other nuclear-weapon States, regardless of whether these are permanent UN Security Council members. A spirit of cooperation could spread from the Middle East via Iran to East Asia.

Due to its policy of détente, backed up by its allies, Germany created the preconditions for its self-determination. Germany owes its peaceful reunification to the 2+4 Treaty in which the principle of cooperation across former borders proved its worth. It enabled historic progress to be made on disarmament and arms control for Europe as a whole. One result was the NATO-Russia Council, which can only be fully effective in a spirit of cooperation. Relics from the age of confrontation are no longer adequate for our new century. Partnership fits in badly with the still-valid NATO and Russian doctrine of nuclear first use, even if neither side is being attacked with such arms. A general non-first-use treaty between the nuclear-weapon States would be an urgently-needed step.

Germany, which has renounced the use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, has every reason to call on the nuclear-weapon States not to use nuclear weapons against countries not possessing such arms. We are also of the opinion that the remaining US nuclear warheads should be withdrawn from German territory.

Cooperation, our century's keyword, and secure stability in the northern hemisphere can become milestones on the route to a nuclear-weapon-free world. This is our answer to the appeal issued by those four Americans, Messrs. Kissinger, Shultz, Perry and Nunn.