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## **Nuclear Proliferation International History Project**

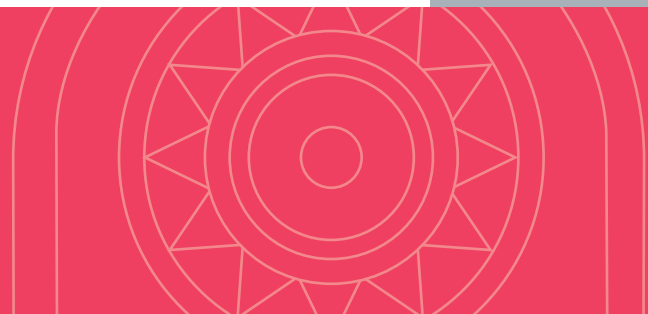
### **The Elephant in the Room:**

The Soviet Union and India's Nuclear Program, 1967-1989

By Balazs Szalontai

NPIHP Working Paper #1

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**Christian F. Ostermann, Leopoldo Nuti and Evan Pikulski, Series Editors**

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# **THE NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT**

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Christian F. Ostermann, Leopoldo Nuti, and Evan Pikulski  
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## The paper's key findings include:

- “Strategic objectives” including regional power balancing, security, and other foreign policy concerns at times eclipsed non-proliferation in determining Soviet policy toward India’s nuclear program.
  - The Soviets, however, initially sought to prevent India from gaining nuclear weapons, and most nuclear aid from the U.S.S.R. came with Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)-based restrictions
- Moscow’s support for non-proliferation as a general foreign policy goal peaked in the 1960’s when it was worried that West Germany might develop its own atomic bomb. Indeed, the concern that Indian opposition to the NPT could encourage similar behavior in Bonn was a stimulus for the initial Indo-Soviet tensions over Indian nuclear policy.
  - After Bonn joined the NPT in the early 1970’s, these fears and the associated tension subsided.
- At the same time, India’s main interest in the Soviet Union was the possibility that it could provide security against India’s regional rivals, Pakistan and China.
  - In 1969, India proposed an Indo-Soviet mutual-security agreement, which was signed in 1971. Yet India’s leadership did not feel that the Soviet security guarantee was strong enough to warrant a halt in India’s nuclear research
  - India also felt having a nuclear weapon was the only way to be taken seriously as a global power and to take part in international policy making.
- The Soviet reaction to the India’s peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE) at Pokhran in May, 1974 showed Moscow could be willing to turn a blind eye toward India’s nuclear program when doing so benefited the Soviet Union. After West Germany signed the NPT, assuaging Soviet fears of a West German bomb, Moscow privately opposed the test, but never publicly criticized it. In doing so, the Soviets hoped to bolster their relationship with India relative to other countries, like the U.S. and China, which had openly criticized the test.
  - By this time, Beijing had become Moscow’s greatest rival, and the opportunity to undermine China, by strengthening Indo-Soviet relations prevailed over the competing non-proliferation goals.
- Following the Pokhran test, the Soviets realized that if India became a nuclear power it could help balance the potential of as many as four nuclear powers, the United States, China, United Kingdom, and France. Further, strong Indo-Soviet relations could and greatly strengthen Soviet influence in the East.
  - With this in mind, Moscow agreed, in the late 1980’s, to the greatest nuclear deal ever between the U.S.S.R. and India. The Soviets would construct two 1,000-MW light-water reactors and provide enriched uranium fuel for the reactors’ entire operational life, and twice offered to sell to New Delhi a nuclear power plant.
  - Moscow also leased a nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine to India, though the Indians would have preferred a permanent sale.
- Soviet policy on India’s nuclear development emphasized the U.S.S.R.’s general non-proliferation goals, except when these goals were superseded by other geopolitical or regional policy concerns. Indian leaders also understood that nuclear weapons carried with them important political benefits. They believed that an Indian bomb could add to their influence in international forums.



## **The Elephant in the Room:**

### **The Soviet Union and India's Nuclear Program, 1967-1989**

If India had presented the world with a nuclear fait accompli, the eminent Indian journalist Amalendu Das Gupta mused in 1987, “the Americans and their allies would have been angry; the Russians would have been unhappy.”<sup>1</sup> His choice of words succinctly expressed the ambivalent attitude the Soviet leadership had toward India’s nuclear weapon program. In the time period between the negotiations for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1967 through the end of the Cold War in 1989, Soviet policy vacillated between disapproval (during the NPT negotiations), silence (in the aftermath of India’s May 1974 nuclear test), and gradually increasing technical support for India’s civilian nuclear program (from 1976 onward). The Soviet Union’s specific strategic objectives --including efforts to maintain and enhance its influence in South Asia, the dynamics of US-Soviet-Chinese-Indian-Pakistani relations, and Soviet concerns about the Pakistani nuclear program—were usually more decisive in shaping Soviet views on the Indian nuclear program than the general principles of non-proliferation policy. For example, when Moscow’s attention was focused on preventing West Germany from developing nuclear weapons, the Soviet leaders expressed their displeasure with India’s nuclear policies in no uncertain terms. In contrast, in the 1970s and early 1980s, when the Kremlin sought to offset Chinese or US influence in Asia, they turned a blind eye to New Delhi’s nuclear ambitions, even going so far as to express their approval of an Indian plan to launch a preventive air strike on Pakistan’s nuclear research center.

Due to the importance of the “Soviet connection” in India’s security policies, it is worth investigating why New Delhi’s chief ally adopted such a standpoint, all the more so

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<sup>1</sup> Ramesh Thakur, “India and the Soviet Union: Conjunctions and Disjunctions of Interests,” in *Asian Survey* 31, Issue 9 (September 1991), p. 837.

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because in the extensive literature on the Indian nuclear program, scholars have usually been more inclined to place this subject into the context of Sino-Indian, Indo-Pakistani and Indo-American relations than they have been to examine the role of the “Soviet factor.” The most detailed analysis of Soviet-Indian nuclear relations, “The Soviet Union and Nuclear Proliferation” by William C. Potter,<sup>2</sup> was published before the archives of the former Soviet bloc became accessible for research, and thus an examination of Hungarian archival sources might throw some new light on the motives of the Soviet leadership. Fortunately, the pre-1990 collection of Hungarian Foreign Ministry documents on India that is stored in the Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár, MOL) has been mostly declassified, which enables researchers to gain additional insight into those periods of Soviet-Indian cooperation – for example, the 1970s and early 1980s – about which Russian archival sources are still less accessible than on the Gorbachev era.

### **Soviet-Indian Disputes over the NPT**

Certain peculiar features of the Soviet-Indian partnership played a major role in that the Kremlin did not apply its non-proliferation principles to India as strictly as to its other allies. For instance, both the USSR and India sought to maintain at least a limited contact with the state which its partner regarded as its traditional opponent – Moscow with Pakistan, New Delhi with the United States –, partly to avoid diplomatic isolation and partly to obtain leverage over its ally (**Documents 1, 4, 10, 20, and 27**). However, India's bargaining position was considerably more favorable, since the political and economic benefits it could expect from its cooperation with the U.S. greatly exceeded whatever the Kremlin could gain by keeping a door open to Islamabad. Consequently, the Soviet leaders had good reason to think that the most effective strategy to outcompete America was to show more flexibility and leniency toward India than the United States – whose economic and technological offers they could not match – was willing to do. Among others, India's efforts to diversify its arms imports induced Moscow to offer its arms (including even late-model jet aircraft) at considerably lower prices and under more favorable credit conditions than the Western

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<sup>2</sup> William C. Potter, “The Soviet Union and Nuclear Proliferation,” in *Slavic Review* 44, Issue 3 (Autumn 1985), pp. 468-488.

powers.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Soviet flexibility had its limits, and on several occasions, the divergence of Soviet and Indian strategic interests created substantial, though partly veiled, tension between the two countries.

The first instance in which India's nuclear conceptions caused concerns in Moscow occurred in 1967-1968, during the long and difficult process of multilateral negotiations over the draft nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Anxious to prevent West Germany from obtaining atomic weapons, the Soviets sought to get the treaty signed as soon as possible (**Document 3**). They feared that the non-nuclear states' demands for security guarantees would incur U.S. opposition and thus delay the conclusion of the treaty. For this reason, they found it increasingly troublesome that India firmly refused to support their initiative. In the spring of 1968, Soviet UN representative N.A. Kuznetsov considered it necessary to refute the arguments of his Indian counterpart point by point, though without mentioning India by name.<sup>4</sup>

New Delhi's opposition to the NPT worried the Kremlin for various reasons. For one thing, as early as mid-1967 some Soviet experts came to the conclusion that if India decided to manufacture nuclear weapons, it would be able to do so "within 10 to 11 months," after which Indian foreign policy might take a more aggressive and possibly pro-American course (**Document 1**). To be sure, the high costs of a bomb project were expected to constitute a serious obstacle (**Document 2**), but the Soviet bloc diplomats were acutely aware of India's unwillingness "to accept the role of a second-rate power in Asia" in the shadow of nuclear-armed China.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, Moscow had good reason to fear that New Delhi's opposition would encourage similar opposition in Bonn. In fact, West German opponents of the draft treaty did pin their hopes on India and those countries which adopted a similarly critical attitude, such

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<sup>3</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 2 September 1983, XIX-J-1-j United States, Top Secret Documents, 1983, 61. doboz, 4-10, 004301/1/1983.

<sup>4</sup> Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Geneva, Memorandum, 6 March 1968, XIX-J-1-j Multilateral international treaties, Top Secret Documents [henceforth MTS], 1968, 107. doboz, 00617/10/1968; Hungarian Embassy in the USSR, Report, 22 May 1968, XIX-J-1-j Soviet Union, Top Secret Documents [henceforth STS], 1968, 80. doboz, 145-1, 001273/5/1968.

<sup>5</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 20 May 1968, MTS, 1968, 107. doboz, 00617/30/1968.

as Romania and Brazil.<sup>6</sup> This is why the Soviet leaders remained concerned about New Delhi's "shrill propaganda campaign against the treaty" even after that the USSR, the U.S., and many other states had signed the NPT in July 1968 (**Document 4**). India, like most Third World countries, was simply not interested in the "West German threat" (**Document 3**). For instance, in January 1968 Premier Indira Gandhi flatly told Alexei Kosygin that India, due to its extensive economic cooperation with the FRG, could not afford to support Moscow's standpoint on the issue of European security, or establish diplomatic relations with the GDR.<sup>7</sup> The Soviet leaders, for their part, did not consider India's fear of China's military superiority sufficient justification for New Delhi's opposition to the NPT, nor were they willing to provide guarantees to India against a possible Chinese nuclear attack (**Document 1**).<sup>8</sup>

However, these differences between Soviet and Indian strategic priorities, which led to the aforementioned debates over the NPT, did not cause a long-term estrangement in Soviet-Indian relations. The Kremlin's preoccupation with the German question implied that the possible proliferation threat posed by India itself was taken less seriously by the Soviet leaders than the effect that India's opposition to the NPT might have on West Germany's attitude. Indeed, a Soviet diplomat expressed this view quite openly: "The treaty *is directed against the FRG*, and even if we suppose, just for the sake of debate, that India or Pakistan or another neutral country might manage to obtain nuclear weapons, this would not cause any serious international tension. In contrast, the FRG's nuclear weapons would definitely evoke the danger of World War III [emphasis in the original]." (**Document 3**). Since India's opposition did not derail the NPT after all, and in November 1969, West Germany also signed the treaty, Soviet-Indian tension started to abate. In 1969, Moscow proposed to New Delhi to conclude a bilateral security pact, which was eventually signed on 7 August 1971.<sup>9</sup>

### **Alliance but Not Dependence: The Motives behind Indira Gandhi's Bomb Project**

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<sup>6</sup> Hungarian Trade Representation in Cologne, Report, 26 January 1968, MTS, 1968, 107. doboz, 00617/2/1968.

<sup>7</sup> Hungarian Embassy in the USSR, Report, 8 February 1968, STS, 1968, 80. doboz, 145-1, 001273/1968.

<sup>8</sup> On India's opposition to the NPT and its requests for Soviet and U.S. guarantees, see also Peter A. Clausen, *Nonproliferation and the National Interest. America's Response to the Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp. 104-107.

<sup>9</sup> On Soviet-Indian disputes over the NPT, see also Vojtech Mastny, "The Soviet Union's Partnership with India," in *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, Issue 3 (Summer 2010), pp. 65-67.

Those Soviet officials who expected the Indian nuclear industry to be capable of producing a bomb in the near future were soon proven right. On 7 September 1972, Indira Gandhi gave authorization to the scientists of the Bhabha Atomic Research Center to manufacture a nuclear device, and on 18 May 1974, India successfully carried out a nuclear test (officially called a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion) in Pokhran. The timing of Gandhi's decision deserves attention, for it was made less than nine months after Pakistan had suffered a disastrous defeat in the Bangladesh War and barely two months after the conclusion of the Simla Agreement that bound the two countries "to settle their differences by peaceful means." Her determination to cross the nuclear threshold can thus not be explained solely by the dynamics of Indo-Pakistani relations.<sup>10</sup>

Several scholars place Gandhi's decision into the context of Sino-Indian competition. Specifically, the post-1970 process of Sino-American rapprochement, combined as it was with the Nixon administration's anti-Indian stance during the Bangladesh War, has been commonly regarded as a crucial factor in boosting India's nuclear weapon program. As Peter A. Clausen put it, "The sea change in U.S. China policy reduced the number of Beijing's superpower adversaries by half, undermining a basic premise of Indian security policy."<sup>11</sup> The correctness of this observation seems to be further borne out by the fact that despite Japanese assurances to the contrary, Indian policy-makers feared that the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and China (29 September 1972) might enable these two Asian powers to achieve regional hegemony.<sup>12</sup>

Why then, did Indira Gandhi not regard the Soviet-Indian Friendship Treaty of August 1971 as a reliable substitute for Indian nuclear weapon development? After all, the conclusion of this treaty was also based on the two countries' shared disapproval of Sino-American rapprochement, and the outcome of the Bangladesh War indicated that the treaty did constitute an efficient deterrent to China.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, India's unwillingness in 1967-1968 to

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<sup>10</sup> George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb. The Impact on Global Proliferation* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 168- 172.

<sup>11</sup> Clausen, *Nonproliferation and the National Interest*, p. 124.

<sup>12</sup> Hungarian Embassy in Japan, Telegram, 12 October 1972, XIX-J-1-j China, Top Secret Documents, 1972, 56. doboz, 78-10, 00701/13/1972.

<sup>13</sup> For such views, see, among others, Ashok Kapur, "Indo-Soviet Treaty and the Emerging Asian Balance," in *Asian Survey* 12, Issue 6 (June 1972), p. 463; and Mastny, "The Soviet Union's Partnership with India," p. 68.

join the NPT had been partly motivated by the fact that neither the U.S. nor the USSR proved ready to offer guarantees against China. Yet when the Soviet Union did finally provide such a guarantee in 1971, it was not sufficient to dissuade the Indian government from reaching for the bomb.

To address this conundrum, one should highlight, first of all, that the successive Indian governments laid great emphasis on achieving nuclear cooperation with as many states as possible. In December 1973, the Hungarian embassy in New Delhi reported that due to its disagreements with the U.S. and Japan, India wanted to develop its nuclear and missile technology with both Soviet and West German assistance: “The FRG is trying to fill the vacuum left by the other capitalist states and to offset the Soviet Union. This obviously coincides with India’s plan to counterbalance the Soviet Union with the FRG.”<sup>14</sup> In April-May 1974, Indira Gandhi visited Iran, and discussed with his hosts how New Delhi and Tehran could cooperate in the field of atomic energy. Her overtures to Tehran were also motivated by the desire of weakening Iran’s commitment to Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> Indian attempts at “nuclear diversification” continued under the rule of the Janata Party (1977-1979). For example, in July 1978 India and Libya concluded an agreement on joint nuclear research.<sup>16</sup> In June 1979, Premier Morarji Desai visited Yugoslavia, and during his talks with Tito, both leaders expressed their satisfaction with the progress of bilateral nuclear cooperation.<sup>17</sup>

For this reason, it appears likely that those “Congress Party circles” with whom the Hungarian ambassador discussed India’s nuclear test hit the nail on its head when they declared that “one of the principal objectives of the nuclear explosion” was to enable India “to reinforce its independence, achieve complete self-reliance, and assume a greater role in international politics.” They also added that India’s growing independence would also imply greater independence from the USSR (**Document 7**). As K. Subrahmanyam, a leading representative of India’s nuclear policy elite, would write in 1981, “Those who oppose the Indian nuclear option are in fact compelling this country to rely permanently on the Soviet

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<sup>14</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 19 December 1973, XIX-J-1-j India, Top Secret Documents [henceforth ITS], 1973, 51. doboz, 60-11, 005163/1973.

<sup>15</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 28 May 1974, ITS, 1974, 49. doboz, 60-10, 003272/2/1973.

<sup>16</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 15 September 1978, ITS, 1978, 61. doboz, 60-1, 005242/1978.

<sup>17</sup> Hungarian Embassy in Yugoslavia, Report, 27 June 1979, ITS, 1979, 61. doboz, 60-1, 004139/1979.

connection for her security.”<sup>18</sup> Similarly, George Perkovich stresses that “more than any other *international* consideration, the desire for major power status affected India’s eagerness to demonstrate its nuclear capability [emphasis in the original].”<sup>19</sup> This motivation seems to have received further impetus from India’s suspicions about Soviet-American detente. President Nixon’s visit in Moscow in May 1972, and particularly Leonid Brezhnev’s visit in the U.S. in June 1973, worried Indira Gandhi, who on the second occasion declared that detente between the “superpowers” (an equidistancing term that irritated the Soviet bloc diplomats) should not be achieved at the expense of smaller countries or lead to the creation of spheres of interest.<sup>20</sup>

### **“We Did Not Want to Condemn India”: The Soviet Union and the Pokhran Nuclear Test**

India’s 18 May 1974 ‘Peaceful Nuclear Explosion’ was a powerful manifestation of this independent mindset. Hungarian diplomats at the time suggested that the independent nuclear program and the nuclear test at Pokhran were evidence of India’s “big power aspirations” (**Document 9**). Very shortly after the test, in June 1974, the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Geneva highlighted India’s “desire for prestige” and its sensitivity to the “discriminatory” regulations of the NPT. Having pointed out that New Delhi’s claim about the peaceful nature of the test was not a credible one, the report summarized the Soviet bloc’s dilemma as follows: If the “socialist countries ... recognize India as the sixth nuclear power, and do not make a distinction between it and the present five members of the atomic club, this will automatically *raise the charge* of proliferation against it,” but if “they accept that the atomic experiment, which was declared to be peaceful, cannot be regarded as the first step toward nuclear armament, they will *create a serious danger* of proliferation [emphasis in the original].” India’s step, the diplomats worried, might set a precedent for other near-nuclear states, such as Pakistan, Argentina and Brazil, or produce a negative effect on

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<sup>18</sup> Thakur, “India and the Soviet Union,” p. 837.

