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Translation from the Russian

His Excellency  
Ronald W. Reagan  
President of the United States of America  
Washington, D.C.

July 26, 1984

Dear Mr. President:

In your letter of July 18, it was stated that you accept without any preconditions our proposal of June 29, and the wish was expressed that our representatives work out an agreed statement regarding the beginning of the negotiations we proposed.

Taking this into account, on July 21 we handed over to the American side a draft of such an agreed statement prepared in strict conformity with what we proposed on June 29, namely: to begin negotiations with the aim of working out and concluding an agreement on preventing the militarization of outer space, including complete mutual renunciation of anti-satellite systems, and to establish from the day of the beginning of the negotiations a mutual moratorium on testing and deployment of space weapons.

Since, as I have already noted, you wrote that you accepted our proposal of June 29, it was natural to expect that such a text of a joint statement would not meet with any objections on the American side.

However, the response which we received through the Department of State does not tally in any way with what was said in your letter. The draft statement proposed by the American side has nothing at all to do with the negotiations which we proposed. Instead of negotiations on outer space, it speaks of some "meeting to discuss and to define approaches for negotiating" and it is absolutely unclear what the negotiations will be about.

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To put it briefly, Mr. President, no doubt whatsoever now remains that the American side is not prepared to conduct negotiations with the aim of preventing the militarization of outer space.

To be candid, we deeply regret the unwillingness of the American side to reach agreement on this vitally important problem. We believed and continue to believe that now, while things have not yet gone too far, it would be easier to reach agreement on the complete prohibition of the entire class of space attack systems. Such is the objective of our proposal for the negotiations.

And the establishment of a mutual moratorium on testing and deployment of space attack weapons, as we proposed to do in conjunction with the beginning of the negotiations, would of itself be a major step showing, among other things, the commitment of the sides to the goals of strengthening strategic stability and reducing the military threat.

I repeat, we regret that the current American position makes it impossible to conduct the negotiations. Should this position subsequently change -- and we would like to hope this will happen -- and should the wish be expressed on the part of the U.S. to start negotiations with the aim of reaching agreement on the complete and unconditional prohibition of space weapons, we would be ready to return to consideration of this issue. In other words, our position, as it was presented in the statement by the Soviet Government of June 29, remains in force.

Sincerely,

K. Chernenko

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

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 WASHINGTON

July 26, 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: George P. Shultz *W7*

SUBJECT: July 26 Letter From Chernenko on Vienna

Soviet Charge Sokolov, under the impression I was out of town, came in today to hand over to Ken Dam a new letter from Chernenko on Vienna. The letter takes a tough line. It claims our response to their proposed announcement "does not tally" with the statement in your letter that you accept their proposal and leaves "no doubt whatsoever" that we are "not prepared to conduct negotiations with the aim of preventing the militarization of outer space." Chernenko says that they "regret that the current American position makes it impossible to conduct the negotiations," that they would be ready to "return to consideration of the issue" should we change our position, and that the Soviet position of June 29 remains in force.

Sokolov had nothing to add to this message and Ken did not comment other than to say we would forward it to you right away. The letter, with a translation, is attached.

I will have recommendations for you shortly on how we should deal with this situation.

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BY CAS NARA DATE 7/25/00
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