

Shah Salahuddin

GENEVA SUMMIT 1985 : THE SUPERPOWERS' SEARCH FOR COOPERATION

Introduction

The relations between the United States and the Soviet Union constitute one of the central aspects of World politics. These two Superpowers with their diametrically opposite political and economic systems are in adversary relationship with each other. Yet they face the imperative of coexistence and accomodation with each other. Adjusting to this fact has not been easy for either nation. The short-lived period of 'detente' which was reached in 1972 gradually eroded from 1975 through 1979. It collapsed in the wake of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and a new phase of cold war begum in the US-USSR relationship since 1980. Even then, dialogue on political and strategic issues continued between the two Superpowers intermittently in the context of uncertainties and difficulties of American-Soviet relations during the first half of the 1980s.

The attention of the entire world is focussed on such dialogues whenever the two sit down to negotiate on any issue including arms control agreement. The 'fireside' summit between Ronald Reagan — the most stridently anti-Communist President of the United States since World War II and an energetic, innovative and dynamic General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail S. Gorbachev held in Geneva, November

19-21, 1985, has been observed and discussed in all capitals on all continents. It is because of the importance of the problems discussed by the two leaders of USA and USSR. It is more so because there is no other more important and burning issue than the question of war and peace confronting mankind in the face of the threat of a nuclear holocaust. This was the first ever summit since President Reagan came to power in 1980. This also coincided with declared policy shift in the US toward dialogue and negotiation following changes in Kremlin leadership and accompanying changes in their strategic moves.

The present paper investigates into the dynamics of the interaction of the US and USSR relationship between Vienna Summit to Geneva Summit (1979-1985), makes an appreciation of the fields of cooperation agreed in Geneva and finally discusses its significance from a Third World perspective.

From Vienna Summit to Geneva (1979-85)

US-Soviet summit meetings have been held 14 times in the last 42 years. One of the best things about the summit is that they impell leaders to concentrate their attention on issues that divide them. Whether the Geneva summit has been a success or not, the fact remains that the Superpowers have returned once again to Geneva. The underlying nature of their relations is an interaction with dynamics of its own which involves not only the aim of the Superpowers, but also the policies and actions which they can not carry out without being influenced by other developments in the world. Besides the course of US-Soviet relationship has been greatly influenced by internal developments in the two countries and their differences in perspectives and perceptions.

In tracing and analysing the course of American-Soviet relations since 1979 through 1985, the most salient was the real divide between 1970s and the 1980s. "The year 1980 marked the beginning of a post-detente relationship, but because it brought the closing of an

American Administration, 1980 was transitional. In terms of the substance of relations, however, there was in fact little to distinguish 1980 from the years that followed".¹ There is a good reason to single out the period from 1979-85 for the period 1969 through 1980 witnessed the rise and fall of the detente and differing American and Soviet conception of it played a crucial role in US-USSR relations in 1970s. "In many ways January 1980 was a sharper turning point than January 1981, when Ronald Reagan on inauguration repudiated detente ensuing American reaction which resulted return to confrontation, unmatched in two decades."²

Brezhnev succeeded Nikita S. Khrushchev as head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in October 1964, but it was not until the period of 1969-72 coincident with the development of a policy of detente, that Brezhnev consolidated a dominant position in the Soviet Leadership. Following his death in November 1982, he was succeeded by Andropov, he, in turn, by Chernenko in February 1984 and he, by Gorbachev in march 1985. The death in the span of just a few years of Mikhail Suslov, Aleksei Kosygin, Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, Dmitry Ustinov and Konstantin Chernenko represent a generational change. After many years of rule by Gerontocracy, Gorbachev became the Soviet leader at the age of 54. There is an important element of change in that Mr. Gorbachev commits a new generation of Soviet leaders to co-existence and better relations with the United States of America. We will focus on few of the important milestones which have marked the development in US-Soviet Relationship particularly in the Vienna (1979)-Geneva (1985) interregnum contributing importantly for setting the tone and stage of the recently concluded Geneva summit. Keeping in view the subjects which have been discussed during the summit the emphasis will be precisely on security issues and regional matters on which both the superpowers

1. Raymond L. Garthoff, "And Rift after Detente", *Detente and Confrontation*, (Washington : The Brooking Institution, 1985), p. 1009.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 967.

have searched for solutions characterising the changing pattern of their relationship. The four important areas of US-Soviet interaction —strategic arms control, the interrelation with detente in Europe, the triangular relationship with China and the competition in the Third World will be focussed in this section.

Arms Control

Though the rationale for Arms Control talks of both the United States and the Soviet Union had differed for a number of factors. An overview of the history of Superpower Arms Control process for well over two decades shows that the process, even if crippled by intermittent crises, has continued to function and the basic purpose of Arms Control has not changed. And both the Superpowers have interests involved in pursuing arms control. The year 1980 marked the beginning of a post-detente relationship. From the Soviet perspective in 1980 the US policy has been as pursuit of a policy of peace through strength, containment of Soviet expansion, restoration of military power and readiness to negotiate from position of strength and thus attempt to reassert American dominance in the world. On the other hand, throughout the first four years of Reagan administration, the Soviet Union continued to advocate detente and arms limitation while attacking the US for abandoning the path of detente, arms control and negotiation. Soviet and American conceptions of detente have differed and the Soviet leadership has shown persistent support for detente rather confrontation. Detente, was, in practice dropped in January 1980.