<sup>19</sup> Perkovich, *India’s Nuclear Bomb*, pp. 167-168. The view that the nuclear test was a demonstration of strength is also expressed by Itty Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic Bomb. Science, Secrecy, and the Postcolonial State* (London and New York: Zed Books, 1998), p. 149.

<sup>20</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 23 August 1973, ITS, 1973, 51. doboz, 60-10, 001347/2/1973.

the first Review Conference of the NPT.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, the Soviet leaders preferred, figuratively speaking, to ignore the elephant in the room. While they did try to dissuade India from staging the test, they refrained from criticizing it after it had been carried out in May 1974 (**Document 6, 8 and 9**).<sup>22</sup> Their conspicuous silence, which stood in a striking contrast with their pre-1969 clashes with New Delhi over the NPT, may be explained by the following factors:

First of all, the nightmare of a nuclear-armed West Germany no longer haunted the Kremlin. The Federal Republic of Germany had eventually signed the NPT, and in mid-1974, the Hungarian diplomats correctly expected that the West European countries, save France, would duly ratify the treaty at the coming Review Conference, India's action notwithstanding.<sup>23</sup> Secondly, the Soviets hoped that the test would further aggravate Sino-Indian relations, and lessen China's influence in Asia. In the 1970s, Moscow started to regard Beijing, rather than Washington or Bonn, as its most troublesome opponent, and therefore it was prone to welcome any development that could reinforce Soviet-Indian cooperation against China. Thirdly, the CPSU leaders seem to have calculated that since various Western countries, including Canada and the U.S., adopted a critical attitude toward the test, the USSR might enhance its influence in India at their expense if it did not follow their lead (**Documents 5, 6 and 8**).

These specific strategic considerations must have greatly influenced Moscow's attitude toward the Indian test, because the general patterns of Soviet non-proliferation policies did not undergo a simultaneous change. On the contrary, in February 1975, at a session of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors, the Soviet delegation insisted that the IAEA should provide technical assistance primarily to the signatories to the NPT, rather than to states which were unwilling to join the treaty.<sup>24</sup>

In a certain sense then, Indira Gandhi managed to achieve the rare feat of increasing

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<sup>21</sup> Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Geneva, Report, 11 June 1974, ITS, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/5/1974.

<sup>22</sup> On Soviet reactions to the test, see also Potter, "The Soviet Union and Nuclear Proliferation," pp. 473-474.

<sup>23</sup> Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Geneva, Report, 11 June 1974, ITS, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/5/1974. This view is also expressed by George H. Quester, "Can Proliferation Now Be Stopped?," in *Foreign Affairs* 53, Issue 1 (October 1974), pp. 88-89.

<sup>24</sup> Hungarian Foreign Ministry, Memorandum, Report, 6 March 1975, XIX-J-1-j United Nations, IAEA, Top Secret Documents, 1975, 159. doboz, V-736, 001995/1975.



India's independence from its Soviet superpower ally without incurring the latter's retaliation, and at the same time using the Soviet Union as a shield against Western pressure. Yet one must also argue that the test eventually made New Delhi more, rather than less, dependent on Moscow, at least in the nuclear sphere. Since India extracted plutonium from the Canadian-supplied CIRUS reactor – which had been provided on the condition that it should serve only peaceful purposes – for the Pokhran test, in May 1976 Canada decided to terminate its nuclear assistance to New Delhi. Eager to seize the opportunity to fill the vacuum, the Kremlin quickly offered to provide the nuclear fuel and equipment which was no longer available from Canadian sources. This June 1976 offer was made in spite of the fact that during the negotiations, Soviet and Indian views on the NPT continued to diverge (**Document 10**).

The final outcome of this nuclear deal reflected a compromise between Soviet adherence to NPT regulations and Moscow's diplomatic efforts to increase its influence in India. On the one hand, the heavy water provided by the USSR was eventually placed under safeguards, although these restrictions were strongly resented by the Indian side.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the timing of the deal suggests that the Kremlin laid more stress on out-competing the Western powers than on dissuading India from nuclear proliferation. Significantly, in January 1979, following the deterioration of U.S.-Indian nuclear cooperation, Moscow concluded a new nuclear agreement with New Delhi (**Documents 11 and 12**).

Soviet "generosity" toward India was also motivated by Moscow's fear of a possible Sino-Indian rapprochement.<sup>26</sup> In this respect, New Delhi's strategy proved quite complex. On the one hand, competition with China continued to constitute a major element of Indian foreign and nuclear policies. In 1978, the Indian government felt it was being discriminated against when France expressed readiness to sell two nuclear reactors to China without insisting on placing them under similar safeguards which the U.S. called for with regard to India, and its resentment was further reinforced by China's decision to provide assistance to

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<sup>25</sup> Potter, "The Soviet Union and Nuclear Proliferation," pp. 474-477.

<sup>26</sup> On Soviet opposition to Sino-Indian rapprochement, see also John W. Garver, "The Indian Factor in Recent Sino-Soviet Relations," in *The China Quarterly* 125 (March 1991), pp. 60, 69-70.

Pakistan's nuclear program.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, the Indian leaders did not want to subordinate their own diplomatic objectives to the Kremlin's anti-Chinese campaign. Instead of supporting Moscow's call for an Asian Collective Security System, they took steps to keep a door open to China, and resented Soviet actions which were likely to aggravate relations between Beijing and New Delhi (**Documents 10, 12 and 14**).

### **The Enemy of My Enemy: The Soviet War in Afghanistan and Indo-Pakistani Nuclear Rivalry**

“During Indira Gandhi's second premiership, the Soviet Union was better positioned to impose its strategic preferences on her rather than vice versa – not because it had gotten stronger but because she was getting weaker,” Vojtech Mastny states. “When the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan intruded into an area of India's prime strategic interest, New Delhi parroted the Soviet line that Afghanistan had been invaded at the invitation of its government.”<sup>28</sup> Actually, however, India's responses to the occupation of Afghanistan, questionable as they were, seem to have reflected a narrow-minded focus on India's own perceived national interests vis-à-vis Pakistan and China, rather than a subordination of these interests to that of the USSR.<sup>29</sup>

To be sure, India did regard Afghanistan as an area of strategic interest, but its determination to retain a foothold in that landlocked Inner Asian country was always strongly intertwined by the intention of taking advantage of the ethnic and political conflicts which frequently had characterized Afghan-Pakistani relations since 1947. For instance, in 1974 Indian foreign policy experts told the Hungarian diplomats quite openly that if India ever felt it necessary to discourage Tehran from providing military assistance to Islamabad, Afghanistan constituted a convenient staging area for stirring up trouble among the Baloch tribes inhabiting Pakistan and Iran.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 17 January 1979, ITS, 1979, 61. doboz, 60-5, 001036/1979.

<sup>28</sup> Mastny, “The Soviet Union's Partnership with India,” p. 75.

<sup>29</sup> On the Pakistan-centered nature of India's Afghan policy, see Partha S. Gosh and Rajaram Panda, “Domestic Support for Mrs. Gandhi's Afghan Policy: The Soviet Factor in Indian Politics,” in *Asian Survey* 23, Issue 3 (March 1983), p. 263.

<sup>30</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Telegram, 15 February 1974, XIX-J-1-j Asia, Top Secret Documents, 1974, 119. doboz, 203-10, 00710/2/1974; Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 12 March 1981, ITS, 1981, 64. doboz,

The Soviet Union's December 1979 invasion of Afghanistan shocked the Indian political elite, and even Indira Gandhi's new government, which took office a month later, in January 1980, was hardly pleased by the Kremlin's action. Gandhi's disapproval was motivated partly by India's non-aligned status, but even more by the realization that the presence of Soviet combat troops in Afghanistan would induce both China and the United States to provide Pakistan with massive military aid. In 1979, U.S.-Pakistani relations had soured because of Pakistan's nuclear weapon program, and India was obviously more interested in hindering reconciliation between Washington and Islamabad than in facilitating it. When Gromyko visited India in February 1980, his hosts told him that "the events in Afghanistan have brought the Cold War right up to India's border," and created an opportunity for America to increase its presence in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region.<sup>31</sup> Worried by this prospect, they stressed their view that Soviet troops should be withdrawn (**Document 16**).

For this reason, India's initial reaction to the Afghan crisis was to launch a diplomatic offensive aimed at preventing the creation of a Sino-American-Pakistani strategic triangle. In February, an undersecretary from the Indian Foreign Ministry visited Pakistan, and offered that "if Pakistan refrained from accepting U.S. military aid, India would not purchase combat aircraft from Britain." (**Document 15**). In the spring, Indira Gandhi met Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua in Zimbabwe. During the talks, Huang emphasized Beijing's readiness to start negotiations about every important bilateral issue, whereas Gandhi declared that "India never accepted the presence of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and Vietnam's in Cambodia."<sup>32</sup>

The CCP leadership made great efforts to assure India that China's military assistance to Pakistan was by no means directed against New Delhi.<sup>33</sup> Still, neither Beijing nor Islamabad could be dissuaded from reinforcing their military cooperation with each other. In

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60-105, 002638/1981.

<sup>31</sup> Hungarian Foreign Ministry, Memorandum, 22 February 1980, STS, 1980, 126. doboz, 145-135, 001329/2/1980. See also Robert C. Horn, "Afghanistan and the Soviet-Indian Influence Relationship," in *Asian Survey* 23, Issue 3 (March, 1983), pp. 245-249.

<sup>32</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Ciphered Telegram, 13 May 1980, ITS, 1980, 62. doboz, 60-10, 002541/1/1980.

<sup>33</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 13 March 1980, ITS, 1980, 62. doboz, 60-10, 002541/1980.

May, Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq visited China where his hosts readily fulfilled his requests for military assistance. Indian policy-makers expected, with good reason, that Sino-Pakistani nuclear cooperation would also undergo further intensification (**Document 17**). Predictably, the July visit of Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi in New Delhi ended in a total fiasco.<sup>34</sup>

Under such conditions, Indira Gandhi switched to a new policy. Instead of continuing to criticize the occupation of Afghanistan, she decided to take advantage of it. Internationally isolated as it was after the invasion, the USSR badly needed to retain India's friendship, and was ready to increase its assistance to its chief Asian ally in exchange for the latter's acquiescence in its Afghan policy. Brezhnev's visit to India in December brought ample material benefits for New Delhi, including MiG-23 and MiG-25 aircraft, T-72 tanks, and a marked increase in Soviet crude oil supplies.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, India welcomed the rift which the Afghan crisis had created between Moscow and Islamabad, and which forced the Pakistani government to deploy a substantial part of its troops along its northern, rather than eastern, borders. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, New Delhi did its best to dissuade the Kremlin from providing Pakistan with military equipment (**Documents 4 and 10**). Anxious to increase their influence in Pakistan at the expense of China and the U.S., in those decades the Soviet leaders did not consider it advisable to give unconditional support to India's actions against Pakistan (**Document 1**). For instance, in January 1972 – that is, soon after the Bangladesh War – the head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's South Asian Department emphatically told a Hungarian diplomat that Moscow was strongly interested in preventing any further deterioration of Soviet-Pakistani relations. He also expressed his anxiety over that India's "stubborn" unwillingness to give up certain strategically important areas in Kashmir which it had occupied during the war might hinder a peaceful settlement of the Indo-Pakistani conflict.<sup>36</sup>

In 1979-1980, however, Soviet-Pakistani disagreements over Afghanistan, combined

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<sup>34</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Ciphred Telegram, 12 September 1980, ITS, 1980, 62. doboz, 60-10, 005463/1980.

<sup>35</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 13 January 1981, ITS, 1981, 64. doboz, 60-10, 00586/1981.

<sup>36</sup> Hungarian Embassy in the USSR, Report, 7 January 1972, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, Top Secret Documents, 1972, 85. doboz, 119-43, 00643/4/1972.

with Moscow's worries about Islamabad's nuclear weapon program, made the Kremlin increasingly disinclined to restrain India. As early as the spring of 1979, the Soviets started to look for means to prevent Pakistan from manufacturing an atomic bomb, which, they feared, might later find its way to the Arab countries (**Document 13**). Such Soviet concerns about Pakistan played into the hands of India's hawks in various ways. Firstly, they may have temporarily lessened Soviet opposition to India's own nuclear weapon program, which had received a new impetus from the post-1980 aggravation of Indo-Pakistani and Sino-Indian relations. In January 1981, the Hungarian diplomats reported that India was showing increasing interest in building atomic weapons: "In India, long articles are published about Pakistan's manufacturing of nuclear weapons, [assisted by] *French, Canadian and Swiss technical experts and spare parts and financed by Libya and Saudi Arabia*, is nearing completion by now. On the other hand, *India* has accelerated its own experimental activities, *several nuclear reactors have been re-profiled*, and the enriched fuel obtained from the USA, as well as *the heavy water that is supplied by the Soviet Union and also produced in India*, is being used for manufacturing a nuclear weapon [emphasis in the original]."<sup>37</sup> While there is no tangible evidence of such misuse of Soviet heavy water for military purposes, Leonard S. Spector claims that in later years, heavy water originating from the USSR may have been used in the unsafeguarded Madras I and Dhruva reactors from whose spent fuel plutonium was extracted.<sup>38</sup>

The Soviet leadership also started to think that a preventive Indian air strike at Pakistan's nuclear research center in Kahuta, even if this would lead to a new Indo-Pakistani war, might be actually more advantageous than disadvantageous to Moscow. As the Soviet ambassador to Hungary put it in January 1982, "the Soviet Union is also interested in weakening and crushing Pakistan. The Soviet Union repeatedly tried to bring Pakistan to reason, but to no avail." For this reason, he went on, "they assisted India in its military preparations by all means." The Kremlin was certainly aware of the international risks of such an Indian attack, but still decided to give the green light to New Delhi (**Document 18**).

<sup>37</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 13 January 1981, ITS, 1981, 64. doboz, 60-10, 00586/1981.

<sup>38</sup> Leonard S. Spector and Jacqueline R. Smith, *Nuclear Ambitions. The Spread of Nuclear Weapons 1989-1990* (Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 71, 83, 87.

## Trying to Square the Circle: Soviet-Indian Nuclear Cooperation in the Shadow of Sino-Soviet Rapprochement

However, before India's debating civilian and military leaders could reach consensus on whether to bomb Kahuta or not, Soviet foreign policy underwent yet another shift. Encouraged by the Sino-American disagreements over Taiwan, in 1982 Moscow launched a diplomatic offensive aimed at achieving rapprochement with China, and in December 1983 it even signed an economic agreement with Islamabad.<sup>39</sup> Under such circumstances, the USSR was becoming less favorably disposed toward a possible Indian attack on Pakistan. In March 1984, the Indian government asked a Soviet military delegation headed by Minister of Defense Dmitry Ustinov to provide the Indian Air Force with a fighter-bomber comparable to the Mirage attack fighters, but to no avail.<sup>40</sup> These developments, combined as they were with other political and economic disputes, created considerable tension in Soviet-Indian relations (**Documents 22 and 23**), and induced Indira Gandhi to make new overtures to China, which in turn displeased the Kremlin.<sup>41</sup>

Under Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi, the question of India's nuclear program assumed particular importance. In New Delhi, the gradual process of Sino-Soviet and Soviet-American detente elicited mixed feelings. While the Indian leaders expressed their satisfaction with the relaxation of international tension, they feared that the superpowers might reach some agreement at India's expense. For instance, at the Reagan-Gorbachev summit held in Geneva in November 1985, "the Soviet Union and the United States put joint pressure on India when ... they expressed their commitment to the system of nuclear non-proliferation, and called upon those states which had not yet signed the treaty to join it." (**Document 27**). In February 1986, Subrahmanyam published an article in which he scornfully compared Gorbachev's disarmament initiatives to the Yalta Conference, and stressed that if the five nuclear powers sought to transform the international system according to their own preferences, India should also join the "atomic club," lest it be excluded from the

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<sup>39</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 16 January 1984, ITS, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-10, 00548/1984.

<sup>40</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 13 May 1984, ITS, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-103, 002450/3/1984.

<sup>41</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 21 November 1984, ITS, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-10, 001223/6/1984.

process.<sup>42</sup> His declarations alarmed the Soviet diplomats, who had expressed their anxieties about India's plans to develop nuclear weapons as early as August 1985, at the time of the third NPT Review Conference (**Documents 24, 25 and 26**).

India's nuclear ambitions posed a serious dilemma for the Soviet leadership. On the one hand, the prospect of India becoming a *de jure* nuclear power flew right in the face of Moscow's post-1967 non-proliferation policies, and could even hinder global disarmament. As a Soviet diplomat put it, "The edifice of nuclear non-proliferation will collapse, many pro-Western countries – including Pakistan, Israel, and South Africa – will openly take the path of nuclear armament. The danger of local nuclear conflicts will increase." (**Document 28**). In October 1985, Rajiv Gandhi sought to gain Gorbachev's consent to the development of nuclear weapons by highlighting the Pakistani nuclear threat, whereupon the Soviets told him that to their knowledge, neither did Pakistan possess an atomic bomb nor did the U.S. encourage Islamabad to develop such weapons (**Document 27**).<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the Kremlin knew that India's nuclear program was directed not only against Pakistan but also against China (**Documents 19, 30, and 31**), and the Soviet leaders, anxious as they were to reach reconciliation with Beijing, were becoming more interested in facilitating Sino-Indian rapprochement than in hindering it (**Documents 34 and 35**). Their efforts generated little enthusiasm in New Delhi: in 1987, the Indian press published a number of articles which disapprovingly noted the improvement of Soviet-Pakistani relations, and alleged that the USSR started to pay more attention to China than to India.<sup>44</sup>

On the other hand, Moscow was strongly interested in retaining New Delhi's friendship. Compelled to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, the USSR sought to offset its retreat by maintaining its influence in India. From this perspective, a strong and possibly nuclear-armed India looked more a much-needed ally than a challenge. "The Indian nuclear potential," a Soviet diplomat said in March 1987, "would essentially strengthen the strategic position of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries" and "alleviate the military burden weighing on

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<sup>42</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Ciphred Telegram, 14 March 1986, ITS, 1986, 65. doboz, 60-4, 002134/1986.

