

# NONUSE OF FORCE OFFERED TO NATO

## Moscow Is Reported Testing Willingness of the Alliance to Agree on Statement

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BRUSSELS, March 22 — Western diplomats attending the East-West security conference in Stockholm say the Soviet Union is sending signals about how the Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear arms could resume.

According to one of the diplomats, discussions with Soviet officials have produced "evidence of a link" between Soviet interest in a statement renouncing the use of force and a resumption of the talks on limiting strategic and medium-range nuclear missiles, which broke up late last year.

The diplomat said it would be up to West to decide whether to test "a number of fairly explicit hints" received from the Russians. The Soviet suggestion is that if the United States, as leader of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, were to say publicly that it would consider a statement on nonuse of force, then this would provide "a favorable element" toward restarting the arms talks.

The diplomats reporting on the development were among delegates who briefed Atlantic alliance officials here this week on progress at the Stockholm conference. The first phase of the conference, which began in January ended last Friday. It is scheduled to resume in May.

### U.S. Appears to Be Opposed

A delegate who discussed the signals said they came in a statement made by the Soviet delegate, Oleg A. Grinevsky, at a closed session of the conference, and then in private talks with Mr. Grinevsky. The Soviet diplomat has served in the Foreign Ministry's Middle East and International Organizations departments.

The United States considers that there is no reason to offer the Soviet Union a face-saving gesture since it was Moscow that chose to break off the arms talks last year in protest against the deployment of new American medium-range missiles in Western Europe. This position was re-emphasized on Tuesday by Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, the United States delegate to the United Nations, in a television interview in Vienna.

American officials have said privately that injecting a nonaggression pledge into the Stockholm conference — whose mandate is limiting the risk of military confrontation in Europe by specific, binding measures — would offer a false message to public opinion at time when the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan continues. Such a statement, in the view of some NATO

officials, would also result in additional pressure for a Western pledge not to use nuclear weapons first, a position they feel would undermine the doctrine of nuclear deterrence.

### Statement Termed Superfluous

Other Western officials say that the nonaggression declaration sought by the Russians is superfluous since renunciation-of-force engagements are already contained in the United Nations Charter, in the Final Act of the 1975 Helsinki conference and in NATO documents.

But some Western governments have suggested a willingness to consider such a statement. Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of West Germany, referring to an Atlantic alliance declaration that it would never use force except in self-defense, said in a speech in Stockholm in January that "it could serve the cause of confidence-building if all participants were ready to make an equally comprehensive pledge."

A West German official here said Bonn would have no trouble with a statement renouncing force if the Warsaw Pact countries agreed to NATO demands for greater "transparency" between the blocs, such as advance notification of troop movements and the posting of observers at all maneuvers.

A West German representative suggested that the United States might wish to see how the Russians would react in relation to the arms reduction talks if the Reagan Administration indicated its readiness to discuss a force-renunciation statement under certain conditions.

### Improvement in Climate an Issue

One analysis here is that the Soviet Union, after its warnings of the world's being endangered by the Western missile deployment, could not return to the arms talks without being able to say that the international climate had changed. If this is the case, the argument runs, then Western willingness to discuss the Soviet Union's nonuse-of-force concept could provide the face-saving change needed by Moscow.

James E. Goodby, the United States delegate in Stockholm, described the issue at a news conference here as a possible "factor for later discussion". But he added, "I don't think anyone would want to offer it up on a plate."

So far, the Warsaw Pact countries have not offered an formal proposal in Stockholm to match the specific confidence-building measures called for by the NATO countries.

The eight neutral and nonaligned nations attending the meeting have made a proposal that calls for more detailed exchange of information on military movements that could lead to a statement on force renunciation.

If these proposals are accepted, the neutral countries' document says, "they thereby create conditions for considering a reaffirmation, in appropriate ways and forms, of the commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, undertaken in the United Nations Charter and the Final Act."