Throughout 1981 and 1982 the Soviet leaders continued to advocate dialogue with American administration. They expected tough negotiations, but negotiations nonetheless. The change in Soviet leadership after Brezhnev did not entail any major change in policy. The main development over the years as seen in Moscow was a steady American military build up including the actual deployment of missiles in Europe. The most jarring development

in the US-Soviet relations since Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was that of the shooting Korean civil airliner KAL 007 which resulted in widespread outrage throughout the world, especially in the United States. It undercut the tentative steps toward an improvement in relations.

General Haig, widely known as the "vicar" of foreign policy³ during the first year and a half of the Reagan administration advocated a policy of containment of the Soviet Union to accept "restraint and reciprocity"⁴ in its international behaviour. Echoing Kissinger's aim of a decade earlier, Haig saw "the tasks ahead for this vital decade before US" during the 1980s, as "the management of global Soviet power."⁵ George P. Shultz who replaced Haig in June 1982 focussed on negotiating limited agreements aimed at a modus vivendi in American-Soviet relations. He placed greater emphasis on arms control and his theme was "realism, strength and dialogue"⁶ (or negotiation). The Reagan administration hav-

3. In addition to his speeches and other statements as secretary of state 1981-82, see his memoir, Alexander M. Haig Jr, *Caveat: Realism, Reagan Foreign Policy* (Macmillan 1984). Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 1011
4. Haig cited this theme of "restraint and reciprocity" in many speeches in which he called it "the central theme of our foreign policy", see General Haig, "NATO and the Restoration of American Leadership", Commencement address at Syracuse University, 09 May 1981, Deptt of State Bulletin Vol 81, P-11. Occasionally he made what he really meant explicit: The United States wanted "greater, Soviet restraint and greater Soviet reciprocity". Secretary Haig, "A strategic approach to American Foreign Policy." Address to the American Bar Association, 11 Aug' 81 *State Bulletin*, Vol. 81 Sep' 1981, p-11.
5. Haig's address to Republic on National convention in July 1980 cited in 'Sample of Haig's views' *New York Times*, 18 December 1980.
6. This theme was spelled out in a number of speeches from mid-1983 through 1984, The key one was made in Congressional testimony in mid-1983. See Secretary Shultz, "US-Soviet Relations in the context of US Foreign Policy," Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 15, *State Bulletin*, Washington D. C.: Vol.83 (July 1983) pp. 65-72.

ing not codified any policy guidance on relation with the Soviet Union until December 1982. (at that time the President approved National Security Decision Directive (NSDD-75) gradually moved from intransigence and confrontational rhetoric in 1981-83 to increasing efforts to develop a diplomatic dialogue in 1983-84. The major military programme and its economic recovery during the first term of President Reagan had placed the United States in a strong economic position internationally. And by the time he addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 1984, he could say that "American has repaired its strength..... we are ready for constructive negotiation with the Soviet Union"⁷. When the Reagan administration was returned to office for another four years by the end of 1984, it seemed to have chosen "containment" and "peace through strength" and showed an interest in dialogue and negotiation on arms reductions rather than confrontation. On the other hand with persistence of Soviet economic problem and years of quasi-confrontation, there was also a question of the readiness of the Soviet leaders to negotiate with United States.

Critics of the SALT I Interim Agreement and SALT II Treaty were correct in evaluating that they did not do enough to curb improvements to achieve reductions in military forces. The interest of Reagan Administration during the initial years in strategic arms limitation remained very uncertain, for the belief that only as American military power was restored the Soviets would have an initiative to negotiate seriously. However, Soviet leaders decided to break off the INF talks at the end of 1983, and also suspended the START negotiations. The Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) proposal was announced by the Reagan Administration on 09 May, 1982 which aimed at the drastic reduction of nuclear-warheads rather freezing the existing deployments which was viewed by Moscow as a simple strategem for ensuring American superiority. An important new element entered the picture when Presi-

7. Presidential Documents, Vol. 20 (October 1, 1984) p. 1356.

dedt Reagan in his dramatic speech on 23 March 1983 embraced the concept of strategic ballistic missiles defenses introducing totally a new dimension of the arms race. The SDI complemented suspiciously well what the Russian saw as a concerted long-term American plan to develop a first strike capability. SDI was seen as an ominous alternative to arms control. The Soviets had broken off in December 1983 from the nuclear arms reduction talks. Under these condition, the basis for a productive US-Soviet dialogue did not exist and several changes had to occur before such dialogue could take place and the trends of late 1970s had to be renewed. In the fall of 1984, partly in response to a Soviet initiative to open talks to ban space weaponry, the US administration raised the idea of "umbrella" talks to cover a flexible combination of arms limitation on various strategic offensive and defensive arms. President Reagan met in 1984 with the Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko in 1984 and in 1985 with his successor Edeard Shevardnadze. Last but not the least, the end of a transitional period of leadership in Soviet Union and the accession of a new and a vigorous leader laid the abasis for a productive dialogue of the Soviets with US that culminated in the Summit. The Soviet resumed in March 1985 the nuclear arms reduction talks. As the year drew to a close agreement was reached for a meeting in early January 1985 between secretary of State Shultz and Foreign Minister Gromyko to discuss ways to proceed under the umbrella approach. Consequently agreement was reached resusne negotiations at the highest political level and thus leading to the Superpowers Summit.