<sup>43</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 25 November 1985, ITS, 1985, 67. doboz, 60-10, 005644/1985.

<sup>44</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 6 February 1987, ITS, 1987, 56. doboz, 60-103, 001217/1987. On Gorbachev's policies toward India and China, see also Sergey Radchenko, "India and the End of the Cold War," in *The End of the Cold War in the Third World. New Perspectives on Regional Conflict* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 173-189.

the Soviet Union, since hitherto the latter has been compelled to counter the potential of as many as four nuclear powers.” (**Document 29**). The Kremlin also appreciated India's support for the Soviet-backed Najibullah regime in Afghanistan. In stark contrast to Indian views early on in the Soviet occupation, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan more worried than pleased the Indian leaders, who feared that the resulting power vacuum might be filled by Islamist elements, and that Pakistani troops would be redeployed from the Afghan border in the direction of India (**Documents 32, 34 and 35**).

These conflicting aims all influenced the outcome of the greatest nuclear deal which the Soviet Union ever made with India – an agreement to construct two 1,000-MW light-water reactors and provide them with enriched uranium fuel for the entire operational life of the nuclear power plant. As early as Brezhnev's 1980 visit to India, and again in September 1982, Moscow offered to sell a nuclear power plant to New Delhi. In mid-1983, Rajiv Gandhi personally made inquiries about Soviet nuclear industry (**Documents 20 and 21**). His visit in the USSR was followed by the visit of Soviet Minister of Power and Electricity Pyotr Neporozhny in September and that of an Indian nuclear delegation headed by Raja Ramanna in December.<sup>45</sup> During the 1980s, Moscow became increasingly interested in accomplishing this deal, for the USSR ran a growing trade deficit with India, and its Indian partners kept pressing it for advanced technology (**Documents 23, 27 and 35**). At the same time, however, the Kremlin firmly said no to Rajiv Gandhi when he attempted to obtain the reactors without placing them under international safeguards (**Document 25**). Reluctant as it was to meet this condition, the Indian government eventually felt compelled to yield, because no other supplier had made any major nuclear sale to New Delhi in recent years, whereas China successfully signed nuclear cooperation agreements with West Germany, Japan and the U.S. in 1984-1985.<sup>46</sup> In November 1988, during Gorbachev's visit in India, the two sides finally concluded an agreement on the construction of two VVER reactors (**Documents 33 and 34**), though the project would remain in limbo for a decade due to the collapse of the USSR.

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<sup>45</sup> Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, December 1983, ITS, 1983, 60. doboz, 60-103, 004915/1/1983; Hungarian Embassy in India, Report, 13 May 1984, ITS, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-103, 002450/3/1984.

<sup>46</sup> Hungarian Embassy in the FRG, Report, 16 May 1984, XIX-J-1-j Federal Republic of Germany, Top Secret Documents, 1984, 110. doboz, 109-40, 003291/1984.



Despite Moscow's insistence on placing the reactors under safeguards, the sale had certain adverse diplomatic consequences, for it induced China to sell Pakistan a 300-MW nuclear power reactor (**Documents 36 and 37**). Similarly, the Soviet decision to lease, rather than sell, a nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine to India – which would have preferred the latter option (**Document 32**) – seems to have been influenced by considerations to lessen the negative effects of Moscow's action, but it angered Pakistan anyway. Islamabad sharply criticized the Soviet decision, declaring that “a Great Power ought to have a stronger sense of responsibility.”<sup>47</sup> The other side of the coin was that in the very next year, when the Cold War was nearing its end, Pakistan did not hesitate to inquire whether Hungary would be willing to sell a control system for the nuclear power plant to be provided by China, and the Hungarian authorities proved quite ready to seize the opportunity (**Document 38**).

## Conclusion

The evidence provided by the Hungarian archival documents in the appendix below seems to be at least partly at variance with the views of those scholars who, like Gary Milhollin, emphasized that “the Soviets have never been willing to sacrifice nonproliferation goals to gain a political advantage” in their relations with New Delhi.<sup>48</sup> This opinion appears valid mainly in the sense that the Soviets did insist on the application of safeguards on the nuclear fuel and facilities which they themselves provided to India, even if this incurred Indian dissatisfaction. In contrast, they were considerably less interested in curbing those elements of the Indian nuclear program where their own adherence to NPT regulations was not at stake. Nor were Soviet offers of nuclear assistance linked with strong efforts to pressure India to sign the NPT in exchange, although the USSR did subject other countries (including North Korea and Algeria) to such pressure, and stressed that the IAEA should assist only the signatories to the treaty.<sup>49</sup> All in all, Soviet views about India's nuclear

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<sup>47</sup> Hungarian Embassy in Pakistan, Report, 3 February 1988, ITS, 1988, 45. doboz, 60-10, 00749/1/1988.

<sup>48</sup> Gary Milhollin, “Dateline New Delhi: India's Nuclear Cover-Up,” in *Foreign Policy* 64 (Autumn 1986), p. 174.

<sup>49</sup> On the Soviet Union's unwillingness to provide nuclear assistance to North Korea and Algeria unless the latter signed the NPT, see Balazs Szalontai and Sergey Radchenko, “North Korea's Efforts to Acquire Nuclear Technology and Nuclear Weapons: Evidence from Russian and Hungarian Archives.” CWIHP Working Paper #53 (Washington, D.C., August 2006), pp. 9-21.

program seem to have been more decisively shaped by the Kremlin's specific strategic objectives than by the general principles of non-proliferation. Among others, the deterioration or improvement of Moscow's relations with Beijing, Washington and Bonn greatly influenced Soviet attitudes toward India's nuclear policies. Notably, initial Soviet concerns about the prospect of a nuclear-armed India were motivated primarily by a fear of its precedent-setting effect; the view that India *per se* might also constitute a serious proliferation problem started to appear only in the mid-1980s, in the context of Sino-Soviet and Soviet-American detente. As long as Sino-Soviet relations remained tense, the USSR was more interested in preventing Sino-Indian and Indo-American rapprochement than in dissuading India's nuclear ambitions.

## Document Appendix

*All documents obtained and translated for NPIHP by Balazs Szalontai  
Available online in the NPIHP Virtual Archive at [www.wilsoncenter.org/npihp](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/npihp)*

### **Document No. 1.**

#### **Report, Embassy of Hungary in the Soviet Union to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 2 June 1967.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1967, 44. doboz, 60-10, 001059/2/1967.

In the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the general view of the Indian political situation is that Indira Gandhi and the leadership of the Congress Party have somewhat overcome the state of shock that was caused by the electoral setbacks, in several respects they managed to feel out the weak points of the opposition, and started to become more active in the fields of both domestic and foreign policy.

During a conversation which one of our officials had on 2<sup>nd</sup> of this month at the South Asian Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, he inquired principally about the views which our comrades held about the current course of Indian foreign policy.

The Soviet side told him the following:

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. They are of the opinion that India laid an extremely great emphasis on that its diplomacy in general, and also a few prominent leaders of Indian foreign policy [who were sent] to those countries which India particularly wanted to inform, made great efforts to explain India's standpoint on the non-proliferation treaty, and at the same time sought to achieve that the Soviet Union and the United States should provide – jointly or separately – guarantees to India against a possible nuclear attack. It is known that this Indian effort has not been supported by any of the Great Powers.

Also known are the Indian arguments raised against the non-proliferation treaty, which partly refer to the Chinese threat from a concrete Indian perspective and partly, in the general spirit of the objections which a substantial part of the non-nuclear countries raise against the treaty, emphasize that the treaty, while it perpetuates the present status quo with regard to the possession of nuclear weapons, deprives those countries which currently do not have nuclear weapons of the opportunity to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes. In this respect, the Soviet side notes that India intends to make political capital in the Third World out of this standpoint, which brings the so-called common problems of several Third World countries to the forefront, and, in a certain sense, take a step to regain India's former role.

It is also known that the Indian standpoint on the non-proliferation treaty has become increasingly radical, and in the very recent days Foreign Minister [Mahommedali Currim]

Chagla categorically stated in a speech he made in the parliament that India would not join the non-proliferation treaty, at least not in its present form. The Soviet side is not yet wholly familiar with the Foreign Minister's arguments, but on their part – [though] not as a final evaluation – they note that their impression is that the basic reason for this evolution in the Indian standpoint is an Indian effort to enable the country to develop its own atomic weapons and which is increasingly taking shape due to pressure from the right. According to the information available to our comrades, there are no technical obstacles to that step, the Indian nuclear industry has already reached such a stage of development that if a decision is made to develop atomic weapons, India will be actually able to manufacture one within 10 to 11 months.

Of course, it would be premature to evaluate what consequences it would have for Asian and even world politics if India obtains atomic weapons. However, it is obvious that through the development of the atomic bomb, the Indian reactionary forces are likely to set the aim that India, once it militarily and politically becomes one of the nuclear powers, should leave the present course of non-alignment, and take further steps to achieve its chauvinist and expansionist objectives by allying itself with one of the nuclear powers. Obviously, Indian reaction will find such an ally precisely in the United States.

There has not been any new element in the Indian statements on the Vietnamese question. Interestingly, however, India was compelled to adopt a far more positive standpoint on the current Middle Eastern crisis than the one it takes on the situation in Southeast Asia. What is the reason for that? The Soviet side is of the opinion that in several respects, the development of the Middle Eastern situation hits India harder than the situation in Vietnam, and this is what compels [India] to support the rightful demands of the Arab countries against the aggressive Israeli efforts, in spite of the fact that it has a relatively good relationship with Israel, and presumably it also would like to avoid any serious disagreement with the leading imperialist powers on issues of world politics. At the same time, however, calls for sanity and moderation are characteristic of the Indian standpoint, and over here [in Moscow] they think that if the Middle Eastern crisis continues or even aggravates, this aspect of the Indian attitude will come increasingly to the forefront. Concerning the motives of the Indian standpoint, they emphasize primarily that for India, it is economically vital to prevent the occurrence of a war, or a similar situation causing considerable tension, in the Middle East. Namely, this would naturally lead to the closing of the Suez Canal, by which India would be deprived of American food aid – which would be an intolerable development for Indira Gandhi and her government in the present situation when there is already famine in several states, and in general, a substantial part of the country's foreign trade would be paralyzed. Politically, India cannot afford to confront the Arab countries, which constitute a not insignificant part of the Third World countries, and India must pay particular attention to preserving the Nasser-Tito-Indira Gandhi triangle as much as possible, and to its traditional standpoint on the Middle Eastern situation which was represented already by Nehru.

The latest visit of Foreign Minister Chagla in several Southeast Asian countries threw light on the newest effort of Indian foreign policy which sets the establishment of a wider Asian

regional economic bloc as a nearer or more distant aim. It is also known that such efforts are made not only by India but, for instance, Indonesia also makes such initiatives. The Soviet side is of the opinion that it has not been thought out yet which form this bloc should take and which countries might participate in it, but they note that in the long run, India is likely to have the creation of an economic bloc reaching from Pakistan to Japan in mind. According to the ideas of its designers, this should ultimately become a closed association akin to the Common Market, and the establishment of such an association would be in the interest of those leading Asian states which would be its members, and also of those imperialist countries which would grant credits to the countries participating in the association. [It would be in the interest] of the latter not only because this would create more favorable opportunities for economically influencing these countries and isolating them, for instance, from the expansion of Chinese influence but also because this bloc should ultimately assume a military dimension, to a lesser or greater extent.

Concerning American-Indian relations, the Soviet side says the following about the American decision to terminate military assistance to India and Pakistan: they think that the Indian campaign which followed the announcement of the American decision, and which sought to emphasize that the American decision had created more favorable conditions for Pakistan than for India, probably served only propaganda purposes. It is true, they say in the MID [Soviet Foreign Ministry], that the availability of spare parts for its American made arms has created a momentarily more favorable situation for Pakistan, because the latter – apart from the quantitatively insignificant Chinese assistance – received only American military aid. However, this constitutes only a momentary advantage for Pakistan. In the long run, the real situation is that while Pakistan has no defense industry whatsoever, India has created its own defense industry since 1962—that is, since the start of its conflict with China. In the MID, they say, among others, that concerning the [development] of the air force, India, for one thing, has the opportunity to reshape its civil aviation industry for military purposes; secondly, the Soviet Union also supplied a factory to produce MiG fighter planes; and thirdly, it is known that India, in cooperation with the UAR [United Arab Republic], is carrying out a program to produce fighter-bombers.

At the Indian desk of the MID, only a few remarks were made about the possible American motives for this decision. They suppose that apart from domestic reasons, the USA was of the opinion that this would render it possible to put pressure on both India and Pakistan. Concerning Pakistan, the termination of military aid may also have been a sort of “punishment” for the somewhat more independent foreign policy that [Pakistan] had pursued in recent times. Furthermore, it must be very burdensome for the USA to maintain the present level of its military presence in all those regions of the world where there are such opportunities, since it already faces serious challenges in places like Vietnam, the Middle East, and Korea. Finally, this step created an opportunity for American propaganda to attack the Soviet Union’s policy in Asia, because now it wants to attack the Soviet Union, which appeared in Tashkent as a champion of facilitating mutual understanding between India and Pakistan, on the grounds that it continues to supply arms to India, whereas the United States, which intends to lessen tension in this region of the world, has terminated military aid to

## India and Pakistan.

The Soviet side draws attention to the fact that in India, the attacks on the American decisions are initiated by the ultra-rightist circles. Over here, the view they hold about the effects which the Soviet arms supplies produce on India and the Indo-Pakistani relationship is that the [arms supplies] are by no means aimed at aggravating the conflict but rather at curbing it. The continuation of Soviet supplies enables the Soviet Union to exert a moderating influence on Indian policies, since the Indian military is dependent upon the continuity of supplies from the Soviet Union, and India's room for maneuver with regard to the aggravation of the conflict with Pakistan is presumably constrained by its fear of the prospect that these [supplies] might be halted at any time if some [Indian] step displeases the Soviet Union. Namely, over here they are of the opinion that India is unable, and will be unable for another decade, to obtain the spare parts and other facilities for the Soviet arms in case of a possible termination of Soviet supplies.

The Soviet side remarks that due to the termination of American military aid, Pakistan was of course compelled to look for new supply opportunities, and thus Pakistan naturally turned to certain Western countries as well as to Iran and Turkey, but also to the socialist countries. On several previous occasions we reported that Pakistan also approached the Soviet Union with requests for military aid. In May, during his visit here, Pakistani Foreign Minister [Syed Sharifuddin] Pirzada repeated this earlier Pakistani request. The Soviet side did not give Pirzada a final answer, but according to the information available to us, during the negotiations they made a statement that in principle they did not see any obstacle to providing military assistance to Pakistan. Concerning this issue, my impression is that the Soviet Union pursues the following plan: [the policy of] hinting to the possibility of providing military assistance to Pakistan but keeping it pending – in parallel with the continuous military assistance to India – is, under the present conditions, suitable for influencing both Pakistan and India to pursue certain policies which would be advantageous to the socialist countries. The fact that Pakistan greatly needs this assistance, and realistically expects that it can obtain it, will presumably reinforce those tendencies of its foreign policies which it knows that the Soviet Union considers positive. India, on its part, will be less inclined to take any step that would constitute a break with its non-aligned policy and might induce the Soviet Union to start supplying arms to Pakistan. Of course, this is only a temporary opportunity for exerting influence, which keeps in mind the current political tendencies in Pakistan and India. Obviously, if the negative shift of Indian foreign policy gets accelerated, and Indian foreign policy undergoes a qualitative change, the Soviet Union might achieve the objective of exerting optimal influence on both countries by starting to supply arms to Pakistan. Our impression is that it also follows from the aforesaid [observations] that the Soviet Union would presumably rather start supplying arms to Pakistan than terminate its [supplies] to India.

Finally, I would like to mention that over here they are of the opinion that there has not been any significant change in the Indo-Pakistani relationship. The exchange of letters between Chagla and Pirzada did not contain any new elements. On the border incidents which

occurred not long before, they have formed the opinion that [the incidents] were of an accidental nature, and the fact that they were quickly settled was welcomed over here. They continue to emphasize that under the present conditions, they do not see any opportunity for progress in the Kashmiri question, because neither the Pakistani nor the Indian domestic political situation would render that possible. However, they suppose that the only possible solution is a compromise which would recognize the current ceasefire line in some form at a later date.

[signature]  
(ambassador)

**Document No. 2.**

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 30 March 1968.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Multilateral international treaties, 1968, 107. doboz, 00617/18/1968.

India's earlier active opposition to the draft Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has abated, and according to the latest official declarations, India's standpoint is becoming a bit more flexible. Within the government, opinions are sharply divided with regard to the formulation of India's final standpoint. In essence, the point is whether India, which is, for economic reasons, unable to develop nuclear weapons by itself but fears China's nuclear armament, should remain passive, or should it actively participate in the positive international efforts of the Great Powers. For the time being, the fact is that India does not wish to write down definitely its objections to the draft treaty and the formulation of the guarantees it expects from the Great Powers. The Indian representative in Geneva was also instructed not to take a stand on the draft treaty for the time being.

We will send a detailed report on the subject by the next courier.

Dr. Peter Kos  
Ambassador

**Document No. 3.**

**Memorandum, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 12 April 1968.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Multilateral international treaties, 1968, 107. doboz, 00617/26/1968.

