

## The Non-Proliferation Treaty Must Be Prolonged



In an exclusive interview with Vladimir ORLOV, Russia's deputy-secretary of the Security Council (SC), Valery MANILOV asks about Russia's stand on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

As far as I know, the Security Council discussed variants of the Russian delegation's conduct at the conference on prolonging the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). A resolution was adopted on the results of the discussion...

Strictly speaking, this issue was not discussed at the session of the SC. The SC staff had prepared it so efficiently that there was no need for discussion. The whole range of likely development possibilities was worked out and calculated. First, the SC discussed the situation that would not lead to an agreement on the treaty's permanent operation. Second, it analyzed the stands of some states, which are dissonant in the general chorus, and thought about the methods that will help prompt them to change their position. All SC members maintain one absolutely realized stand: the treaty must definitely be prolonged.

Then comes the most important issue: for how long? I have heard that, for the sake of compromise they are considering prolonging the treaty for a term of 25 years, with a possibility of extending it further.

It would be ideal for the term of the treaty to be unlimited, and for all countries of the world to be its "signatories and observers." One must aim for this ideal, but at the same time it is necessary to do everything possible so that a maximum number of states will join this treaty and that no country should withdraw from it in the course of the conference. Moreover, everything must be done so that the treaty works indisputably.

Is the decision of the SC about the NPT confidential?

Yes, just like the majority of other SC decisions, not to mention the issues concerning sensitive matters, such as control over armaments. In the final analysis, it is a matter of security. I can say that the Russian delegation must not proceed from the "all or nothing" formula. The responsible approach is not to allow proliferation by any means. Therefore, our delegation will have a number of alternatives reserved.

If we take the positions of the countries, which are dissonant and which do support the unlimited prolongation of the treaty (Iran, Nigeria, Egypt and Mexico), they have one indisputable trump-card: the nuclear states' incomplete observance of article 4 of the treaty — on rendering technological aid to the countries that, of their own free will, seek to take possession of nuclear weapons. In this respect, the situation with Iran, which is an object of U.S. pressure, is interesting. Was this issue analyzed by the SC?

Naturally, we regard this as one of the most crucial issues. As for the situation with Iran, it is absolutely clear that there is direct evidence of intrusion into the sphere of nuclear security and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons of other interests, which, in my opinion, are most remotely related to the treaty, and most directly related to the economy, to the division of the spheres of influence. We attentively considered all the arguments from those opposed to our cooperation with Iran in the construction of nuclear power plants. We critically weighed the likelihood associated with the danger of using these power plants for the production of weapon plutonium in such amounts that will enable the development of nuclear weapons. Here are the conclusions: first, the many-sided verification by experts (including independent, thorough calculations using formulas with which we, politicians, have little in common) shows that even if some amount of plutonium is obtained at the final stage, it will be impossible to use that plutonium to produce nuclear weapons, even with the highest engineering and technological

developments. Second, since Iran commits itself to place all that is and shall be done in the nuclear sphere fully under international control, under the control of IAEA, then even the secondary possibility of unforeseen phenomena arising is completely ruled out. Practice shows that this control is quite effective, all the more so, since it rests on the consent of nuclear powers.

In this case there is the fully realized and clearly expressed will of Russia, which completely understands its responsibility for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in any region of the world. We understand that in an unstable world, regional and global security is threatened by the likelihood of nuclear weapons being possessed by any state or group of states having unstable regimes, and moreover, having regimes of extremist, nationalist and fundamentalist orientation with elements of fanaticism. We are well informed that a number of states have come close to possessing, or have actually possessed technology and materials for the production of nuclear weapons. The threshold states number from 12 to 15. In speaking of cooperation with Iran in the nuclear sphere, we are proceeding precisely from these crucial provisions, and they are being observed very rigidly. Considering the above, Russia's cooperation with Iran will allow for the stabilization of the situation in the interests of not only one region, but also of the entire world. This is because there is nothing more effective than peaceful economic cooperation, partnership and the strengthening of contacts and interests that arise from the sphere of creation, and not from the sphere of destruction.

The situation is more complicated with the preparation of a contract on the construction of a nuclear power plant in India. India is not a member of the NPT and has no intention to join it.

I think that a number of questions may rightfully arise in this situation. However, I shall note that most often questions arise on a field which, I would say, is insufficiently provided with "information fertilizer." In this case I would not like to reveal all the nuances. The issue is too delicate. I shall only stress that



The Topols: the hope of Russian nuclear forces.

one of the real instruments of civilized influence upon India to change its stand regarding the treaty and its joining the treaty, is our likely cooperation in this sphere, specifically the signing of corresponding contracts. This is exactly what must bring India into the framework of consent with the postulates foreseen by the Treaty, at least it may facilitate the recognition of the basic principles of the non-alignment regime. It is clear that a considerable, if not a decisive, role in this matter is being played by Indo-Pakistani — Indo-Chinese relations. We are trying to use the authority and influence of Russia, to employ partnership relations with the United States and other countries to influence Pakistan's position appropriately and settle this issue comprehensively so that the balance is not violated on the subcontinent.

A treaty is now being prepared in Geneva on the comprehensive ban of nuclear weapon tests. The work is proceeding slowly. At the Russian SC this issue, as far as I understand, was dealt with in detail in the context of the NNPT's prolongation, and in a narrower context: on the expedience of preserving a moratorium on nuclear weapon tests. It is common knowledge that a number of experts are con-

vinced of the necessity to suspend the moratorium for a short while and hold several tests to introduce new technology, specifically on the improvement of the security system.