Europe between the Superpowers

In US-USSR relations Europe occupied the pivotal place for obvious reasons. This is mainly because of West Europe's geographical closeness to the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. Historically, it is Europe, not the US, which has been the theatre of armed conflicts. Therefore Europe has the most vital stakes in a stable detente between the US and the USSR. Naturally, in East-

West dialogue, Europe always come to the force though the Geneva arms control negotiations on intermediate-range and strategic nuclear weapons (INF and START) as well as on defence and space are bilateral matter of the US and the USSR but the US has ensured that through consultations on these subjects are held with the Allies of Europe. The Superpowers relations with their European allies have largely conditioned their policy shift with each other during different periods of the post-world war II era. Whether the summit was a testimonial to alliance solidarity and cohesion or not but there is no doubt that development of new relationships as occurred both in the US and its NATO allies and the USSR and the WARSAW pact countries were crucial elements in this process.

It is necessary to mention here that the European allies of the USA had not been happy with the White House for taking some steps toward detente and arms limitation with the Soviet Union in the early 1970s. That discontent intensified over a unilateral US pursuit of a course of quasi-confrontation in the early 1980s. The first efforts

The Superpowers relations with their European allies have largely conditioned their policy shift with each other during different periods of the post-world war II era.

were felt in 1980 in the wake of Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan when the US abandoned detente but Europe did not. During 1981-82 a similar discrepancy attended the responses of the United States and Western Europe to the Polish crisis in December 1981 and thereafter. To the Europeans, SDI threatened the ABM Treaty and the whole process of East-West arms control, as well as stirred fears of American strategic decoupling and isolationism."⁸ Furthermore, it became the growing American sentiment that the Europeans were not doing their share to carry the common defence

8. Raymond L. Gurthott, *Europe between the Superpowers* (Washington D.C. : The Brookings Institution, 1985), p. 1029.

burden and were to take a soft attitude toward detente and arms control. "Nevertheless if the United States was to remain on a confrontational-containment track, while Western Europe pursued a detente track in relations with the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe, the long-term impact on the alliance could be very great".⁹ The US agreement to open arms limitation talks on intermediate range nuclear forces (INF), announced to the allies at the May 1981 Ministerial meeting, prevented what otherwise could have become a serious split over the deployment of INF missiles and consequently, over mutual confidence between the United States and its allies. Thus, despite increasing dissatisfaction at the failure of the INF talks over their two-year life (November 1981-1983), by breaking off the talks the Soviet Union took the lion's share of the blame in the eyes of the Western public. The INF talks did not lead to an agreement.

In the INF negotiations the Reagan administration proposed a "Zero Option" for intermediate-range missiles on 18 November 1981. It killed the prospect for serious negotiation and agreement. "While it would have meant that NATO would not proceed with the newly planned deployment of 572 US missiles in Europe, it would have involved the Soviets not only eliminating all their deployments of SS-20 missiles, but rolling back twenty years of strategic history and dismantling the nearly 600 Soviet intermediate-range missiles deployed since the 1950s".¹⁰

It would also have limited only land-based missiles, excepting all sea-based missiles and aircrafts. Thus, the United States would have retained the option of an unlimited increase in those systems capable of striking the Soviet Union. Further, by restricting the proposed constraints to US and Soviet systems all British and French nuclear strike systems were excluded. On all counts the proposal was loaded to Western advantage and Soviet disadvantage,

9. *Ibid.*, p. 1029.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 1023-24.

and it was not a basis for negotiation for reaching at an agreement. But the Soviet aim in INF was to head off any deployment of US intermediate-range missiles in Europe. When the NATO deployment began in November 1983, the Soviet leaders decided to beef off the INF at the end of 1983, the US suspended the START negotiation. The important element of the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) as proposed by President Reagan in March 1983 entered the picture—one that would cast a long shadow over all subsequent strategic arms negotiations and possible limitations. Though at the close of the year 1984 there was agreement between the US and USSR, in the light of the idea of the umbrella talks (to cover a flexible combination of arms limitations on various strategic offensive and defensive arms), but the future of strategic arms limitation and reduction and arms control in general, remained clouded. Ultimately, the prospects for START and INF, the expired SALT-I Interim Agreement, unratified but observed SALT-II Treaty and the ABM Treaty—all depended on the political relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States continued to press for limits on economic relations by its Western European allies with the countries of the East, and the Soviet Union imposed limits on the political relations of its East European allies with the West. The START talks on strategic arms reduction which began in mid-1982 drew relatively less attention especially in Europe where the INF were in the forefront. The main development, however, in the field of strategic arms field was not arms control, but a new American programme for strategic defence—the SDI or more known as 'star wars' programme. The Soviet walkout from START as well as INF talks at the end of 1983 was not carried over to MBFR (the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions) negotiation which continued in leading neither to breakdown nor to agreement. The CDE (usually shortened from Conference on Confidence — and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe —(CCSBMDE) opened in Stockholm in January 1984. Its purpose

was to build on and extend beyond the modest confidence building measures in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. Detente in Europe also continued to attenuate to some degree the dependence of the Eastern European countries on the Soviet Union. The Soviet military predominance with the politico-military obligations of the WARSAW Pact countries and their continued economic dependence ensured the hegemonic role of the Soviet Union in the socialist community. Nevertheless, by 1984, five years of uneasy co-existence between European detente and American-Soviet confrontation had shown European both in the East and the West that to an important extent East-West relations were not divisible while European detente survived, it was seriously constrained by the continuing tension between the Superpowers.