Today I had conversations with Soviet Mission Secretary Stashevsky, Yugoslav Secretary Pavicevic and Romanian Secretary Nicu on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. During these conversations, the following standpoints were expressed:

The *Romanian standpoint* may be summarized as follows: the treaty is *desirable but in need of further improvements* [emphasis in the original]. If we regard the text to be submitted to the General Assembly as final, what is the point of discussing it in the General Assembly? It is absolutely certain that India will not sign the treaty. Consequently, Pakistan will not join, either, and Japan, in all probability, will make its own decision dependent on India's. If we also add that Israel and the Arab countries, distrusting each other, will not join the treaty, the Non-Proliferation Treaty will not be of full value.

In the Yugoslav opinion, *the treaty is necessary and they do support it*, but the *non-aligned* countries are making numerous and well-founded *objections* to it [emphasis in the original].. Against these *it is difficult for Yugoslavia* to support the current draft [emphasis in the original]. Many [countries] object to the fact that the Soviet Union, bearing in mind the West German threat – in which the African and Asian states are not interested, has made too many concessions to the United States (the question of the atomic weapons stationed at American bases, and other issues). Others, such as India, *regard the S[ecurity] C[ouncil] procedure on guarantees as worthless* [emphasis in the original]. They do have a point there, because it cannot be expected that the three participating nuclear powers of the SC will adopt a common standpoint if any of their allied states faces nuclear attack or a threat of it. *They understand the Soviets' haste* [emphasis in the original], because after the elections, the United States will hardly be as interested in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as it is now, and the majority of the so-called “near-nuclear” states are Western countries.

*In the Soviet opinion, the United States is still strongly interested* [emphasis in the original] in signing the treaty, because it intends to create, as soon as possible, such conditions under which the United States will not have to be afraid of being drawn into a nuclear conflict. In addition, Johnson wants to occupy a place in history by signing the treaty. The treaty must be signed right after the spring session of the General Assembly, because any delay might become dangerous. For this reason, *the Soviet Union is opposed to any further modifications* on a matter of principle [emphasis in the original].

The treaty *is directed against the FRG* [emphasis in the original], and even if we suppose, just for the sake of debate, that India or Pakistan or another neutral country might manage to obtain nuclear weapons, this would not cause any serious international tension. In contrast, the FRG's nuclear weapons would definitely evoke the danger of World War III. A lot of additional issues related to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which ought to be discussed, might be raised later, but these should not be discussed at the spring session. There is no [Soviet] objection to the subsequent signing of separate agreements or protocols on peaceful utilization [of atomic energy], underground tests or other issues. Some of these issues might be discussed at the conference to be held in Geneva in August, but, as the General Assembly resolution on the subject also indicates, the [conference's] task is not to negotiate about the



treaty itself but to discuss those related questions in which the non-nuclear powers are interested and to put the treaty into practice.

The overwhelming majority of the small countries have no conflicts of interest with what the treaty comprises. The members of the two military alliances are protected by the alliances in the form of the nuclear umbrella, and the issue of guarantees is raised only in the neutral countries, but even there, as the example of India demonstrates, this appears to be more a political problem – that is, a problem of domestic politics – than a military one. For this reason, [the Soviets] hope that Yugoslavia will not adopt a neutral standpoint during the debate over the treaty but rather assist them in persuading the non-aligned countries.

It is their impression that due to American pressure, Israel will sign the treaty, which will also render it possible to [persuade] the Arab countries to join.

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Other issues of discussion:

Concerning the organization of the General Assembly, it seems that the questions of South West Africa and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will be discussed by the plenum and the 1<sup>st</sup> Committee, respectively. Certain non-aligned countries suggest that one of these should hold its sessions in the mornings, where the other in the afternoons. The date of the SC debate on the guarantees to be provided by the Security Council has not been specified yet.

It is said that certain African countries create a linkage between the two questions to be discussed in the General Assembly by [declaring] that they will not support the Non-Proliferation Treaty unless the Great Powers support their ideas with regard to the South West African question. It also belong to this issue that some of the latter intend to present such an argument that if South Africa does not join the treaty, the African countries, in defense of their security, should also keep away from it.

Endre Zador

**Document No. 4.**

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in the Soviet Union to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 21 August 1968.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Soviet Union, 1968, 80. doboz, 145-1, 001273/6/1968.

It is known that during Prime Minister Kosygin's visit in India, among others, an agreement was reached that the two countries would conduct regular consultations about foreign policy with each other, at the level of the foreign ministries. On the basis of the earlier agreement,

the first such consultation should have taken place in Moscow in July, but President Zakir Hussain's visit to Moscow created an opportunity for the exchange of ideas about issues of international politics as well, and thus there was no need for a consultation at the level of foreign ministries.

Afterwards, however, the Indian side proposed that the representatives of the two foreign ministries should meet each other in Delhi between November 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The Indians proposed Delhi as the venue of the meeting on the grounds that their similar consultation with the Americans – [Attorney General Nicholas] Katzenbach – also took place there. The Soviet side accepted the Indian standpoint and the invitation. True, the Indian side wished the MID delegation had been headed by Comrade Gromyko, but he declined to do so on the grounds that he was engaged, and for this reason the delegation will be probably headed by Comrade Firiubin.

The consultation has no pre-prepared agenda, the Soviet side is prepared to discuss all those international and bilateral problems which currently seem to be topical in Soviet-Indian relations.

Of the international issues, it is likely that the issues of Vietnam, the Middle East, and the problem complex of European security will be raised. Furthermore, in the context of the British withdrawal from the area of the Indian Ocean, the Soviet side would consider it appropriate to make the Soviet point of view unmistakably clear about those plans which are aimed at establishing regional blocs of a military, political or economic character, and of a narrower or broader scope, in the area of the Indian Ocean. Namely, the Soviet side is of the opinion that [the establishment of] these blocs would eventually enable the dominant capitalist states – above all, the USA and Japan – to retain, and even reinforce, their influence in this part of the world by taking advantage of these new forms of relationship. In addition, they are of the opinion that it will be necessary to repeatedly raise the issue of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, for two reasons: On the one hand, India – as I also noted in an earlier report of mine – is conducting a very shrill propaganda campaign against the treaty, whose primary reason is presumably its fear of the prospect that the broader the circle of the treaty's signatories becomes, the more isolated the country will be in the international arena. On the other hand, however, they have information that in the Congress Party, and even in the closest circle around Indira Gandhi, there are significant forces which profess that signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty would suit India's national interests better than keeping away from it. This creates certain opportunities for the socialist countries to counter this highly annoying Indian activity.

Concerning bilateral relations, the Soviet side considers it possible that they will also raise a few economic problems at the meeting. For instance, they disapprove of the fact that the reports on the profitability problems of the state-owned enterprises built with Soviet assistance, which were written by the six delegations of Soviet experts who recently visited India, have not had any effect yet. They intend to protest against the discriminatory commercial policy India pursues vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries,

that is, against the fact that the Indian authorities hinder the development of trade relations between the Soviet Union and Indian private companies.

Of course, the question of Indian-Pakistani relations might also crop up during the discussions. Our comrades are of the opinion that these [relations] are not stagnant; in recent months there have been positive developments in several concrete issues, though, regrettably, the standpoints have become more inflexible in certain other questions.

The positive developments are the following: the demarcation of borders in the area of Kutch, and between East Pakistan and West Bengal, has been nearly completed. To avoid possible border incidents, the staffs of the two armies have established direct contacts with each other, telegraph and telephone connections have been restored, an agreement is being prepared to allow military planes to enter each other's air-space, etc.

In her National Day speech, Indira Gandhi reiterated the proposal Shastri had made in Tashkent to conclude a non-aggression treaty between the two countries. This apparently indicates a sensible Indian policy. Of course, it is questionable – but this does not modify the previous evaluation – whether Ayub Khan is currently able to react to this proposal more positively than he did in Tashkent, when he stated that at the given moment one should not go further in this respect than what the Tashkent Declaration said about the necessity of solving the unsettled issues between the two countries in a peaceful way.

Concerning the negative aspects: the question of dividing the water output of the Ganges has aggravated the relationship between the two countries. According to the Indians, this issue is an Indian domestic affair, and they are willing to negotiate about it at a technical level at most. Pakistan considers the Ganges an international river, and demands that negotiations be conducted at a political level. Moreover, Foreign Minister Arshad Hussain made a declaration in which he ranked this question with the problem of Kashmir, and when he spoke about the latter, he did not reiterate those more moderate expressions (“Pakistan does not regard the issue of placing the Kashmiri question on the agenda as a precondition of resolving the other unsettled questions,” etc.) which Ayub had used this spring and which seemed to indicate that the Pakistani standpoint was becoming somewhat more flexible.

In the opinion of our [Soviet] comrades, the start of Soviet arms supplies to Pakistan evoked a certain – partly anti-Soviet, partly anti-Pakistani – hysteria in India. However, the anti-Soviet campaign launched by [Indian] reaction has failed, because the sensible and responsible circles of the Indian leadership eventually showed understanding – though, of course, not approval – towards Soviet policy on this issue.

In its talks with the Indians, the Soviet side strove to justify its arms supplies to Pakistan in a detailed and convincing way. They emphasized that this was a political action which assisted Pakistan to pursue such a more independent and non-aligned policy that would encompass both a reinforcement of relations with the Soviet Union and a realistic and sensible policy toward India. In spite of Indian statements to the contrary, the Soviet side is of the opinion

that these arms should be considered of a truly defensive nature, it is inappropriate to present the affair in such a way as “they may be used only against India (or Afghanistan).” Besides, Ayub Khan assured the Soviet Union that Pakistan, “whose military power is in a proportion of 1-5 to the power of India,” naturally did not want to, and would not, attack India. It closed down the American base at Peshawar, and is no longer active in any sense in CENTO and SEATO. Finally, the Soviet side highlights the merely symbolic size of the military supplies to Pakistan: its volume is about one-tenth of the military aid provided to India. The arms delivered are old and of a non-offensive nature – in fact, Ayub Khan asked precisely for such types, as he himself stressed the primarily political nature of his request.

(signature)  
ambassador

**Document No. 5.**

**Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 23 May 1974.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/1/1974.

According to the opinion of Indian foreign policy experts, the Indian nuclear explosion might make India draw closer to the Soviet Union, taking the anti-Indian attitude of the other nuclear powers into consideration.

In their view, only the Soviet Union can be expected to support India in its nuclear test explosions.

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**Document No. 6.**

**Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 23 May 1974.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/2/1974.

On May 22, Trivedi, the secretary general of the F[oreign] M[inistry] received the departing GDR ambassador, to whom he said that the Indian government was grateful to the socialist countries because they did not confront India over the Indian nuclear explosion, though they had signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Comment:

The socialist ambassadors of this place consulted with each other on the Indian nuclear explosion, and concluded that it was appropriate on our part to adopt the position that having taken notice of the fact, we expressed our trust in the official Indian declaration, according to which the explosion served peaceful purposes (the communique published earlier this week). According to our common evaluation, under the present circumstances the Indian nuclear explosion might hinder Indian-American rapprochement and further aggravate Indian-Chinese relations.

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**Document No. 7.**

**Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 31 May 1974.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1974, 49. doboz, 60-10, 001122/1/1974.

According to the information I received from Congress Party circles, India's foreign policy, having settled the problem of the subcontinent, lays the main emphasis on reinforcing India's independence. This is also one of the principal objectives of the nuclear explosion. According to what the informant said, India is "becoming more independent" from the Soviet Union, but this does not mean that it will come dangerously close to the USA. India's goal is to reinforce its independence, achieve complete self-reliance, and assume a greater role in international politics. At the same time, the government is going to restore internal order with a firm hand, because the chaotic internal situation endangers the position of the government, damages the potency of Indian foreign policy, and disturbs cooperation with other countries. Our informant said that due to the disorderly internal situation, there were signs of distrust [of India] in Western financial and economic circles. Besides preserving its independence, India also strives for extensive international collaboration, and for the development of industrial cooperation, in order to solve its economic problems. It makes use of credits and economic aid, for which, however, it must create the necessary preconditions and generate trust by stabilizing the internal situation.

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**Document No. 8.**

**Telegram, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Geneva to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 14 August 1974.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/8/1974.

A Soviet UN official in charge of disarmament issues said that India had informed the Soviet Union in advance that it intended to explode a nuclear device. The Soviet Union applied strong pressure to prevent that.

In the spring, however, the position of Indira Gandhi had been greatly weakened. Her fall and a turn to the right became a real possibility. The execution of the nuclear explosion has reinforced Indira Gandhi's position, and attenuated her conflicts with the ultra-rightist nationalist forces.

According to the Soviet evaluation, the Indian nuclear test poses danger from the perspective of nuclear proliferation, but the fall of Indira Gandhi would have caused much more serious harm. The nuclear test does not affect the military balance in Asia, and it will not relieve the Soviet Union of the burden of facing China, not even in the long run. Its positive aspect is that it lessens, or offsets, Beijing's influence on the smaller states of the region and on the developing countries in general.

From the perspective of the Soviet Union, a further advantage is that there is a certain change in the situation and orientation of Pakistan.

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#### **Document No. 9.**

##### **Memorandum, Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 31 October 1974.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/9/1974.

The approval of steps which were aimed at strengthening international peace and security, such as measures aimed at curtailing the arms race and furthering universal and complete disarmament, always constituted a major component of India's foreign policy. This is why it was a surprise that from the mid-1960s, India adopted a negative standpoint on the issues of nuclear disarmament. It was still one of the first countries to sign and ratify the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, but since then it has stayed away from every effort aimed at disarmament.

India's conduct can be explained from two sides: Partly from the outside, primarily by the perceived threat from China, and partly from the inside, by [India's] big power aspirations; the independent nuclear development program is an important manifestation of these [aspirations].

Some research in nuclear physics had been done in India as early as the aftermath of the Second World War, but the real impetus was given by the Chinese test explosion carried out at Lop Nor on 16 October 1964. In 1967, while the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was

being drafted in the Disarmament Commission in Geneva, the representative of India already firmly defied the majority. Of course, in principle they did not oppose the treaty aimed at preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, but by maintaining their right to conduct nuclear experiments for peaceful purposes, they practically rejected the whole of it. Recently they referred precisely to that declaration when they asserted that as early as 1967, at the public forum of Geneva, they had announced their intention to carry out underground test explosions for peaceful purposes.

India's first nuclear test explosion took place in Pokhran, on 18 May 1974. While the Indian standpoint summarized above was well known, the test nevertheless caused immense surprise and a great stir all over the world. The Indian government was quick to reassure world public opinion that the test had served solely peaceful purposes, and that India did not intend to launch a nuclear weapons program. To the most directly affected – and thus the most vividly reacting – side, the Pakistani government, Premier Indira Gandhi sent a letter, in which she reaffirmed that the test had served solely peaceful purposes, as early as 20 May. Despite these declarations, a very high number of countries expressed their disapproval in a more or less open form.

For the socialist countries, including us, it was a rather difficult task [to deal with] this problem, since we did not want to condemn India, nor could we stand up for it without setting ourselves against our own standpoint. For a long time, we have propagated, and we still profess, that there is no essential difference between the nuclear explosive devices which serve military or peaceful purposes, and it depends solely on the manufacturer or possessor of the device to decide which purpose he will use it for. For this very reason, we adopted the standpoint of refraining from expressing our opinion, which was duly appreciated by the Indian leadership. (On several occasions, they said thanks to us for our “expressive silence.”)

While, at various domestic and international forums, the representatives of India rose to the defense not only of their first test explosion but also of their right to proceed with their nuclear program, they also unambiguously declared that this first test would be followed by additional ones. In the current period of “energy crisis,” the programs aimed at harnessing nuclear energy are more and more favorably received [by public opinion], and this undoubtedly plays into India's hands. For instance, during the current debate over disarmament in the UN General Assembly, India does encounter criticism, but to a lesser extent than expected and in a considerably muffled voice. Instead, an increasing number [of countries] emphasize the growing importance of harnessing atomic energy, including the importance of peaceful nuclear explosions.

Ferenc Gajda

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**Document No. 10.**

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 6 July 1976.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1976, 63. doboz, 60-1, 001658/4/1976.

Indira Gandhi's visit [in the Soviet Union], and its multidimensional significance, is valued highly in India, both in terms of bilateral relations and the [visit's] international impact.

This is the conclusion one can draw from the news and commentaries of the news services and propaganda organs as well as from the opinions of our conversation partners. On the basis of the communiqués published about the negotiations, they regard both the current situation of the political and economic relations and their planned development as outstanding.

As early as before the visit, personalities belonging to government circles and important political, scientific and economic institutions, in their conversations with us, repeatedly referred to the significance of the mutual visits which took place in this period. Among these, they mention the visits of Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Firiubin and Deputy Premier Arkhipov to India as well as the visits of Indian economic and military leaders in the Soviet Union. At that time, the Indian information service confined itself to publishing merely the occurrence of the visits in a laconic way.

At the same time, we received information about the most important questions discussed during the negotiations from persons close to the Indian Foreign Ministry and the Premier's Secretariat. According to this [information], Comrade Firiubin, during his private talks with Indira Gandhi which lasted for over two hours, raised such issues as India's standpoint on the new endeavors in the Non-Aligned Movement, the development of Indian-Chinese and Indian-Pakistani relations, the situation in Bangladesh, and the questions related to Asian security.

Constructive attitudes notwithstanding, their views were not wholly in accordance (e.g., concerning the Soviet efforts related to Asian security), but in many other questions (basic principles of belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement; development of relations with China) the Indian standpoint was reassuring. We received similarly positive information about the visit of Comrade Arkhipov.

On the negotiations of the Indian military, economic and scientific delegations which visited the Soviet Union, we had received remarkable information as early as during [the visits], but only now, with full knowledge of the joint communiqué and in possession of the data we received in the course of the conversations we had after [Gandhi's] visit, are we able to evaluate them.

Certain reactionary circles attached great hopes to the alleged problem that in the supply of arms and military equipment, the Soviet Union is still reluctant to provide [India] with its latest products. According to the information available for us, the negotiations have disproven



these [allegations], and the Indian government is most satisfied with the helpful and understanding behavior of the Soviet government and with the concrete agreement reached in this question. Taking India's long-term ambitions into consideration, this is undoubtedly a factor that reinforces both the internal and external position of the government.