Yes, we are supporters and initiators of a universal ban of nuclear tests. We shall fight for it to become truly universal, and for no country to ever conduct any tests, including our country. However, there is something to think about, and not only from the viewpoint of maintaining nuclear security. This is a universal problem, not only ours. And if someone says that he has found electronic, bench methods of solving this problem, then he is cunning. The task of verifying and finding truly guaranteed mechanisms of maximum efficiency to ensure the safety of the ammunition, which is becoming obsolete, is very serious. To do this without holding such tests is rather problematic. This issue has not yet been resolved. A decision must be made as to whether it is reasonable to continue to observe the Don Quixote image — the country that once declared that we are introducing a moratorium of our own accord — and as a result, to face mounting danger. It is quite possible that, weighing all the pros and cons, will determine the minimum tests that will eliminate the further possibility of a major nuclear security violation. If the need arises, and if we fail to find other solutions, the decision to resume tests will be made openly. We shall substantiate this decision and will come to an understanding with our partners. Sometimes a step backward must be taken in order to take two steps forward later.

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### Will NPT Be Extended Indefinitely?

At UN headquarters people are making bets about the future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) — whether it will be extended indefinitely, for 25 years on a non-permanent basis, for 25 years on a permanent basis, or for five years. The fate of the NPT may largely determine the face of the world at the turn of the century.

In the betting process the word "hung" is important, for the conference to discuss this question may be "hung." In other words, debate will not end after the established four weeks, the agenda will prove to be vague, and the decision on extension will not be passed.

The NPT is a unique agreement, a fact which explains why countries regard it differently. This international treaty has turned into a treaty-organization. Every five years over the course of a quarter-century members assemble in Geneva or New York to discuss its effectiveness. Though it discriminates against states which were not originally part of the "Big Five," and more generally discriminates against the developing world as a whole, the treaty has received the backing of an overwhelming majority of states, not only in the North, but also in the South. The product of a hard compromise, the treaty structure makes it very difficult for anyone who wishes to amend it. Having prevented such countries as Iraq and North Korea from obtaining nuclear weapons, the Treaty

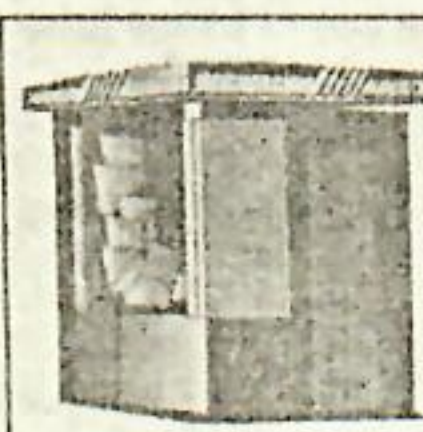
failed to prevent Israel from arming itself. Since its term of validity is limited, under article X.2 the treaty must be extended by a conference of member-states. Theoretically, the treaty will "live after death." Lawyers have maintained that if the New York conference cannot reach an agreement, the treaty won't lose its legal validity.

The treaty contains only ten articles but harbors a great number of riddles which officials have been trying to decipher over the past few months, largely without success. Now they will have to be solved in New York. The most important question is: for how long will the treaty be extended? Those who agree to prolong NPT indefinitely include the United States, Russia, the CIS countries, NATO member-states, most other advanced countries and some developing ones (the number of supporters fluctuates from 70 to 82). This position has advantages. And like any other program-maximum it has no chance to be accepted by consensus. Those who until now could not be convinced of the need for indefinite prolongation will probably not change their minds in four weeks. The opposite tendency is much more likely, since many developing countries are irritated by the fact that the five nuclear states have repeatedly violated Articles 4 and 6 of the treaty, by moving too slowly to ban nuclear testing. As compensation for their sins, the nuclear countries (which are also permanent members of the UN) adopted at the UN Security Council a resolution confirming that they would not use nuclear weapons nor threaten a first strike. This is not even a concession to the Third World, but a logical and quite painless step (naturally, an important one). But the nuclear Five are

not ready for painful concessions. If the treaty were indefinitely prolonged but in the process lost (even if not de-jure, then de-facto) a fourth, even fifth of its support, this would be an inadmissible luxury. The most weighty argument by advocates of the effectiveness of the treaty is that in recent years it was joined by China, France, Algeria, Ukraine, and South Africa. Hence, the treaty does not lose its attractiveness. Isn't it more reasonable to agree with a number of critical arguments, advanced by such countries as, say, Mexico, Nigeria and Egypt, and then to proceed to the prolongation of the treaty for 15-25 years through a consensus, by obtaining the consent of the developing countries to renounce their demands to add to the treaty all sorts of protocols and supplements. However, the compromise should not be too unsteady. It is important to avoid the conversion of the conference into "a trial of the North," not because of rhetoric (it is known), but in the essence of saving time. To drag out the conference would be equivalent to failure.

The states interested in keeping the non-proliferation regime in force must finish the conference at the fixed date, with an accurately worded decision, preferably passed via consensus to extend the treaty indefinitely. One possibility for indefinite extension has been suggested by two authoritative scientists and diplomats — George Bunn and Roland Timerbayev. This time Russian diplomacy is ready to display both flexibility and persistence. By the way, to balance Russian promises to America with its "indulgence" of non-aligned countries is easy only in theory, not in practice.

V. O. New York



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