Triangular Diplomacy

The relationship between the US-China, and the Soviet Union-China had an important impact in the development of relations between the two Superpowers particularly in the post-detente period of 1970s. The processes of relationship among the United States, the Soviet Union and China entered a new phase in 1980 by a sharp contradiction in the approach of the new Reagan administration. The US administration advocated a policy of continued effort to build American-Chinese relations on the basis of a strategic geopolitical alignment directed against the Soviet Union. The major hitch in such effort was the two China dilemma. President Reagan and a number of his colleagues had strong sympathy for Taiwan and did not like to have close ties with the Peoples Republic of China at Taiwan's expense.

The former Secretary of State Haig had struggled to advance US relations with China in pursuit of alignment against the Soviet Union. He attributed great significance to the role of China in the world alignment of political forces in particular as a major factor in containing Soviet expansion. Whether Haig's visit to Beijing was

a failure or not, he had not been successful in establishing American policy toward China. Haig's successor Shultz visited Beijing in February 1983 and American policy and diplomatic communication with China developed on a more stable basis in 1985 and 1984. The visit by President Reagan to China was of particular importance and US-China relations in 1983-84 were back on a track of normal development. China also continued its move toward greater independence and assertion of its position in areas that diverged or contradicted US positions. From the Chinese re-evaluation of the triangular relationship, a changed Sino-Soviet relationship stemmed out. Besides, China with the revival of the "three world" theory identified itself with the Third World as distinct from, and to an important extent in opposition to, both the western and Soviet worlds. To enhance its position in triangular diplomacy, China decided to resume direct talks with Soviet Union in 1982. The Soviets tried to keep relations with both China and the United States from deteriorating, in part to prevent a return to closer Sino-American ties. From the standpoint of Soviet American relations, the China factor continued to trouble the Soviet leaders but much less so in 1981-84 than it had in 1978-80. The general outcome of the shift in triangular diplomacy from 1970s to the 1980s was thus the loss of American position as the balancing element. "Nixon and Kissinger had improved US relations with both of the powers and gained leverage with both. Carter and Brzezinski lost much of this by aligning with China. Reagan exacerbated relations with both and lost leverage with both, in particular in the first two years. By 1983-84 the United States was seeking to ameliorate relations with China and by the end of the period, to some extent with the Soviet Union as well. Relations with the Soviet Union itself remained uncertain at the beginning of 1985.¹¹ In view of the new developments in the triangular diplomacy as indicated about and the prevalent uncertainties in the international arena, it is widely believed that renewed consideration of arms control suggested

11. *Ibid.*, P. 1050.

willingness on both sides for dialogue and negotiation. In dialectical terms, it may be said that dissatisfaction with the thesis of detente in the 1970s led to its antithesis in confrontation in the early 1980s a new synthesis may probably follow in the last half of the 1980s which is indicative of the last November Geneva Summit.

Competition in the Third World

It is believed to be almost a truism that both the East and the West are now interested to maintain a status-quo with no prospect of an armed flare-up in European theatre. This makes the Third World an important concern with mean dimension in the global strategy of the two Superpowers. "In the age of intercontinental missiles, one would have expected nuclear weapons to be restricted to their home territories. But unfortunately the unfolding complexities of nuclear weapons technology, the doctrines that governs their use and the geopolitics of the USA and USSR have led to the global spread of nuclear weapons".¹² The superpowers are much engaged today in their competition to establish their foot-hold or sphere of influence in the Third World. During President Reagan's initial years in the White House the subject of Soviet involvement and expansion of influence in the Third World were at the centre of American Soviet relations. Soviet involvements and interventions in the Third World in the later 1970s, from Angola to Afghanistan, had been widely regarded in the United States uncongenial to the spirit of detente. The Reagan administration saw these Soviet actions as a challenge to the security of a free world and especially to American influence and security. The Secretary of State Haig referred to Cuba, Libya, the PLO, Vietnam and Nicaragua as Soviet proxies, "surrogates" or "clients"

12. C. Raja Mohan, "Global Nuclearisation", in *Nuclear Proliferation and International Security*, edited by K. Subrahmanyam. (New Delhi : IDSA), 1985, p. 128/129.

From the Soviet perspective, in the first half of the 1980s, the United States had turned to a broad policy of more active use of counter-revolutionary insurgent forces in its attempt to roll back history. Thus, beginning in 1981 the Reagan administration stepped up US assistance to insurgent in Afghanistan, stimulated a new insurgency in Nicaragua, and directly supported other reactionary powers aiding the insurgencies in Kampuchea, Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia. In short, virtually all the gains by the revolutionary forces in the latter half of the 1970s were being subjected to a vigorous counterattack in the first half of 1980s. Moreover, the Soviet Union itself was overextended and not in favour to aid these regimes. Soviet preoccupation with Poland, the issue of INF

The Superpowers are much engaged today in their competition to establish their foot-hold or sphere of influence in the Third World.

missile deployment in Europe, internal economic problems and a double transition in the Soviet leadership itself further reduced any inclination to wider involvement in the geopolitical competition in the Third World. As such the Soviet leaders were inclined to deal with the United States on the geopolitical issues of "reciprocity and restraint" in the competition in the Third World. Dialogue on the range of political and geopolitical interests of the two powers continued intermittently through the first half of the 1980s, but on an erratic basis. The year 1984 marked the start of a new approach on the US side and 1985 found the two countries resuming a path of mixed competition and cooperation. The two Superpowers have moved forward to explore opportunities for progress. No less important was to manage carefully the enduring competition between their two countries in the political and ideological arenas that culminated in the summit.