Our contact persons in the Ministry of Trade attribute similar importance to the latest visit that Professor D.P. Chattopadhyaya, the Minister of Trade, paid to Moscow, and they are of the opinion that the Indian requests he had elaborated were fulfilled in the joint communique.

In this report, we cover the joint communique only in that respect that from diplomatic circles and in the course of our conversations with the leaders of the CPI, the functionaries of the Congress Party, leading university professors, the leaders of political and social organizations, economists and journalists, we received pieces of information, evaluations and opinions related to its various points.

The Indian evaluation of the Moscow negotiations can be summed up in the unanimous opinion according to which they resulted in the elevation of relations to a level that is qualitatively higher than the previous one.

This has been achieved in that the level of economic, technological and cultural cooperation between the two countries continues to rise, and the scope of such [cooperation] is broadening. However, they consider it even more important that such an advance has taken place in the mutual agreement of the two nations, on the basis of their full confidence in each other, which will ensure the success of the international efforts aimed at stabilizing world peace as well as a greater agreement and cooperation for this purpose, not only in one or two regions of the world but in all of them.

In this way the government dashed the hopes of certain powers whose interests lay elsewhere. The significance of cooperation was expressed by the special correspondent of the weekly *National Solidarity* in the following simple words: India and the Soviet Union advance shoulder to shoulder toward their common goals.

During a conversation about that part of the Joint Communique which dealt with the synchronization of plans, S.C. Chaudry, the Chief Executive Officer of the Planning Commission, highlighted the importance of the September 1972 session of the Indian-Soviet Intergovernmental Joint Committee, which he also [described as] one of the antecedents of the present success. At that session, measures were taken for the first time to coordinate the plans of the Soviet Union and India, and [the plans] of India and the socialist countries. This was followed by further consultations between Soviet and Indian planning experts. In his view, the idea of coordination in planning created an opportunity for the exchange of expertise, and enabled Indian planning experts to gain knowledge about the making of short-, medium- and long-term plans. He also mentioned the multi-annual cooperation in the planning and realization of joint projects in this context.

His conclusion was that the cooperation between the planning organs of the two countries meant the intensification of relations in the future, not only in the principles of planning but also in concrete cooperation in production.

The Indian side highlights the political significance of the visit in a very definite way. On the basis of the analyses published in the various Indian newspapers and of our personal conversations, this may be summarized as follows:

- 1.) It is clear to all from the speeches made by the leaders of the Soviet Union and from the Joint Communique that the Soviet Union regards the role that India, led by Indira Gandhi, occupies in world politics as [a role] of historical importance.
- 2.) The Soviet Union approves and supports the aims set by the Indian government, because it has recognized that these [policies] will promote India's social and economic development.
- 3.) The Soviet leaders fully agree with India's foreign policy activities, because this way India actively facilitates the gradual relaxation of tension in the world. They agree with the policies which the Indian government pursues with the aim of establishing neighborly relations with the countries of the subcontinent and the Southeast Asian region.
- 4.) The Soviet Union attributes particular importance to the Indian policy that provides consistent support to the liberation movements against colonialism and to the struggle against racial discrimination, because this way India makes a contribution to the new economic system to be established in the world.

In political circles, the declared standpoint on transforming the region of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace is considered an important part of the Joint Communique. With regard to this question, they highlight, as a new element, that the two sides did not merely outline some kind of vague intentions but concretely expressed the Soviet Union's clear standpoint that the Indian Ocean should be free from military bases.

For India, this is a security question of vital importance, since they very definitely consider the American base built on Diego Garcia the most serious threat to India.

They also attribute great importance to the agreement according to which the governments of both the Soviet Union and India considered it necessary that in the future, they should discuss questions related to the strengthening of peace, and to international security and cooperation, at regular and systematic meetings held at the highest level, on the basis of the equality of the [two] states.

To offset the concord that was reached during the negotiations, certain journalists and commentators highlighted the fact that on two significant issues, the two sides adopted different standpoints:

The first was the question of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The second was that the Indian side adopted a reserved attitude with regard to the issue of establishing an Asian Collective Security System.

To concrete questions about what sort of standpoint India eventually adopted on this very important issue, the sum of the answers was that India could support such a system only if the whole of Asia participated in it, and, of course, it should not be akin to a military bloc in any sense, not the least because that would interfere with India's non-aligned status.

At the same time, they also highlighted the issue's Chinese aspects, which, they said, constituted a concrete, practical problem. Namely, China is not only fiercely opposed to any such idea and step, but it has also declared that it was nothing else but a "Soviet conspiracy" aimed at isolating China and posing a threat to its security. For this reason, they most emphatically denied the idea that such a system would increase the security of the whole of Asia and strengthen the Asian peoples' struggle against colonialism and imperialist conspiracies. Our contact persons who spoke about this question added that, in any case, other Asian countries also disapproved of the idea. For this reason, they concluded, India should follow another road. To the question about what sort of road it was, they replied that it should be [a road] that would lead to an increase of detente in Asia, contribute to the solving of the problems which currently aggravated relations between the Asian countries, and enabled the peoples of the continent to achieve joint security through the growth of the idea of solidarity.

Concerning the Sino-Indian relationship, the political circles – primarily the Sinologist university professors with whom we maintain contacts – made only cautious statements. They analyzed the fact that the Joint Communiqué had not mentioned this subject from various points of view.

Those who are less inclined to sympathize with the socialist countries linked this with the Pakistani question, and claimed that in Moscow, following an intense debate, the Soviet government had complied with India's request to discontinue the supply of certain types of Soviet arms (primarily modern tanks) to Pakistan.

Others regarded the Soviet Union's flexible standpoint on the development of Sino-Indian relations as its acceptance of India's positive foreign policy. They added that the Indian government, of course, assured the Soviet government that India would not fall into any trap set by Beijing, and it would not submit to [China] on the pretext of normalizing relations. All that India is doing on this issue is merely the elevation of relations to a qualitatively higher level.

Concerning India's [efforts] to improve its relations with its neighbors, the political circles hold a very positive opinion of the Joint Communiqué. They highlight, primarily in the question of normalizing Indian-Pakistani relations, the importance of a concurring Soviet

opinion. Nor do they consider it accidental that the Joint Communique also draws attention to the dangerous character of [certain] externally inspired anti-Indian steps.

The Soviet standpoint on this question is of vital importance for India. Its identical approach, they say, constitutes a serious warning addressed to Washington and some other capitals which continue to shower arms upon Pakistan, with an obviously anti-Indian aim. They add that this is also a warning to Beijing, which once again provides open support to Pakistan's aggressive plans, and also to Islamabad itself, which is engaged in a double game: on the one hand, it keeps making preparations for war, but on the other hand, it seeks to find opportunities for normalization.

As far as the United States is concerned, the Indians do not consider it accidental that Washington announced its massive new arms shipments to Pakistan right on the eve of Indira Gandhi's visit, and that Bhutto promptly traveled to Beijing in order to conclude various military agreements with China and, adopting the role of China's parrot, screech anew about the Kashmiri question.

Economic experts highlight the significance of the resolutions which were passed at the second and third sessions of the Intergovernmental Joint Committee, held in Moscow in September 1974 and April 1976, respectively. During these negotiations, agreements were reached on the permanent cooperation between the planning organs of the two countries. They expect that this coordination will play a great role in the finalization of India's fifth five-year plan, which is still being prepared. They also agreed that for the sake of making preparations for the next session of the Joint Committee, the Soviet-Indian joint study group would be constantly in operation.

Evaluating the visit and the Joint Communique, O.P. Sangal, editor-in-chief of the *Indian Left Review*, expounded that this constituted evidence that the Indian-Soviet friendship was not merely a concord between two governments but a friendship of two peoples. Although the visit was an official one, he expressed its deeper content by quoting the words which Indira Gandhi had said after her return: "neither the eyes can be arranged nor what I saw in them nor the smiles." O.P. Sangal also said that certain journalists tried to claim that the debate and non-agreement over the rupee-ruble exchange rate constituted the essence of the negotiations. He contrasted that with the opinion of Indira Gandhi, who declared in a very unambiguous way that the discussions and agreements about economic issues provided great advantages and development opportunities for India.

Namely, the agreement that the two governments reached covered not simply the development of foreign trade but also the multilateral expansion of economic cooperation, in which they explored such new opportunities as non-ferrous metallurgy, textile industry, copper procession, electronics, the manufacture of fancy-leather goods and color TV sets, agriculture, the provision of car service stations with equipment, and other sectors of the economic sphere.

The leaders and middle-level functionaries of the Congress Party also have extremely positive views about the visit. We recently discussed this with Congress deputy Nawal Kishore Sharma, who is a member of the Lower House, the Joint Secretary of AICC, the person in charge of the party's propaganda section, and a member of the Peace Council, and with Member of Parliament Shrikant Varma, a member of the Upper House (who is otherwise a writer).

While expressing their opinion, they noted the outstanding political importance of the visit, but in describing its practical, concrete [results], they switched to the subject of economic issues. They mentioned, as the antecedents of the current results, that in India, the Bhilai Steelworks has been regarded, for about two decades, as the first symbol of the Soviet Union's helpfulness, which was followed by the Bokaro Steelworks and later by the Malanjkhand copper plant. This is regarded as the nucleus from which the current cooperation in steel industry, energy generation, engineering, coal mining, oil and gas production, and the related training of technical experts has evolved.

During our conversations with the leaders and journalists of the CPI, they also pointed out primarily the political importance of the visit. From the perspective of the CPI's policy of supporting the positive goals of the government, they considered it very important. During our latest meeting, Comrades Lahiri and Mazumder spoke about that. At the same time, Sadham Mukherjee, a leading official of the CPI's news agency, highlighted the concrete economic achievements. He said that apart from the general importance of Soviet assistance, one should highlight as a concrete case the cooperation in the textile industry, in whose framework the Soviet Union would export cotton to India, which would be then re-exported to the Soviet Union in the form of finished products to be manufactured here. This, he said, would render possible the modernization of state-owned textile industry in India. On the part of the CPI, two issues are still subjected to criticism. For one thing, they voiced a complaint over the alleged Soviet praise for the positive policy of the Indian Congress Party, rather than the Indian government. Nor do they understand why it had been necessary to invite Sanjay Gandhi and to give him such a reception and program that he received from the Soviet government.

Concerning agriculture, he said that long-term production cooperation would be realized in such new fields as, for instance, the production of natural rubber and castor oil. The Soviet assistance that India is to receive for processing the immense quantities of bauxite mined in Northern India into aluminum will be also of outstanding importance. With this assistance, it will be possible to fulfill the objective of producing 500,000 metric tons of aluminum [per year].

During a conversation with P.P. Johar, who works in the Ministry of Agriculture, he said that they regarded the meeting as very significant for the development of Indian agriculture. He attributed outstanding value to two discussed subjects. One was the joint river control program to prevent the water of Indian monsoon rains from causing floods; the other was to prepare a joint program to increase the generation of cheap electricity. In this field, they will

work out the practical methods of harnessing natural resources.

Those contact persons of ours who can be regarded as economic experts attributed outstanding importance to the agreements aimed at developing the Indian-Soviet joint ventures, and in this context, to the cooperation to be realized in the supply of industrial complexes to third countries. They cited as an example the Ranchi Heavy Machine Building Plant, which will supply mechanical and electronic facilities and equipment to an aluminum works in Yugoslavia that is being built with Soviet assistance.

From what they said, it is also worth highlighting that Soviet-Indian bilateral cooperation also contributes to the development of India's multilateral economic relations. During my conversation with Virendra Mohan, a journalist for *The Economic Times*, he emphasized in this respect that, for instance, on the basis of the Indian-Iranian oil agreement, India provides Iran with iron ore, which will be processed in the blast furnace that the Soviet Union is going to build in Isfahan. To facilitate the procession, Iran is making substantial capital investments to develop the Indian iron ore combine in Kudremukh.

Those conversation partners of ours who maintain contacts with scientific circles pointed out that in addition to the previous fields of economic cooperation between the two countries, other spheres were also discussed during the negotiations. They highlighted the agreement that had been concluded on atomic energy, including the increased Soviet assistance in this field.

They pointed out that this issue was given special importance by the fact that recently Canada had unilaterally abrogated its contract with India, and refused to continue supplying the nuclear fuel and equipment that is indispensable for India. According to the information available for them, now the Soviet Union offered to provide the basic materials and equipment which had been hitherto supplied by Canada, and to supplement them on a continuous basis. They added, however, that the final agreement had not signed yet, because nuclear technologies vary from country to country. For this reason, further activity of the experts is necessary to assess which equipment would suit the Indian [nuclear] plants. Of course, this does not mean that the Soviet Union will also provide the know-how, which is carefully guarded by every nuclear power.

The Indians also greatly appreciate that supposed agreement on maritime transport which they cite as an example of the Soviet Union's flexibility and helpfulness. Namely, according to our informants an agreement was reached and that the principle of 50:50 would be accepted. Taking into consideration that the volume of Soviet exports to India is far greater, it is obvious that this should be regarded doubtlessly as a manifestation of the selfless generosity of the Soviet government.

In sum, Indira Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union has been regarded as very successful and extremely important by the competent Indian political and economic forums alike.

The Indian press, radio and television provided great publicity to the visit, and increased the number of writings and films depicting the life of the Soviet people. All this enhanced the popularity of the Soviet Union and the reputation of the socialist systems in Delhi, but presumably also all over India.

Dr. Ferenc Turi  
ambassador

**Document No. 11.**

**Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 17 May 1978.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1978, 62. doboz, 60-5, 003496/1978.

During my stay in Bombay, I visited [Homi] Sethna, the chair of the Atomic Energy Commission. He told me that he no longer expected the delivery of American nuclear fuel to occur, though Indian government circles still attach hopes to that. Sethna described their action as a typically American measure that is devoid of any moral or other basis.

He remarked with particular bitterness that before the implementation of the supply ban, the Americans had ensured that their partners – including the FRG – received a quantity [of nuclear fuel] which was sufficient to meet their needs. In the case of India, however, they enforced the ban. He is convinced that Israel and South Africa obtained sufficient quantities from American sources. He is of the opinion that within 2-3 years, India will be able to develop its own production of nuclear fuel to ensure the operation of its power plants. He considers it likely that [India] will be able to pursue a more open nuclear energy policy in the future, and this will be true for research activity, too.

There are good opportunities for *Hungarian-Indian cooperation in the field of atomic energy* [emphasis in the original], but in this respect he considers it necessary that the Hungarian side take the initiative. If we want to supplement or broaden the agreement, we should take the initiative. He might travel to Hungary on the occasion of the international atomic energy session to be held in Vienna. If we have a stake in that, I propose a Hungarian initiative, because Sethna and some of his colleagues might assist it. Some people do not regard his position as stable, and thus one could take good advantage of this seemingly temporary period.

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**Document No. 12.**

**Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 21 March**

**1979.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Soviet Union, 1979, 122. doboz, 145-1, 002480/1979.

The Soviet counselor told me the following about the visit of Comrade Kosygin:

*Three important agreements were signed: a long-term economic and commercial [agreement], a cultural agreement, and a health agreement [emphasis in the original]. Only in the case of the last one did certain problems crop up, for in India there are both private and state-owned institutions, which causes confusion in the system of reciprocity. In the end, this [agreement] was also signed, on the express proposal of the Foreign Ministry. The Soviets achieved that they would build the extension of the Soviet-planned steelworks, whose construction had been dragging on for years, with the exclusion of the capitalist multinational corporations [emphasis in the original] to which the Indians wanted to give the [commission]. At the request of Cde. Kosygin, the program in the countryside was shortened in order to give more time for political conversations. There was a five-hour private talk between the two prime ministers. The foreign minister could only explain himself because of his visit in China [in February], which the Indian prime minister also called unsuccessful. There is a visible difference of opinion between these two persons with regard to the evaluation of the visit. Problems arose over the wording of the communique, as Deo and Mehta (head of section and undersecretary of state) behaved in a cowardly and over-cautious manner. The joint communique resulted from a compromise. During the negotiations it was perceptible that the foreign minister was opposed to the prime minister, and that the latter's position was stronger. This time the issue of nuclear cooperation was not discussed, because they had signed such an agreement in January. They could not reach an agreement on the Cambodian question [emphasis in the original], despite the fact that the [Soviets] noticed that the Indian government was pressured by the public standpoint of the parties toward a more positive attitude.*

*The Indians asked for new arms and military equipment, and the Soviet side will fulfill their request [emphasis in the original]. Their conversation with the competent officials of the Indian CP was only of a formal nature. With Indira Gandhi, they discussed the RSS [Rashtryia Swayamsevak Sangh] and the Jan Sangh party, because she spoke about the judicial farce directed against her and her son. The Soviets are satisfied with the visit [emphasis in the original]. A detailed report will be sent by the next courier.*

– 66 – V. –

**Document No. 13.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in Pakistan to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 17 May 1979.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1979, 108. doboz, 119-4,



003411/1979.

Azimov, the Soviet ambassador over here, informed the heads of the diplomatic missions of the closely cooperating socialist countries about the situation of the Pakistani nuclear program, sharing the information he had obtained.

According to this information, Pakistan already possesses both the material and the intellectual capabilities to carry out nuclear explosions, and thus such a device can be manufactured within no more than one year and a half. The execution of the program is being accelerated by the recent discovery of uranium of a favorable composition near Dera Ghazi Khan. They began to set up the already available enrichment facility in the vicinity of the quarry.

In the view of the ambassador, due to political and prestige considerations it can be taken for granted that the explosion will be carried out sooner or later. Its timing will depend on how they evaluate the situation. Actively supported by Saudi Arabia and Libya, the Pakistani nuclear program is proceeding at an accelerated pace. According to the Soviet evaluation, it would pose a serious danger to peace and security if *the Arabs could lay their hands on nuclear weapons* [emphasis in the original].

For this reason, it is becoming less and less interesting whether we might be able to slow down the execution of the program. Instead, we should rather look for means *to prevent its successful completion* [emphasis in the original]. At the same time, however, one should be extremely cautious in this question because of the “Indian factor,” Comrade Azimov emphasized.

– 49 – K. –

**Document No. 14.**

**Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 14 June 1979.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1979, 61. doboz, 60-2, 004054/1979.

The Mongolian ambassador was summoned to the FM of this place with regard to the Dalai Lama’s visit in Mongolia and the Soviet Union.

They asked for an explanation of why he had been invited directly, rather than through the FM. During the discussion, it became clear that the Indian side did not approve the Dalai Lama’s trip to Mongolia, let alone the fact that he would also make a stopover in the Soviet Union. They told him that the Dalai Lama would have wanted to visit Leningrad as well, but, on the suggestion of the Indian FM, he desisted from that.

The Indian side expounded that for 20 years, no one had cared about the cause of the Tibetan refugees. Now, however, the situation has changed, and both Mongolia and the Soviet Union are interested in them. The burden of the financial support they need weighs heavily on India, particularly now when the Western countries have ceased to provide aid, for they do not want to evoke the disapproval of the Chinese government.

They accepted the Mongolian ambassador's explanation with reservations, and they are visibly disturbed by the Dalai Lama's first trip to the two socialist countries.

On the eve of the Dalai Lama's trip to Mongolia, he expounded to an official from our embassy that he strove to establish a permanent and regular relationship, and he wanted to invite Mongolian Buddhist priests to do scientific work in their center over here.

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**Document No. 15.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in Pakistan to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 13 February 1980.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1980, 113. doboz, 119-14, 001558/1980.

According to diplomatic [sources] – including the Indian Ambassador – and Pakistani sources, the visit of Sathe, an undersecretary of the [Indian] Foreign Ministry, has not yielded concrete results. Concerning the evaluation of the events in Afghanistan, the positions adopted by the two countries have not drawn nearer.

Sathe proposed to convene a conference, in which the neighboring countries would participate, to discuss the Afghan question. Pakistan did not accept the proposal. The Indian side also suggested that if Pakistan refrained from accepting U.S. military aid, India would not purchase combat aircraft from Britain.

At the meeting, they could agree only that they would continue the dialogue.

– 26 – F. –

**Document No. 16.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 16 February 1980.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Soviet Union, 1980, 126. doboz, 145-135, 001329/1/1980.

According to the evaluation of Deputy [Foreign] Minister Krishnan, Gromyko's visit, despite the fact that there were, and have remained, differences of opinion, might be regarded as useful and successful. Indian-Soviet relations are not based on a short-term, momentary assessment but on a solid foundation, and they guarantee the long-term cooperation of the two countries.

During the current discussions, both sides expressed their views on the situation that had arisen in the region. The difference [between their views] lies in that India considers the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan [a phenomenon] that might serve as a pretext for American-Chinese intervention by means of Pakistan. This would create a permanent source of danger in the region. It is India's foremost interest to reduce tension in the region. This is why it is of the opinion that the troops should be withdrawn.

He stressed that the local newspapers did not depict the negotiations in a sufficiently objective way.

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**Document No. 17.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in Pakistan to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 30 April 1980.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1980, 113. doboz, 119-130, 003408/1980.

The preliminary evaluation of the ambassadors of the closely cooperating socialist countries on President Zia-ul-Haq's visit to China and [North] Korea, which is about to take place between May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>:

1.) The visit has been preceded by extensive political preparations. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of this month, the Pakistani side gave an essentially negative reply to the Soviet leaders' message with regard to Afghanistan. Citing the resolutions of [the Organization of] the Islamic Conference, they inflexibly cling to their previous standpoint; they are not willing to negotiate until the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops, and not with B. Karmal's government, anyway. In Zimbabwe, President Zia-ul-Haq made statements that pleased the Chinese. The closure of the Pakistani embassy in Vietnam can also be evaluated as a gesture toward China. The reason of [Zia's] haste is that he seeks to negotiate with the Chinese leaders before Huang Hua's planned visit to India.

2.) Of the subjects to be discussed, Pakistan's demand to conclude a treaty of peace and friendship is likely to take priority. Pakistan's effort to achieve cooperation in the nuclear

field can be regarded as an issue of special importance. The process of making preparations for an atomic explosion is being hampered by new technical problems. Both in terms of domestic and foreign policy, conditions are unfavorable for carrying out an atomic explosion. For this reason, the Pakistani side presses for a joint explosion to be carried out at a Chinese test site. The third main theme encompasses the questions of military cooperation. The Pakistani side demands that not only arms but also defense factories should be provided free of charge.

3.) The purpose of [Zia's] visit in the DPRK is to further intensify the supply of arms, a process that started earlier.

4.) The fact that the Chinese side also raised India's hopes for an opportunity to normalize relations plays a substantial role in the Chinese reactions to the Pakistani ideas. This might actually set limits to the fulfillment of the exacting Pakistani demands.

– 68 – F. –

**Document No. 18.**

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 19 January 1982.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1982, 60. doboz, 60-10, 00599/1982.

Dear Comrade [Foreign Minister Frigyes] Puja!

Hereby I submit, as an attachment, the extremely confidential information about the Indian designs on Pakistan that I received from the Soviet ambassador. I wrote the memorandum in a way that the source of the information was not revealed in it. My request is that only the narrowest circles [of the leadership] should have access to this material and that it by no means should find its way back to the Soviets.

It is obvious that the Soviet Union must be aware of certain Indian conceptions. The ambassador firmly declared that they assisted India in its military preparations by all means.

In essence, India has concluded that only prevention can be expedient against the Pakistani atomic bomb.

New Delhi, January 1982

With comradely greetings,  
Ferenc Turi

Attachment:

Subject: Development of India's relationship with Pakistan

At present the relationship with Pakistan constitutes one of the main foreign policy problems for India.

In recent times, relations between Pakistan and the United States, and between Pakistan and China, have become closer, to the detriment of India. The Indian leadership is worried that the USA is providing Pakistan with massive military assistance. By arming Pakistan, the United States aims at reinforcing its presence in the region, applying direct pressure on India, and ensuring that support is provided to the Afghan counter-revolutionaries via Pakistan. In the last analysis, the objective of the USA is to establish its control over this region by means of Pakistan, and to gain strategic advantages in the area near the Soviet border. The Indian leadership is even more worried about the Pakistani atomic bomb. The Indian leadership is currently pondering which solution to choose. In Indian military circles, there is a quite widely held opinion that the Pakistani nuclear power plant, which is only 3-400 kilometers from Delhi, should be bombed in the Israeli manner. This idea is opposed by quite a few people in the Foreign Ministry. The latter assert that this would produce a very detrimental effect on India's international relations, and its position in the Non-Aligned Movement would become untenable.

An even more critical question – which has to be considered by the Soviet Union as well – is the reaction that a possible Indian-Pakistani war would elicit from the American side. According to the information available to the Indian intelligence service, the agreement signed by the United States and Pakistan has a secret military clause that would enable the USA to dispatch troops. The Soviet-Indian treaty of friendship renders it possible to dispatch Soviet troops to India if India faces a threat that is serious enough to warrant it. If the United States dispatched troops to Pakistan, evidently the Soviet Union could not stay idle. All this, however, would carry the risk of a direct confrontation between the two Great Powers.

It is estimated that India has a year to make a decision. By that time, the Pakistani atomic bomb will reach a stage of readiness for action. India has made certain that Pakistan is working on the development of the atomic bomb at a rapid pace. Conditions for this are provided by the United States, but China also gives assistance.

The other main question is China's reaction. The Indians have evidence that in recent times, China has dispatched numerous military units near the border with India, primarily to the section in Kashmir.

Under such circumstances, the Soviet Union provides assistance to India to strengthen its military potential. This assistance will be effective, it will enable the Indian military to take on Pakistan.

India has started to modernize its military at a rapid pace. It seeks to obtain the most

up-to-date arms (French Mirage aircraft). France, however, is not going to provide these aircraft before 1984-85. It claims that first it must satisfy its own needs and the demands which others submitted earlier.

By the way, the French presidential change was a certain disappointment to the Indian leadership. In contrast with the previous good relations – though relations are not bad at present, either –, their cooperation with President Mitterrand and the new French leadership keeps stalling.

According to our own experiences and the hitherto obtained information, India is preparing for the war with Pakistan at a rapid pace. One can hear the following opinion from Indians: India is going to bomb the Pakistani [nuclear] power plant, because it cannot tolerate the development of Pakistan's nuclear potential. Day by day, the newspapers publish communiques about the inauguration of new Indian military units and the establishment of new military services. It seems that the official news organs seek to habituate [Indian] public opinion to the idea of war.

Thus at present India sees no other way out but to prepare for a showdown with Pakistan, and, for the sake of this aim, to create an even more modern and up-to-date military equipped with advanced technology.

It depends on various internal, and primarily international, factors when this showdown will occur and whether it could occur at all. It is absolutely sure that if India considers the situation suitable, it will settle accounts with Pakistan. The government of Indira Gandhi is capable of doing so; no other Indian leadership would take on that.

Last but not least, the Soviet Union is also interested in weakening and crushing Pakistan. The Soviet Union repeatedly tried to bring Pakistan to reason, but to no avail. Pakistan is so close to the Soviet border that it cannot [be allowed to] become an American strategic base against the Soviet Union.

In parallel with the rapid development of its military, India continues the diplomatic dialogue with Pakistan, whose main subject is currently the non-aggression pact proposed by Pakistan. It has become clear to the Indians that this was suggested to Pakistan by the Americans for tactical reasons. India is absolutely doubtful about the sincerity of the Pakistani proposal. For tactical reasons, it is unable to reject the Pakistani proposal for the time being, but it will eventually reject it on the grounds that the Pakistani intention is not sincere. They will probably refer to Pakistan's offensive intentions with regard to the development of an atomic bomb. The undersecretary of state – when I visited him – declared that they expect Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi to come to Delhi in the near future. They will try to ascertain how sincere the Pakistani intentions are.

New Delhi, 19 January 1982

Ferenc Turi  
Ambassador

**Document No. 19.**

**Report, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the International Organizations in Vienna to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 26 January 1982.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1982, 60. doboz, 60-146, 001017/1982.

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, I had lunch with Indian Ambassador Dalal. During our conversation, he expounded in detail his standpoint on two issues:

1.) In his opinion, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) would indeed provide protection to India from Pakistan's planned nuclear explosions and from the latter's consequences. On the occasion of Premier Indira Gandhi's latest visit in Europe, when she summoned Dalal, he discussed this issue with her. They even raised the issue whether the standpoint that India had hitherto taken on the NPT should be modified. They eventually agreed that this was unnecessary. As an explanation, he added that he would tell me the background of this decision, even if his reasoning might be regarded as nationalistic. It is quite true that India is a developing country with a backward industry. However, it is also a fact that India, not only because it already exploded a nuclear device but also because the number of its inhabitants and the position it occupies in the Asian continent, should not be preoccupied with Pakistan. India's partner is not Pakistan but China. To this day the Indian intelligentsia has not forgotten how China attempted, during its aggression against India, not only to humiliate India but also to discredit the principles represented by Nehru ([that is, the principle of] peaceful co-existence).

Thus in the short run the NPT might be good against Pakistan, but in the long run India should be on the same side of the treaty where China is. After a brief pause, he added, "and where the other Great Powers are." In response to my question, he suggested that in his view, India would join the NPT only on the condition of becoming a member of the "nuclear club."

2.) In his opinion, the UNIDO Charter will be ratified by a sufficient number of countries (80), and also by the most important membership fee payers (USA, Soviet Union, etc.), by the end of 1982. When an African candidate appeared to have a chance to be elected Secretary-General of the UN, the re-election of [Abd-El Rahman] Khane seemed impossible, and Iglesias was the strongest candidate (see Ciph[ered] Tel[egram] No. 72/81.). Now it is again an African candidate who seems to have a chance to be elected the head of UNIDO. Dalal is also of the opinion that the Algerian government has not decided yet whether to propose the re-election of Khane.

However, there is also another problem to be solved: Khane's mandate will expire this

December. The conference to be held for the ratification and for the establishment of the specialized organization will certainly take place at a later date. For this reason, he considers it possible that Khane might be given an interim mandate to lead the affairs of the organization during the period between this December and the establishment of the specialized organization.

The issue of who should be the permanent candidate will be raised only after that. This person might be Khane, but he might also be some other African.

Tamas Lőrinc  
ambassador

**Document No. 20.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 1 October 1982.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1982, 60. doboz, 60-13, 005793/1982.

Political observers evaluate Indira Gandhi's visit in the Soviet Union by comparing it with the visit the prime minister paid to the USA. They are in agreement in that the purposes of the two high-level visits were entirely different. While her visit in the USA was aimed at "bridge-building," she visited the Soviet Union in order to stabilize relations. She achieved her objectives in both countries. It is regarded as natural that her negotiations with the Soviet leaders were unequivocal in most questions; the few disagreements which were known did not cause problems. The joint communique – to which observers attribute special importance, because it covered the issue of disarmament, the necessity of detente, the situation in Asia, the question of the Indian Ocean and the role of the non-aligned countries at unusually great length – accurately reflects the purpose and result of the visit. They are of the opinion that all this happened at Soviet initiative, with the aim of enabling India to take sufficient advantage of the non-aligned summit to be held in Delhi in March 1983.

Indian official circles consider the visit very successful, concerning both the evaluation of international questions and the further development of bilateral relations.

The press has covered the visit widely and in general positively; they publish a particularly high number of articles on the issue of what sort of decision the Indian government will make with regard to the high-capacity nuclear power plant offered by the Soviet Union, which is considered crucial from the perspective of future cooperation, too.

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**Document No. 21.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in the Soviet Union to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 28 July 1983.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1983, 60. doboz, 60-103, 004413/2/1983.

At the MID's [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] South Asia department, an official of our embassy was told that Rajiv Gandhi had been invited for an unofficial visit by a parliamentary group of the Supreme Soviet, and that his principal host was Comrade Shitikov.

They regard Rajiv Gandhi as a person who in the long run might play an important role in India's foreign policy, and for this reason, the primary purpose of the visit was to make him familiar with Soviet realities and the current state of bilateral relations. No concrete issues were raised during the talks.

The Soviet hosts laid great stress on the fact that this was the Indian leader's first independent trip abroad.

Rajiv Gandhi was received by Gromyko, Ustinov, Ponomarev, Kuznetsov, Arkhipov, Patolichev, Ryabov (SCEER [State Commission of External Economic Relations]), and Comrade Mishin, the first secretary of the Komsomol.

During his trip to the countryside, he visited the aircraft factory in Voronezh and the nuclear power plant which currently serves as a model for the similar Soviet facilities to be built in the future and in which foreign technical experts are also being trained. In Novosibirsk, he visited the institute of nuclear physics in order to become familiar with the practical results achieved in [Soviet] applied research, in which India shows increasing interest.

The Soviet side regards Rajiv Gandhi's visit as positive. They highlight his utterances on general international issues and on the necessity of developing Soviet-Indian relations even further. In the presence of the representatives of both the Soviet and the Indian press, the Indian politician also positively evaluated his visit in the Soviet Union.

– 152 – Janos Barabas –

**Document No. 22.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 27 March 1984.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-103, 002450/1984.

For restricted distribution only:

An influential Congress Party member of the parliament, who is usually a reliable informant, confidentially and in private told an official of our embassy that Indian government circles and the leading circles of the Congress Party regard the results of the Soviet defense minister's visit in India as "disappointing." The Soviet side was unwilling to provide the modern military technology that India asked for, and to share technologies [with India]. At the parliamentary session held in the recent days, government party deputies had heated conversations of an anti-Soviet character over this question and other irritating issues. According to the informant, all this will negatively affect the whole system of Soviet-Indian relations. "For the sake of Indian-Soviet friendship," the informant asked us to inform the Soviet comrades about this issue in an appropriate form. Over here we have not taken any step toward the Soviet embassy. I shared the information with our military attache, but he will not take any step, either.

– 87 – T. –

**Document No. 23.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry,  
28 March 1984.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-103,  
002450/1/1984.

For restricted distribution only:

The informant mentioned in Telegram No. 87 summarized the additional factors which disturb the Indian-Soviet relationship as follows:

- 1.) Indira Gandhi has not forgotten that in the aftermath of her downfall in 1977, she was completely "written off" by the Soviets who broke off all relations with her.
- 2.) The politicians of the Indian government party are offended that the Soviets maintain relations with them only as long as they are in high positions, or as long as the Soviets have a stake in that relationship.
- 3.) Soviet policy in India "has a couple of irons in the fire." The government is aware that the Soviet organs maintain contacts with the leaders of every political party, and they even frequently resort to financial influence.
- 4.) Middle-level Soviet leaders, while dealing with their Indian partners, adopt such an attitude as if the Soviet Union had India fully in its pocket, as if it were India's "big brother."

5.) The Soviet Union is unwilling to provide [India] with its most up-to-date achievements in sciences, engineering, and industrial technology.

6.) The representatives of numerous Soviet foreign trade organs are very corrupt. Among Indians, [their involvement in] the rice, tobacco, and tea rackets is well known.

The informant asked us to assist “those Indian political circles who are well-disposed towards the Soviet Union” by informing the Soviet comrades about these affairs, too, in an appropriate form. In the informant’s view, these problems might, sooner or later, seriously damage the relationship of the two countries unless they are remedied in time.

– 88 – T. –

**Document No. 24.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 13 August 1985.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1985, 121. doboz, 119-532, 004157/1985.

Vice-President [Ramaswamy] Venkataraman – who had been minister of defense earlier – told me that in his opinion, the news about the manufacturing of a Pakistani atomic bomb was a Pakistani bluff.

The point is rather that Pakistan would like to join the World Nuclear Association, in which India has been a member for several years and for which a certain level of nuclear capacity is necessary. Nevertheless, India was prepared for all contingencies, the vice-president said.

According to the information I received from another source, Pakistan is working on the preparations for manufacturing an atomic bomb, but India is doing so in an even more serious way. India intends to manufacture an atomic bomb, and it is waiting only for a suitable political situation or pretext.

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**Document No. 25.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 13 August 1985.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1985, 68. doboz, 60-532, 004156/1985.

A Soviet counselor told our counselor that in their opinion, the Indian government seriously considered developing an atomic bomb, but it has not made a final decision yet.

On the basis of the signs which have been observable in recent weeks, one may conclude that they have started to make the domestic and international public opinion psychologically prepared for the possibility of exploding an Indian atomic bomb. Such a test would also put the Soviet Union in a delicate position, because the USSR is consistently committed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, while at the same time India's nuclear armament would create an entirely new strategic situation in South Asia.