Agreements of the Geneva Summit

During the last Geneva Summit meeting a great deal of basic issues in US-Soviet relations and current international situation were discussed. While serious differences remained on a number of critical issues, some greater understanding of each other's view was achieved by the two leaders resulting in agreement in some fields of international situation as a whole. The summit was marked by cordial and lengthy private meeting between President Reagan and Secretary General Gorbachev. A joint statement was signed on 21 November '85 at the International Congress Centre in Geneva by the US Secretary of State George Shultz and his counterpart Mr. Edward Shevardnadze which contains the broad outlines of the areas of agreed cooperation. We will focus on a careful scrutiny of the contents of the aforementioned joint statement in brief and for convenience these will be grouped in four broad headings.

Security Issues

1. The two contracting parties being conscious of their special responsibilities for maintaining peace and security of the world recognized that any conflict between the USA and the USSR could have a catastrophic consequence and thus emphasized the importance of preventing any war between them whether nuclear or conventional. They agreed that "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought"¹³ Furthermore both agreed "not to seek to achieve military superiority". But Reagan-Gorbachev agreement did not spell out any specifics for prevention of arms race. The use of nuclear weapons as the international instrument of power and their spatial proliferation around the world have enhanced the prospects of interventionism by nuclear weapon powers in the countries of the Third World and their increased sense of insecurity.

13. Joint Statement, 21 Nov '85. Text from the Weekly Compilation Presidential Documents of Nov 25, 1985. *Dept of State Bulletin*, January, p. 8.

2. They agreed that the Geneva arms negotiations should be accelerated "to prevent an arms race in space and to terminate it on Earth".¹⁴ On the strategic nuclear arsenals, both sides had called for 50 percent reduction but the leaders could not agree on a framework for negotiation toward that end.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Soviet Union's major strength is in land based missiles, while the United States relies more on submarine based missiles and bombers. Besides definitional problems of the strategic weapons, differences arose from the methods of application of the cuts.

It is to be noted here that the US aimed at a "limit of 6,000 nuclear charges (i.e. warheads) top submarine and land-based missiles and air launched cruise missiles" and "to ban mobile missiles and new heavy land-based missile". On the other hand the USSR originally proposed "the 6,000 cap but wants to include weapons in which the US has an edge : gravity bombs and short-range attack missiles launched from planes. It wants to ban air-launched cruise missiles".¹⁵ Furthermore the American position on the intermediate range nuclear weapons demanded a "freeze on weapons in Europe at the end of this year 1985 limiting each side to about 140 launchers. British and French forces are not to be counted" whereas Russia wanted a ban on US ballistic missiles. "The US could keep about 120 cruise missiles. The Soviets could cut their forces to equal US deployments places that of Britain and France".¹⁶ In working out a balance of Euromissiles (American Pershing and cruise and Soviet SS-20 missiles), the Soviet side wanted to include the British and the French nuclear forces in the list which the American side declined to agree and demanded a balance only between American and Soviet medium range nuclear forces in Europe. "The Soviets are particularly concerned about

14. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

15. *Time* ; 18 Nov' 1985. No. 46. p. 11.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

the American Pershing II which they consider a weapon of first strike. They have been willing to accept the presence of cruise missiles but not the Pershing II. A solution to the Euromissiles problem could be possible if the Soviets agree to the deployment of a few Pershing II and the Americans are ready to compensate the Soviets for the French and British nuclear weapons".¹⁷ Besides the key issues of nuclear arms reduction, the summit statement refers to agreement on various issues of arms control and confidence building.

3. The two sides have agreed to examine the new concept of the nuclear Risk Reduction centres "which found its first expression in the summit. The ideas for US-Soviet arms management and the prevention of a nuclear war initiated accidentally or inadvertently which originated since the Cuban crisis in 1962 led to the establishment of "the Hotline" and this "Hotline" has been modernized to transmit text at a more speedy rate. But the risk of an accidental war has increased because of rapid development of nuclear technology and mounting proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is hoped that such centres would significantly contribute in the management of the Soviet-US crisis, check its escalation to a nuclear level and avoid nuclear war by miscalculation or by action of a third party.

4. General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan reiterated their firm commitment to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the centre piece of which is nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Since the inception of NPT in 1970, the big two have always affirmed their support but failed to achieve their commitment under NPT for nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately during the last 15 years the nuclear arsenals of five states have multiplied many times over, and the knowledge of nuclear science and technology has spread too far. The whole universe is being increasingly nuclearized by spatial, vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

17. C. Raja Mohan, "Arms Control: A Letdown at Geneva", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. IX. No. 10. (Jan., 1986) p. 991.

The purpose of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is being defeated today. Yet in an increased degree, the USA and USSR continue to harp on the NPT.

5. In addition to all the above mentioned areas of agreements the joint statement issued by the two leaders mentioned that they are in favour of general and complete prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of the existing stockpiles.

They also agreed to an effective international convention on chemical weapon ban and initiate dialogue on preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons. Critics are of the opinion that the philosophy of non-proliferation is now proposed to be extended to chemical weapons. However if the Geneva summit results in the ultimate banning of chemical weapons in its various forms it would surely be a very welcome development for the humanity and a booster to the UN Disarmament Committee which is working this field since 1980. Nevertheless "it would be a tragedy for arms control of a non-proliferation regime if chemical weapons are given a higher priority than a universal ban on these awful weapons".¹⁸

6. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment in favour of nuclear non-proliferation with intention to pursue consultation in the matter and promote strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This was one of the central areas on which the summiters were expected to reach an agreement, but nothing substantive has come out.

Though the Soviet-American moves on confidence building have been welcome, such a step, in fact, addresses the symptoms rather than the disease of the nuclear arms race. Unless the basic cause of the nuclear arms control are addressed the results of the arms control negotiation would not be satisfactory as manifest from the sorry episode of the Soviet-US agreements which has tended to accelerate the arms race instead of eliminating the danger of the

18. *Ibid.*, p. 994.

nuclear holocaust. Unfortunately with no concrete agreement signed on arms control the world would hardly be a safer place.

7. Last but not the least, on arms control the two sides emphasized the importance of the Vienna talks on reducing troops level (MBFR-mutual and balanced force reductions) in Europe. They also pledged to seek early and successful completion of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and disarmament in Europe and reaffirmed the need for a document on the non-use of force. Mention must be made here that the two leaders, "for the benefit of all mankind" emphasized the potential importance of work on the use of thermonuclear fusion for peaceful purposes.

Most interestingly, the joint statement made no reference to the American Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) or the Star Wars programme which is the central issue of the arms control negotiation between the US and USSR. It is pertinent to point out here that since President Reagan's speech of 23 March 1983, it has become a significant turning point in the evolution of nuclear strategy. It called on the American scientists to develop defensive measures against nuclear weapons with a view to making them "important and obsolete" and thus make the generation free from the fear of nuclear annihilation. "The underlying basic idea is that if defence systems can gain an edge over the offensive systems on both sides of the ideological divide then there will be no incentive to use nuclear weapons in an offensive manner and they will be rendered important and obsolete"¹⁹ Now the United States advocates the strategy of mutual assured survival through development of defence dominant system and strategic wave. The USSR favours the maintenance of deterreant stability through mutual assured destruction. However, whether for substantive or political motives the most important ingredient in US-Soviet relations has

19. K. Subramanyam. *A Chaotic Doctrine ; Nuclear Proliferation and International security*, New Delhi: 1985, p. 47.

become now the topic of negotiation over the strategic defence. During the Geneva summit President Reagan did not yield on SDI insisting that research and testing would be within the bounds of ABM treaty and SDI could be shared with the Soviet Union. And Gorbachev could not achieve his main aim in Geneva to force an end of the programme of Reagan administration for a space based missile defence.

As the US Star wars programme goes ahead, it is likely that the Soviet will build their own Star wars weapons along with an increase in their offensive weapons. Soviet reaction on the US strategic Defence Initiating the "(SDI) research programme has been strongly negative and the USSR has accused the US for expanding the armed race into a new area by initiating the "militarization of space". Though substantial conceptual differences remained on SDI, the summit discussions had value because each leader had a chance to express his views face to face.

Bilateral Issues

1. The most important agreement of the Geneva summit was the recognition by the two Superpowers of the need to improve the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and the international situation which currently suffers from tension and danger of nuclear holocaust. In this connection, the two sides have confirmed the significance of continuing dialogue between them and agreed to "meet again in the nearest future". This reflects their strong desire to seek common ground on existing problems. The leaders emphasized greater understanding among their people and agreed to encourage "greater travel and people-to-people contact." The two leaders agreed on the utility of broadening exchange and contacts including 'some of their new forms' in a number of scientific, educational, medical and sports fields. They also agreed to resume cooperation in combating cancer diseases.

2. It was agreed that the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail

Gorbachev will visit the United States in 1986 and the President of United States Ronald Reagan will visit the Soviet Union in 1987. Such meetings are considered in all likelihood to reduce tensions between the two Superpowers.

2. The two countries concluded agreement to open consulates in New York and at Kiev, capital of Ukraine simultaneously. It is necessary to mention in this context that a day after the summit the two sides agreed to resume commercial air links which the United States revoked in retaliation to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and imposition of martial law in Poland. In addition the United States and the Soviet Union in cooperation with the Government of Japan agreed to a set of measures for improving the safety of civil airliners flying in the North Pacific routes to avoid repetition of the KAL-007 disaster of 1983 which 269 people were killed." All of these steps are part of long term effect to build a more stable relationship with Soviet Union".²⁰

Regional Conflict

One of the major issues on which there was scant progress is the regional conflict. What took place between Reagan and Gorbachev in their long private talks is not known because of the news blackout strategy to which both agreed. Both sides wanted that local clashes or regional conflict should not turn into Superpower conflict or boil into East-West incidents. But there was no mention in the joint statement of any of the regional conflict viz, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Angola, South Africa, Nicaragua, Grenada, Ethiopia and the like. Furthermore, the two sides failed to agree on a common stand against terrorism after Gorbachev accused the United States terrorism for backing the 'rebels' in Afghanistan and Nicaragua.

20. President Reagan's address before a Joint Session of Congress, 21 Nov. 1985 Text from Weekly compilation of Presidential Documents of 25 Nov 1985. *Department of State Bulletin*, p. 16.