During Rajiv Gandhi's visit in Moscow, the Indian side sought to persuade the Soviet side to provide a nuclear reactor without the necessary Indian safeguards, but the Soviet side firmly refused to do so.

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**Document No. 26.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 23 October 1985.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1985, 68. doboz, 60-532, 004156/1/1985.

One of the Soviet counselors said they had become aware that in recent weeks the Indian political research institutes were bringing forward more and more arguments to prove that India's nuclear armament would bring only advantages. This campaign is headed by the institute of Dr. [K.] Subrahmanyam. Their main argument is that China's nuclear armament did not damage China's international prestige. On the contrary, since then China has become a member of the S[ecurity] C[ouncil], in essence achieved the status of the third superpower, and today both the Soviet Union and the USA seek to reach an agreement with China. India's nuclear armament would bring similar advantages.

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**Document 27.**

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 25 April 1986.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1986, 64. doboz, 60-10, 002794/1986.

Since our last report, the relations of the two countries [India and the Soviet Union] have continued to develop very extensively. High-level visits keep occurring, and an official,

high-level contact has been established between the two ruling parties as well. The Indian side greatly appreciates the domestic and foreign policy of the Gorbachev leadership, and the political cooperation of the two countries has become stronger in the issue of disarmament. Due to several factors – such as the intensification of India’s independent big power aspirations and the improvement of Indian-American and Sino-Soviet relations –, the factors which hinder cooperation have been brought to the surface to a greater extent than before. Despite the difficulties which have arisen, economic cooperation is becoming more extensive, and military relations are developing. The mutual festivals scheduled for next year are expected to be unprecedented social, political and cultural enterprises.

1.) High-level political meetings have continued.

Of these, Rajiv Gandhi’s “unexpected” visit in Moscow in last October stood out. It took place after the Indian premier’s attendance at the UN General Assembly and the Commonwealth summit, and the official visits he had paid to a number of countries. The importance of the visit was increased by the fact that the Indian premier visited the Soviet Union twice in half a year. He had multiple aims: to make the Soviet leadership familiar with the results of his visits, and gain information about the Soviet attitude towards the nearing Geneva summit. According to the information available for us, the Indian premier coordinated the new arms limitation proposals of the “Delhi Six” with the Soviet leadership, which met with the approval of the Soviet leadership. According to the available information, Rajiv Gandhi sought to gain the tacit support of the Soviet leadership for the development of India’s nuclear armament on the grounds that Pakistan’s nuclear program posed a threat to India’s security. India did not get such Soviet support.

This January, a Soviet parliamentary delegation headed by V.V. Kuznetsov, an alternate member of the Politburo and the vice-chair of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, visited India, and attended the National Day celebrations. Kuznetsov was received at the highest level. At the reception held in honor of the Soviet delegation, Vice-President Venkataraman spoke warmly about the relations of “special importance” which “have passed the test of time,” and about the Soviet assistance that enabled India “to build a strong industrial infrastructure and a self-sustaining economy.” However, according to Indian journalists Kuznetsov took offense at the fact that the Indian side did not pay due attention to the Soviet disarmament program, which had been announced on January 15<sup>th</sup>, and was not sufficiently critical of the negative American conduct in the issues of disarmament.

High-level official relations have been established between the ruling parties. A CPSU delegation headed by CC member [Viktor] Afanasyev, the editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, attended the celebrations of the centennial of the Congress movement, which were held in Bombay in last December. Afanasyev was received by Rajiv Gandhi as well. The editor-in-chief of *Pravda* announced that Comrade Gorbachev would visit India within this year. Apart from the delegations of the Indian Communist parties, the delegation of the Congress Party – headed by Vice-Chair Arjun Singh, the second highest ranking leader of the party – also attended the XXVII<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU. The Indian politician discussed the state of

bilateral relations with Gorbachev, and in the interview he gave to the Soviet press, he evaluated the work of the CPSU Congress and the Soviet efforts for disarmament very positively.

According to Soviet and Indian opinions, it is likely that Comrade Gorbachev's visit in India will take place within this year.

2.) In general, Indian public opinion and the press evaluated the measures which the Gorbachev leadership took in domestic and economic policy, and the steps and initiatives of Soviet foreign policy, very positively. They concluded that the internal political situation of the Gorbachev leadership was stable, and it was further reinforced at the Soviet party congress. Both the Indian official circles and the press appreciated that the Soviet leadership responded positively to the disarmament initiatives of the "Delhi Six."

3.) At the same time, in the political relations one could clearly perceive the surfacing of those factors which hinder cooperation. In our opinion, the main reasons for that are as follows: the intensification of India's big power aspirations, including its insistence on its right to develop nuclear weapons; a certain Indian rapprochement toward the United States; and the ongoing progress of the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations.

The disturbing factors appeared primarily in the following fields:

India sharply criticized the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its review conference, and made it known that India had the right to possess nuclear technology for both peaceful and military purposes. In this question, the Soviet Union and the United States put joint pressure on India when in the declaration published about the Geneva summit; they expressed their commitment to the system of nuclear non-proliferation, and called upon those states which had not yet signed the treaty to join it. Nor could India gain the tacit support of the Soviet Union to India's nuclear weapons program by citing the "Pakistani nuclear threat." The conclusion of the agreement on the supply of Soviet nuclear reactors is still being postponed, because the Soviet side insists on international inspections.

India sharply – though not in an official form – rejected the Soviet proposal that called upon the five nuclear powers to hold a meeting to discuss the questions of disarmament and international security. It made it known that India could not be left out from such negotiations.

Nor has the Indian side reacted actively to the Soviet proposal to establish security in Asia. As we reported earlier, the Indian authorities hindered even the propagation of this proposal in India, and – according to information received from a Soviet source – India would like to take over the initiative in this issue, with the exclusion of the Soviet Union, China and Japan.

The Indian government and public opinion watches the Sino-Soviet rapprochement with distrust. It caused indignation in India that Comrade Gorbachev extensively covered China in

his report at the [CPSU] Congress, and expressed the Soviet Union's readiness to normalize relations, whereas – in contrast with the practice of the earlier congresses – he failed to mention India.

In confidential conversations, the Soviets tell us that they disapprove the fact that the Indian government, in the hope of economic advantages, has toned down its criticism of American policies.

4.) All in all, the economic, commercial, technical and scientific relations are developing well.

On 6 November 1985, the Soviet State Planning Committee and the Association of Indian Engineering Industry (AIEI) signed an agreement that specified the fields in which the two sides would make efforts to achieve cooperation in production as well as in technology and science. The Indian side emphasized that the significance of production cooperation, compared to trade, would continue to increase. They asked the Soviet side to specify the volume of its imports of each major Indian commodity in the long run, in which case they would be able to guarantee the supply of goods by creating appropriate [production] capacities. The signed agreement was submitted to the meeting which the work team dealing with production cooperation held in December, and incorporated into the five-year trade agreement.

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, negotiations held at the level of deputy ministers started in Delhi about the conclusion of the five-year commercial agreement. On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, the trade agreement for 1986-1990, the credit agreement on the supply of Soviet machines and equipment, and the agreement on long-term shipments were signed by the two ministers of trade in Moscow. The agreement plans to increase the volume of trade, which was 45 billion rupees during the previous five-year period, 1.5 to 2 times during the next five-year period. India will supply mainly agricultural products, ores and minerals, chemical materials, leather, textiles, and engineering products, while the Soviet Union will increase its exports primarily in machinery, equipment, and chemical fertilizer. They agreed on that Indian companies would participate in the construction of hotels in the Central Asian republics [of the USSR], and cooperation in production would undergo a significant increase.

In early January, an Indian-Soviet economic seminar was held in Delhi, at which presentations were made by the economic leaders of the Indian government as well as leading businessmen. Minister of Industries [Narayan Dutt] Tiwari called for cooperation in production and for an increase in the trade of industrial and processed goods. The Indian minister of trade proposed to increase the trade of new, modern products, for which purpose both sides should improve its marketing activities. The chair of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) stated that 80 percent of the Indian exports to the Soviet Union were produced by the private sector. For this reason, it was important to increase production cooperation between Indian private firms and Soviet enterprises, primarily in the following fields: machine tools, refrigerators, air conditioners, computers,

metallurgical, chemical and pharmaceutical facilities, and railroad facilities.

Deputy Foreign Minister Jain called for a more effective utilization of credits.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, an agreement and a work plan on cooperation in computer production and electronics were signed in Delhi. On the basis of these [agreements], India will export computers and electronics worth 1.670 million rupees, while it will import such goods worth 620 million rupees. Among others, they agreed to jointly develop and manufacture a personal computer. Both sides will develop programs and exchange them.

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, a two-year agreement on technical and scientific cooperation in the field of agronomy was signed in Moscow.

In the economic and commercial relations, the decrease of oil prices causes a problem. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Indian government decided that for the Soviet oil and petrochemical products to be contracted in the future, the world market prices should be considered authoritative. This led to serious debates over prices, and it is also difficult [to decide] which additional Soviet products India should purchase in order to maintain the balance of trade. According to Indian opinions, this is one of the issues which are to be solved at the current session of the Indian-Soviet joint economic commission.

5.) Military cooperation is progressing satisfactorily. Nearly 80 percent of India's arms purchases, and of its acquisition of [defense] production technologies, is still from the Soviet Union. In the second half of last year, the USSR started to supply Il-76 MD military transport aircraft, and it is said that Arjun Singh received a promise in Moscow that India would be given the latest-model MiG fighter planes it had asked for. It seems that the Indian government is increasing its room for maneuver vis-à-vis the Soviet Union by conducting negotiations with several developed capitalist countries – including the USA – on the purchase of modern arms and military technologies. Some confusion was caused by the disappearance of two Soviet made Indian military transport aircraft for unknown reasons.

6.) Cultural relations are still very extensive, and they have been extended to new fields and forms.

The more important events were the following:

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, a two-year agreement on sports exchanges was signed in Delhi at the ministerial level. Apart from the exchange of athletes, this would include the exchange of coaches and cooperation between sports physicians.

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, an educational agreement on cooperation in the field of technical training was signed in Moscow. They agreed to have direct exchanges between educational institutions.



On March 14<sup>th</sup>, an agreement on inter-archival cooperation was signed. They will hold exhibitions on the early history of Russian-Indian relations, and organize seminars. They will make a documentary about Soviet-Indian relations since the proclamation of Indian independence. The director of the Soviet Archives presented valuable archival objects.

*Mahatma Gandhi*, a book by A.V. Gorev, attracted great attention in India, for the Soviet author, in contrast with the previous view, called Gandhi a revolutionary leader, the leader of the Indian masses.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, Soviet Minister of Culture [Pyotr N.] Demichev and N. Rao, the Minister for the Development of Human Resources, signed an agreement, according to which they will mutually hold festivals next year. In the framework of this one-year series of programs, they will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of Indian independence. In both countries, the programs will be extended to the entire countries, and include a variety of political, cultural, and social actions. According to the cultural counselor of the Soviet embassy, the programs will be without precedent in their magnitude.

Jozsef Olah  
ambassador

**Document No. 28.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 12 November 1986.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1986, 65. doboz, 60-4, 002134/3/1986.

A Soviet diplomat said that according to their evaluation, it is nearly inevitable that India will become a nuclear power in the near future, Soviet efforts notwithstanding. The main negative consequences of such a development would be as follows:

- 1.) The edifice of nuclear non-proliferation will collapse, many pro-Western countries – including Pakistan, Israel, and South Africa – will openly take the path of nuclear armament. The danger of local nuclear conflicts will increase.
- 2.) A new anti-Soviet campaign will unfold, claiming that India became a nuclear power with Soviet support.
- 3.) The process of nuclear disarmament will become even more complicated.

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**Document No. 29.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 24 March 1987.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1987, 58. doboz, 60-4, 002195/1987.

The counselor heading the foreign policy group of the Soviet embassy confidentially told Comrade Újlaki that if India became a nuclear power, in the formulation of the Soviet standpoint they would take into consideration, aside from the negative factors, that the Indian nuclear potential would essentially strengthen the strategic position of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. To a certain extent it would also alleviate the military burden weighing on the Soviet Union, since hitherto the latter has been compelled to counter the potential of as many as four nuclear powers.

In our view, it is not impossible that the competent Soviet organs are already pondering what standpoint the Soviet Union should adopt, because they realistically reckon with the contingency of India becoming a nuclear power.

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**Document No. 30.**

**Memorandum, Hungarian Foreign Ministry, August 1987.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1987, 58. doboz, 60-4, 002195/2/1987.

For a long time, the Indian bourgeoisie has been striving to achieve such a status for this country that would make India's regional dominance unquestionable, and enable it to pursue its aims in the Asian continent, and in the main questions of world politics, more effectively than at present. Due to the country's limited economic potential and the political antagonisms crisscrossing the South Asian region, [India's] efforts to assert its dominance face serious obstacles even in the region that is immediately adjacent to India. In the opinion of the Indian leading circles, the power they covet can be attained through the speeded-up modernization of the army and the creation of an independent nuclear strike force. The latter would enable the country to join the ranks of the nuclear powers – as the sixth one.

The Indian government considers the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which was concluded in 1968, a form of discrimination against the developing countries, and refuses to join it. Apart from the nuclear powers, India has been the only country that carried out a nuclear test (in 1974). Lately, the Indian government disregarded the joint declaration on the prevention of the further proliferation of nuclear weapons that was made at the Soviet-American summit held in Geneva in November 1985.

In the 1980s, the necessity of India's nuclear armament has been discussed [in that country]

with increasing intensity, with particular reference to the Pakistani threat. This has been particularly true for the period following the inauguration of the Rajiv Gandhi administration. In recent times, the prime minister himself also repeatedly made public statements in which he referred to India's option to manufacture nuclear weapons.

According to the official Indian standpoint, at present the country does not possess nuclear weapons, but India is fully capable of manufacturing atomic weapons, and it is constantly developing these capabilities. In practice, it is only a question of political decisions whether India will join the ranks of the countries possessing nuclear weapons. However, it will not take this step unless "the circumstances compel the Indian government to do so."

To justify its ambition of becoming a nuclear power, the Indian government mentions Pakistan's nuclear armament as its foremost argument. In India's opinion, in the recent years Pakistan has practically developed its own nuclear weapon, which it would be able to test at any time. China is cooperating with Pakistan in this field, and the United States also fails to take actual steps against Pakistan.

Thwarting the "Chinese threat" is a priority of the Indian defense doctrine. The strategic conflicts between the two countries, and their competition for hegemony over Asia, are almost of an antagonistic nature. The existence of the Chinese nuclear strike force, and the feeling of being subjected to "disarmament" – which has appeared in the wake of the Sino-Soviet rapprochement – reinforce the position of those circles who press for the manufacturing of Indian nuclear weapons. The internal pressure exerted by the rightist parties also has an effect in favor of the independent development of Indian nuclear weapons.

According to the Soviet evaluation, it is practically inevitable that India will become a nuclear power sooner or later. This step might lead to numerous negative consequences: The edifice of nuclear non-proliferation will collapse, many pro-Western countries (Pakistan, Israel, South Africa) will openly take the path of nuclear armament. The danger of a local nuclear conflict will increase, and the process of nuclear disarmament, which is energetically supported by the Indian government at various international forums, will become even more complicated.

Our country shares the reservations which the Soviet Union and the socialist countries have about the Indian nuclear program. Up to now, we have not published any official Hungarian declaration on this question.

Budapest, August 1987

**Document No. 31.**

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 9 February 1988.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1988, 46. doboz, 60-40,

00750/1/1988.

The treaty between the Soviet Union and the USA on the elimination of shorter- and intermediate-range missiles, which was signed in last December, evoked an unequivocally positive reaction from the Indian leadership. Following its signing, the government declaration that Minister of State for External Affairs [Kunwar] Natwar Singh read to the upper house of the parliament characterized the INF treaty as an act of historical importance both in a political and a psychological sense, and emphasized that this proves the correctness of the efforts which India had made for the sake of nuclear disarmament during the previous decades. One can gather from the Indian standpoint that they regard the agreement as a bilateral treaty that is only the beginning of a global process of nuclear disarmament.

The parliamentary debate created an opportunity for the Indian government to reaffirm its earlier standpoint on refusing to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The minister of state of foreign affairs repeatedly contrasted the peaceful character of India's nuclear program with China's status as a nuclear power. The Indian reactions make it clear that India's standpoint on the Non-Proliferation Treaty might be modified only in the framework of a global process of nuclear disarmament. The speech Premier Rajiv Gandhi made in late January at the summit of the "Six" [the Six-Nation Five-Continent Peace Initiative] in Stockholm confirms that India energetically strives to extend the circle of countries participating in nuclear disarmament to every power which possesses nuclear weapons, including China.

The Gandhi government has an interest in such a global process of nuclear disarmament which would be completed by a certain time and lead to the elimination of all nuclear armaments in the long run, and which would be extended to the near-nuclear states as well. The latter [aim] is motivated primarily by India's anxiety over the development of Pakistan's nuclear capacity. Although in Stockholm Gandhi did not mention Pakistan by name, he openly took a stand against the practice that near-nuclear states, "clandestinely or openly," could receive assistance from some nuclear powers. This was obviously meant to criticize the policy that the USA, and, to a lesser extent, China, pursued toward Pakistan.

The standpoint the Indian premier expressed at the summit of the "Six" confirmed that India's efforts in the field of strengthening international security and facilitating disarmament continue to be in accordance with the objectives of the socialist countries, and support the latter. For instance, Gandhi, calling for a complete and extensive nuclear disarmament, took a stand against the doctrine of "nuclear deterrence," the militarization of space, and the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, and firmly came out in favor of signing a treaty on the complete and universal prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, and of radically reducing conventional armaments.

A remarkable element of the speech the Indian premier made in Stockholm is that Gandhi, analyzing the questions of disarmament in a broader context, called for the creation of such an effective structure of international security in which there would be no room for "outdated

thinking, dangerous delusions and destructive military doctrines.” According to India’s standpoint, only such an approach to international security can serve as a basis for preventing the danger of nuclear confrontation once and for all, and for making the elimination of the arms race an irreversible process. All this indicates that the content of the Delhi Declaration, which was signed during Comrade Gorbachev’s visit to India in 1986, increasingly finds its way into India’s practical thinking about global politics.