Human Rights

As with virtually every issue dividing the two Superpowers, human rights have been defined in different perspectives by the Soviets and the Americans. While the US emphasises the rights of the individual such as freedom of speech and religion, the Soviet stresses the notion that the individual rights are contingent upon rights of the collective. They regard full employment, housing and comprehensive health care as the fulfilment of basic human rights. The United States had been critical of the Soviet human rights abuse and charged her of the violation of the Helsinki agreement in letter and spirit. The conditions of Soviet minorities, particularly the Jews were also an irritant in East-West relations. Except agreeing on the importance of resolving humanitarian case in a spirit of cooperation there was no concrete statement on the subject. Gorbachev at his post-summit press conference observed that "humanitarian issues" would be easier for the two Superpowers if they had agreed on arms control.

In sum, the common understanding jointly endorsed at the highest level in Geneva that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" and the pledge that both the Superpowers have to build their relationship from this indispensable truth is the most important

While nuclear testing will go on and the arsenal will continue to grow, many more highlevel contacts will be needed to achieve a break through in significant arms reduction.

achievement. Furthermore, the pledge the two sides made to facilitate in all ways the enhancement of the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime is also of no little import in the present day disquietening international situation for maintaining world stability and diminishing the risk of war. While nuclear testing will go on and the arsenal will continue to grow, many more high-level contacts will be needed to achieve a break through in significant

arms reduction. As to the outcome of the Geneva summit while addressing the US Congress immediately after his return from the summit, President Reagan said, "I can't claim we had a meeting of the minds on such fundamentals as ideology and national purpose. This is the key to peace. I gained a better perspective. I feel he did too with all that divide us. We cannot afford to let confusion complicate things further".²¹ This better understanding of each other's views is evidently reflected also from the concluding remarks of General Secretary Gorbachev as he said, "I would like to announce that the Soviet Union, for its part, will do all it can in this cooperation with the United States of America in order to achieve practical results to cut down the arms race, to cut down the arsenals which we have tried up and produce the conditions which will be necessary for peace on Earth and in space".²²

An Appraisal of the Summit

Viewed in the context of the present day international scenario, the Geneva Summit was undoubtedly a significant event and a stabilizing factor by itself. Since the success of the summit should not be judged by the newspaper headlines, it would be also naive to think that the summit could solve all the problems between the Superpowers. Whether it was a meeting to 'get acquainted' and hopefully set an agenda for future discussion" or not, of the vital questions which crop up in the minds of many thousand people around the world are what does the Geneva Summit do for the world outside the Soviet Union and the United States? Would the Geneva Summit mean anything a few years from now? Has it earned a page in history? A search for the answers to these questions would be made in this section.

All countries want peace including the countries of the Third World. They aspire for peace not only to be preserved but real

21. *The Statesman*, 23 Nov. 1985, Calcutta, p. 1.

22. Press Release 265, Concluding Remarks, Nov; 21, 1985, State of State Bulletin, January 1986 General Secretary Gorbachev, p. 11.

progress to be made in the struggle to halt the arms race to see the world free from nuclear weapons which are fraught with catastrophe for world civilization. "Moving toward a nuclear free-world mankind ought to surmount obstacles that may arise on that path".²³ This thinking is growing stronger day by day and this is a factor of tremendous importance. The combined efforts of the Superpowers, initiatives of the different governments and the peoples of the world can only create conditions for our planet to enter the 21st century without nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass annihilation — a task today vitally important than any time before. The benefits of such a step for all are evident and need no explanation.

That is why Geneva Summit, its objectives and outcome are of utmost interest to all nations, big and small. The historic Dhaka Declaration as adopted during the SAARC Summit (7-8 December 85) also expressed hope that the recent summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev will contribute to the cause of interational peace and security. It is nedless to stress that this categorical expression of the security concerns of mankind reflects the realities of the present international scenario as perceived not only by the countries of this particular region but also by other members of the Third World "Who are not at the summit, the uninvited but involved in the summit who represent 88% of the human race whose fate is involved in the Reagan-Gorbachev talks on the avoidance of nuclear war. They want to live and they need hope. They need jobs and they need education. They are the future if they get a chance".²⁴ It is worthwhile to quote the former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt from his

23. Mikhail Gorbachev's message to the Mayors of Nagashaki and Hiroshima, press Release Information Department of the USSR Embassy in the people's Republic of Bangladesh, P.R. No. 22/65, 16 February 1986 p. 2.

24. Quoted from James Reston, involved in Geneva but not invited to summit, *International Herald Tribune*, 20 Nov. 85, p. 8.

speech while in a tour in Washington in November 1985 who spoke for those whose future was too important to be left to the decisions of the leaders of the two nuclear giants of the present day world: "East and West can no longer be safe from one another but only together with each other. Putting mutually assured security in place of mutually assured destruction is the right aim."²⁵ The colossal resources released as a result of limitation of the world arms race could easily be used for the needs of developing world including the South Asian region where, according to the UN data, more than 50% of the population live in abject poverty (with annual per capita income less than 75 US dollar). It is irony of fate of the teeming millions that about 1,000,000 million US dollars are spent for military purposes. A quarter of this amount would be enough to supply for 20 years the most needy countries with everything necessary to combat hunger, disease, and illiteracy. "While hunger rules peace cannot prevail, who wants to ban war must also ban poverty. Morally it makes no difference whether a human being is killed in war or is condemned to starve to death because of the indifference of others"²⁶ In the context of the great social challenge of the present day world the most powerful and the wealthy nations cannot play a marginal role and will have to assume responsibility that their economic power confers on them. The great prospect might open up if only part of the unproductive expenditure were turned to productive expenditure on development of the Third World so long neglected and exploited by the Great Powers. North-South relations should be viewed as a historic dimension for active pursuit of peace. "The motives of power, influence and commerce and absurdly prestige-that lie behind the arms trade must be harnessed to development"²⁷ This would be a great move for the peace and for

25. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

26. *North-South: A Programme for Survival*. The report of the Independent Commission on International Development issues under the Chairmanship of Willy Brandt. 1980 Pan Books Ltd, London, 1980. The MIT Press, Cambridge. p. 16.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

the solution of the development problems of the Third World countries. Viewed in this context the November 1985 Geneva Summit has great significance for the Third World countries and its people who are still living in sub-standard conditions on different continents of the world.