From the conversations we have had with the foreign policy and diplomatic circles over here, one may draw the conclusion that in comparison with their earlier summits, in Stockholm the “Six” were less able to accept such a new document of a mobilizing character that could produce a meaningful effect on the further disarmament process. This may be explained, above all, by the fact that the intensification of Soviet-American dialogue, the signing of the INF agreement, and the Soviet-American joint declaration accepted on that occasion, has hindered the “Six” in taking the initiative.

The Stockholm declaration of the “Six,” despite its positive aspects, contains few new elements. In essence, only the proposal aimed at establishing an integrated, multilateral system of inspections under the aegis of the UN belongs to the latter category. According to local sources, this initiative came from the Indian side, primarily with the aim of strengthening the multilateral character of the nuclear disarmament process and thus broadening India’s opportunities to play a role in it. However, the feasibility of the proposal is quite doubtful, because in the very issue of inspections, the two Great Powers managed to find a mutually acceptable platform that has considerably contributed to the conclusion of the agreement signed in December. While the Soviet Union welcomed this initiative, it met with a categorical rejection by the United States. Presumably, the Soviet Union’s positive reaction is based more on [its intention] to provide political support to the activity of the “Six” than on the acknowledgement of the feasibility of the initiative.

Jozsef Olah  
ambassador

**Document No. 32.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 21 July 1988.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1988, 46. doboz, 60-40, 00750/3/1988.

According to the information provided by a Soviet political counselor, President Venkataraman’s visit in Moscow exceeded the protocol framework for which the Soviet side had been prepared. During the discussions, the Indian president laid stress upon the political issues, particularly Pakistan and Afghanistan. He castigated the Pakistani leadership’s nuclear weapon program in an extremely sharp tone, and with regard to this issue, he emphasized the

threat posed to India. He asked the Soviet Union to provide India with the most advanced military technology, with special respect to airborne warning facilities. He announced [India's] interest *in purchasing three additional nuclear-powered submarines* [emphasis in the original]. The Soviet side promised to study the requests. Venkataraman confirmed their commitment to the current Afghan leadership. He expounded that India was ready to support the Afghan government "by all means." The Soviet side attributed political importance to the fact that the Indian president called Afghanistan an ally.

Concerning the questions of disarmament, there were disagreements [between Venkataraman and his hosts] over the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Soviet side disapproved of the proposal that the Indian premier had presented in the U.N., according to which the current treaty should be replaced by a new one after 1995. They emphasized that the Soviet Union considered it necessary to prolong the current Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

*Concerning Comrade Gorbachev's visit, which is scheduled for November* [emphasis in the original], the Indian president agreed in principle with the idea that the agreement on the establishment of an international space research center in Delhi should be signed during the visit.

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### **Document No. 33.**

#### **Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 10 November 1988.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Soviet Union, 1988, 95. doboz, 145-13, 004467/1988.

According to the information provided by a Soviet diplomat, during Gorbachev's visit to India, which is scheduled for the period between November 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, several agreements will be signed, primarily on the further broadening of economic cooperation and on international issues, but there is also some talk of the supply of new military equipment and arms. Concerning the latter issue, he remarked that the Soviet Union would be ready to provide India with advanced military technology in the future, too.

He said that the talks about the Soviet Union's further active involvement in the construction and development of Indian nuclear power plants were in an advanced stage.

They will publish a joint communique on the visit.

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**Document No. 34.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 25 November 1988.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1988, 45. doboz, 60-103, 00756/3/1988.

On the basis of the 30-minute conversation I had with Foreign Minister [P.V. Narasimha] Rao, who attended the reception held to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Hungarian-Indian diplomatic relations, and [of the information received] from the competent officials of the FM as well as from additional Indian and other sources, one should pay attention to the following aspects of the development of *Soviet-Indian relations* [emphasis in the original], in the context of Gorbachev's visit:

The visit reinforced the Soviet-Indian special relationship. This is indicated by the top-level discussions held in an intimate atmosphere, the signing of four agreements (nuclear reactors, credits worth 3.2 million rubles, cooperation in space research, agreement on double taxation), the joint communique, and the declarations which the members of the Indian government made in the parliament. *Nevertheless, the Indian side is perceptibly worried about how predictable the future course of Soviet foreign policy might be, that is, they are unsure of the extent to which the Soviet Union is going to re-evaluate its earlier role in Asia* [emphasis in the original], and they are under the impression that the signals they receive are not unequivocal.

During the confidential discussions (instead of the originally planned brief meeting of a protocol nature, the head of state and the premier conducted negotiations for 9 hours, Gorbachev's visit was prolonged from one day to nearly three days), the central question was the evaluation of *the relationship with China* [emphasis in the original]. The Soviets made it clear that they wanted to normalize their relations with China, and called upon India to do likewise.

India has no confidence that the Chinese leadership is completely absorbed in its modernization program and other domestic tasks. India feels aggrieved at any plan which would perpetuate the monopolistic position of the nuclear powers, and which would thus put India in an inferior position vis-à-vis China, too. The different [Soviet and Indian] views on China have resulted in the that the joint communique, though it mentions several international issues, does not contain any reference to China. R. Gandhi declared that Sino-Soviet and Indian-Chinese relations were not linked to each other, "they are of a [mutually] exclusive nature."

The Indian side has strong doubts about the situation in *Afghanistan* [emphasis in the original], they are afraid that the Soviet withdrawal might open the door to a pro-Pakistani Islamic fundamentalist regime. India is also troubled by the fact that, in their opinion, the Soviet Union is sacrificing *Vietnam* [emphasis in the original], and by this means it opens the

door to Chinese influence in Indochina.

The differences of opinion about the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* [emphasis in the original] still persist, as India intends to leave the door open to its own “nuclear option.” As a consequence, there are many different elements in the [Soviet and Indian] conceptions of disarmament, though it is still possible to [arrange] joint actions and documents.

India, together with the Soviet Union, wants to reinforce the role of the UN, but makes no secret of the fact that it does not consider the *present structure of the UN* [emphasis in the original] suitable for the new international realities. According to the Indian arguments, this structure reflects the circumstances which existed in the wake of World War II, and does not take into consideration of the growing importance of Japan, the FRG, India, and the Third World in general.

In the opinion of certain Indians, the Soviet “New Thinking is a dangerous mixture of selfish interests and uncertain paternalism.” Gorbachev did not meet the representatives of the fraternal parties and the press.

The General Secretary of the CPSU publicly called the rumors about the cooling of Soviet-Indian relations (which were never published) “baseless speculation.” The currently held, very intense parliamentary debates do not touch upon the Moscow-Delhi relationship, the parties rudely debating with each other are still in agreement on the further maintenance of close relations with the Soviet Union.

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#### **Document No. 35.**

#### **Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in the Soviet Union to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 1 February 1989.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j India, 1989, 38. doboz, 60-13, 00742/1989.

At our request, on January 30<sup>th</sup> E.P. Ivanov, the head of the Indian Department of the MID [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], provided us with an evaluation *about India's current domestic and foreign policies and their bilateral relations* [with India] [emphasis in the original].

At present, the most important task Rajiv Gandhi faces is to make thorough preparations for the *parliamentary elections* [emphasis in the original] and ensure the victory of the Congress Party. The defeat they suffered in Tamil Nadu is an uncomfortable development, all the more so because the Premier was also personally involved [in the campaign]. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to draw conclusions from this case for the whole country, for this state never constituted a stronghold of the Congress, and the development of the Tamil question and the Sri Lankan situation also played a role in it. According to the Soviet evaluation, R.



Gandhi and his followers were “chilled” just in time, because this shock made them realize that they would not be able to win the national elections unless they had a carefully prepared electoral program, strategy, and tactics. As early as last November, during M.S. Gorbachev’s visit in India, the Soviets felt that the utterances of Rajiv Gandhi reflected excessive self-confidence, which has now brought its own punishment. R. Gandhi will certainly draw the necessary political and organizational conclusions from this defeat.

In its electoral campaign, the Congress Party will concentrate its forces primarily in the northern region, where it must win by all means. It seems that R. Gandhi will not resort to the method of holding elections at an earlier date, and thus they will take place at the end of the year or early in 1990. The Soviet side expects that the Premier and his party will surely win, but its victory will be much more marginal than the latest one was.

Punjab, where stabilizing the situation appears to be extremely difficult, is still one of the most neuralgic points in Indian politics. Matters are greatly complicated by the fact that the Sikh separatists enjoy the support of Pakistan. Among others, this is why India is worried about the prospect that following the settlement in Afghanistan, Pakistan, according to all indications, will redeploy a substantial part of the troops currently stationed along the Afghan border in the direction of India. According to the Soviet evaluation, one cannot expect any significant change *in the Indian-Pakistani relationship* [emphasis in the original] in the near future.

All in all, one can regard *R. Gandhi’s visit to Beijing* [emphasis in the original] as successful. This was a delicate mission from the perspective of domestic politics, too, but in the end the Premier gained more than he lost, and he can even make some political capital of it. Before the visit, the Soviets made it unambiguously known to the Indian side that they had a stake in the improvement of Indian-Chinese relations. During his current visit to Beijing, Foreign Minister Shevardnadze will tell the Chinese, too, that the Soviet Union supports the Sino-Indian rapprochement.

According to the Soviet evaluation, India plays a positive role in the *Cambodian* [emphasis in the original] settlement, in which its good relationship with Vietnam constitutes an important element. Indonesia and other ASEAN countries watch India’s activities with a certain anxiety and jealousy, because they are not interested in the growth of Indian influence in Southeast Asia.

The Soviets greatly appreciate India’s policy toward *Afghanistan* [emphasis in the original]. India supports the establishment of a broadly based coalition government, in which the PDPA [People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan] and personally Najibullah would also participate, in Afghanistan. The Soviet side urges the Indians to get actively involved in the development of the Afghan economy. The Indian side maintains extensive contacts with the Pashtun tribes, and they also have persons of influence in Pakistan. The Soviet side expects that concerning the developments in Afghanistan, it will be possible to take advantage of these opportunities in the future, too.

On the issues of the *Middle Eastern* [emphasis in the original] settlement, India adopts a position which is practically identical with that of the Soviet Union. It pursues a constructive policy with regard to the Namibian affairs.

In the questions of *disarmament* [emphasis in the original], there are many common characteristics in the approach of the Soviet Union and India, but there are also certain different elements. For the purpose of expressing the Soviet standpoint in detail, the Soviets are planning to send Deputy Foreign Minister V.P. Karpov to India in early February.

The Soviet side intends to draw the Indians' attention to the fact that, in their opinion, the activity of the "Six" has considerably lost momentum, and it is in decline. To their knowledge, the Greeks are also worried about that. The Soviet side will induce India to take the initiative in making the "Six" more active. According to the plans, the Soviet Union, once it completes its withdrawal from Afghanistan, will also call upon the "Six" to facilitate a political settlement there.

From the perspective of the Soviet Union's Asia policy, India continues to be a country of crucial importance. Motivated by their own national and international interests, both sides strive to maintain and reinforce the existing system of relations. At the same time, the overall picture also includes the fact that *not every concrete manifestation of the new Soviet foreign policy thinking is given a clearly positive reception by the Indian side* [emphasis in the original]. Particularly in the case of Asia, they have certain anxieties, reservations, and occasionally even different concrete interests, and they are anxious about their current special status in Soviet policy. As far as possible, the Soviet side maximally takes into consideration India's sensitivities, special interests, and even some of its regional ambitions. This is why they do not support, for instance, certain Pakistani or Nepali proposals concerning the [South Asian] region which would otherwise be in accordance with Soviet foreign policy.

In the field of foreign policy, India, apart from maintaining its stable relationship with the Soviet Union, makes efforts to intensify cooperation with the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, and within the latter region, particularly with the EC countries. The smaller European socialist countries, on an individual basis, do not belong to the regions to which [India] attributes particular importance.

In 1988, the volume of *Soviet-Indian trade* [emphasis in the original] reached 6 billion rubles. It is known that at the highest level, the two sides set themselves the task to increase the volume 2.5 times by 1993. To achieve this aim, it would be necessary to increase the volume of trade by 30 percent per annum, which appears hardly possible for the time being. Previously, shipments of crude oil constituted 90 percent of the value of Soviet exports. One could hardly increase the current volume of crude oil shipments, which is 3.5 million metric tons, to a significant extent, though it might be possible to increase it to 4 million tons. They would like to achieve a breakthrough primarily in the export of machinery and equipment, but this will not be easy. They are planning to establish a new form of cooperation in the

manufacture of civilian aircraft. They would jointly produce Tu-300b passenger planes, for which India would manufacture Rolls-Royce engines produced under license. They are planning to establish joint enterprises in biotechnology, electronics, and in the construction of a nuclear power plant.

The next session of the intergovernmental commission for economic, technical and scientific cooperation, at which the Soviet delegation will be headed by Deputy Premier [Vladimir M.] Kamentsev, will be held in Delhi between 9-15 March 1989. It is possible that Comrade Shevardnadze will visit India before that date, but the PB has not made yet a decision on that issue.

– 19 – Sandor Rajnai –

**Document No. 36.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in Pakistan to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 13 February 1989.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1989, 71. doboz, 119-4, 001023/1989.

Concerning the successful *Pakistani missile test* and the [Pakistani] *nuclear program* [emphasis in the original], the Indian naval attache said the following:

According to the information available for them, Swedish and Italian companies were involved in the development of that missile, whose range is approx. 300 kilometers, and [the possibility of] Chinese [involvement] cannot be excluded, either. For the time being, they regard it as a prestige program. Benazir Bhutto was only subsequently informed about the test.

They are convinced that Benazir has not been appropriately informed yet about the real situation of the Pakistani nuclear program, and thus her statements on its peaceful nature cannot be considered accurate. They are aware of the visit that the head of the Pakistani program paid to China in November 1988, in whose light it appears likely that there is intense cooperation [between Pakistan and China]. Nevertheless, they have doubts about the news according to which the Pakistani nuclear weapon might be tested at the Lop Nor site. In their opinion, China is aware of that a Pakistani nuclear test would trigger an immediate Indian reaction, and nowadays China is not interested in launching a nuclear arms race in South Asia.

Another issue:

Hereby I note that [the Pakistanis] contacted Tibor Deri, the trade director of Idex [Enterprise] who was here as a member of a Chamber of Commerce delegation headed by Comrade

Lőrincze, and expressed their interest in beryllium-enrichment [*sic*] technology. Taking into consideration the intensifying American pressure related to the Pakistani nuclear program, I consider this request a very delicate issue, and propose to proceed with circumspection. Comrade Deri will report [on the issue] in an appropriate form.

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**Document No. 37.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in Pakistan to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 28 November 1989.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1989, 71. doboz, 119-4, 001023/1/1989.

According to the evaluation of the Indian ambassador, the case of the nuclear reactor that China is to provide to Pakistan is producing a negative effect on regional security. India is not reassured by the fact that the agreement stipulates [the acceptance of] IAEA safeguards, because, after all, India, Brazil, and South Africa also obtained their nuclear capacity under IAEA safeguards. According to the information available for them, the used [nuclear] fuel will be returned to China. India's reaction to the nuclear reactor sale is of a deliberately low-key nature. They also expect that during Mitterrand's visit, which is due to take place in the first half of next year, an agreement will be signed on the supply of a French reactor to Pakistan. India takes notice of these developments, and, if necessary, it will be ready for a nuclear arms race on the subcontinent.

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**Document No. 38.**

**Ciphered Telegram, Embassy of Hungary in Pakistan to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 12 December 1989.**

Source: Hungarian National Archives, XIX-J-1-j Pakistan, 1989, 71. doboz, 119-42, 004299/2/1989.

For information:

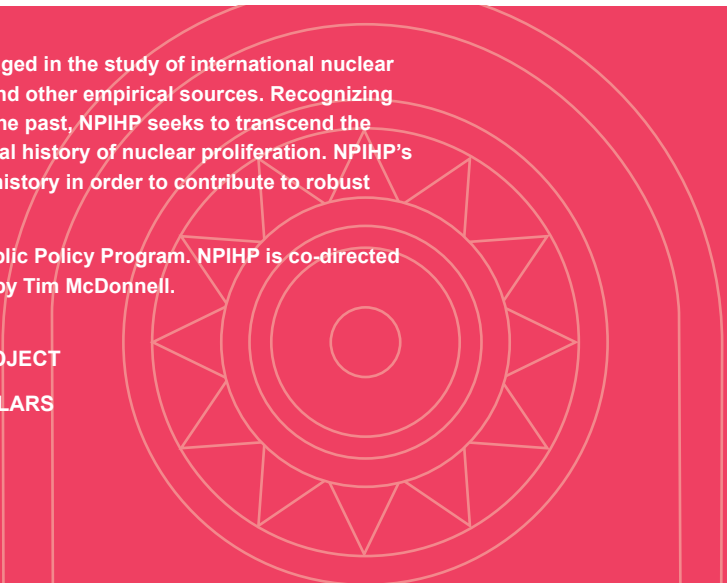

I will initiate talks with the chairman of the Pakistani Atomic Energy Commission. During an earlier meeting, said person expressed their interest in obtaining a control system comparable to the one at [the Hungarian nuclear power plant in] Paks.

Our commercial counselor informed me that in the meantime, [the officials in] Paks had been contacted at an appropriate level, and that the Hungarian side was interested in the sale.

In all probability, [the Pakistanis] would like to purchase the control system for the 300-MW power plant to be provided by China.

The purpose of the meeting is to clarify whether the establishment of the power plant would be fully under IAEA supervision or not. Concerning the Indian standpoint on the power plant sale, see [Ciphred Telegraph] No. 219.

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NPIHP is a global network of individuals and institutions engaged in the study of international nuclear history through archival documents, oral history interviews and other empirical sources. Recognizing that today's toughest nuclear challenges have deep roots in the past, NPIHP seeks to transcend the East vs. West paradigm to assemble an integrated international history of nuclear proliferation. NPIHP's research aims to fill in the blank and blurry pages of nuclear history in order to contribute to robust scholarship and effective policy decisions.

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