However, it would be naive to comment with certainty as to what the Geneva Summit 1985 would mean after few years from now. It was a "fresh start", and an important step forward in a continuing process of long travel which the US and the Soviet Union are to go along. Besides, a new realism spawned the summit" which was a good start for "step by step progress". For the quest of peace and preservation of freedom can't be attained in a package deal on the edge of an unknown future.

"It was the 11th summit of the post-war and still the differences endure the gulf that separates so far East and West is wide and deep. Well, today, three decades later, that is still true".²⁸ The

A summit that seemed fraught with peril for both sides turned out to have two winners and no losers. But, despite Geneva, the two Superpowers remain poles apart in attitudes, ideology and national interest and no summit can erase their differences.

dreadful fear to the nuclear weapons and their capacity of complete annihilation of human civilization continue to exist in both camps but certainly the chances of mutual destruction have not become worse. It will not be proper to say that "the meeting was a failure in terms of sustenance and that "it missed an opportunity the best in memory to move toward real reductions in bloated nuclear armouries

28. Quoted from President Reagan's address before a Joint Session of Congress, 21 Nov, 1985, Text from weekly compilation of President Documents of Nov, 25, 1985. Department of State Bulletin January 1986, p. 15-16.

of the Superpowers"²⁹ for the history of the summit is littered with misreadings of what was said or miscalculation of what was meant compounded by unexpected elements. Nevertheless, the summit's place in history is uncertain. It is easier to identify what it did not achieve than what it did. The two sides made a "fresh start", yet a lot of hard work remains to be done. Geneva will not go down in history as the meeting of the great themes and great solutions but as a summit of two leaders who stamped it with their personalities. Of the 15 hours spent in various meetings between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev and the members of their official delegation approximately 5 hours were talks between them, just one-to-one. A basis has been created on which negotiations could take place on those problems in future. But most important were the invisible and undocumented results. The world's two most powerful men understand each other better. "Mr. Gorbachev certifies that" the President whom Moscow so often valifies as a mortal enemy is actually a rational competitor interested in the rules of restraint".³⁰ And Reagan testifies that "no amount of evil in the Soviet system should discourage Americans from pursuing their interest's in negotiations and compromise".

In a statement from the White House, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Mark Palmer on 12 April 1986 said, "Reagan saw his first meeting with Gorbachev in Geneva last November as an opportunity to establish a personal relationship. The second summit due this year, should concentrate on narrowing dawn differences between the Superpowers, while any treaties and agreements would be signed at a third".³¹ It is a summit for breaking the ice as they did not meet in Geneva for solving world's problem over night. Many more high-level contacts will be needed to attain any tangible outcome.

29. From *Washington Post*, Printed in International Herald Tribune, pp. 23-24 Nov, 1985, p. 8.

30. Anthony Lewis, A Summit Lesson about Limits, *International Herald Tribune*, 26 Nov, 85, p. 6.

31. *Bangladesh Observer*, No Soviet-US Accord until Third Summit 13 April 1986, Dhaka, p. 4.

A mere reduction in arms race and expenditure will not necessary lead to greater stability or security. Only the bold development of economic, cultural and intellectual contacts can lessen mistrust and build confidence needed between the Superpowers for disarmament. And importantly enough a common interest in survival warrants this process to be started. In that account the Geneva Summit has certainly earned a page in history. As part of steps of a long term effort to build a more stable relationship between the two Superpowers their two leaders have come a long way.

The world entered an era which is very different from the situation during the period when East-West confrontation was the dominant fact of international life. There are today many countries that feel threatened by the nuclear weapons of either the United States or the Soviet-Union. In their efforts to advance of nonproliferation, the Superpowers can accomplish more by downplaying the usefulness of nuclear weapons than by extending nuclear protection to additional countries".³² The need for disarmament has never been more imperative in history than it is today. In the current spree of increased military spending the world over, there is an imperative need for drastic cut in the expenditure of armament race, and the lead in this tremendous task must come from the Superpowers who are convinced of their special responsibility for maintaining peace and security of the world. It is heartening to note that "after six years of suspicion and hostility and rhetoric form both sides that evoked the coldest days of the cold war, Reagan and Gorbachev finally broke the ice".³³ A summit that seemed fraught with peril for both sides turned out to have two winners and no losers. But despite Geneva, the two Super-powers remain poles apart in attitudes, ideology and national interest and no summit can erase their differences. The answer to issues of war and peace won't be easy to find. Cooperation with the spirit of understanding of each other's viewpoints is the only solution for peaceful co-existence and survival of mankind.

32. Pyokichi Imai and Henry S. Rowen; *In Search of Workable Solutions ; Nuclear Energy And Nuclear Proliferation.*: (Colorado Westview Press, Inc. United States of America, 1980) page-46, Boulder.

33. *Newsweek*, 02 Dec' 1985 p. 16.