



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Yes  
LSnellens  
not

Prime Minister  
Thanks on Agree that the  
Foreign Secretary should  
send out this letter to  
Government back-benchers?  
All Whips and the 1922  
Committee are keen. I think  
it's rather good. CDD  
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You may find it useful in dealing with enquiries to have a summary of the results of the Moscow visit.

This was the first working visit to Moscow by a British Prime Minister since 1975. It is the culmination of several years of sustained effort by this Government to strengthen contacts between East and West, and to improve British-Soviet relations. The Prime Minister's visit to Hungary in 1984, her talks with Mr Gorbachev in London before he became Soviet leader, and my own visits to East European countries were part of this process.

Our objective is to build the greater mutual understanding and trust which are fundamental to a more stable and more secure East-West relationship. Openness and honesty are the only basis on which viable and verifiable arms control agreements can be built.

This visit has enabled us to get across to Soviet leaders, as well as the Soviet public, the genuinely peaceful intentions of this country, and our concerns about Soviet activities at home and abroad. The Prime Minister's 1 1/2 hours with Mr Gorbachev provided for the most candid and coherent exchanges on nearly every aspect of the East/West relationship that have ever taken place between a Soviet leader and the head of a Western Government. And her appearance on Soviet TV, as well as reports in the press, enabled her to convey Western views with frankness to hundreds of millions of Soviet citizens. *(complete)*

These achievements alone would have made the visit a notable success. But there are also other specific results:

- agreement on the need to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe, with constraints on shorter-range weapons, and follow-on negotiations to deal with them; though agreement still has to be reached on equal ceilings for these shorter-range systems (ie the important principle of a US right to match);
- agreement on the need for strict verification;
- agreement on the importance of pressing ahead for a world-wide ban on chemical weapons;



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- agreement that there should be early negotiations on reductions in conventional forces;
- agreement that progress should be made stage by stage, with clearly defined priorities;
- agreement by Mr Gorbachev to consider the Prime Minister's proposals for establishing greater predictability over programmes for developing strategic defences, including SDI;
- agreement on an improved 'Hotline' between No 10 and the Kremlin;
- a Space Agreement strengthening collaboration between UK universities and the Soviet Space Research Institute, including co-operation on a mission to Phobos, a moon of the planet Mars;
- resolution of longstanding difficulties over embassy sites in London and Moscow;
- an agreement on Co-operation in Information, Culture, and Education to improve human contact and the flow of ideas: it includes encouragement of TV and radio companies to arrange joint discussion programmes, links between papers, an undertaking to ensure free receipt of each other's broadcasts, and exchanges of home visits for secondary school pupils;
- commercial contracts worth some £400 m, which were either hastened by the visit or secured through active intervention during its course.

We were able to appreciate Mr Gorbachev's seriousness about the important changes going on in the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister made it clear that we welcome the steps taken. The meetings with Dr Sakharov and Mr Begun underlined our hope to see full compliance with the human rights obligations of the Helsinki Agreement. Mr Gorbachev agreed to consider positively the specific cases we raised.

These are valuable and worthwhile achievements from what proved to be an historic visit. They demonstrate the enhanced respect for Britain under this Government, and the sincerity of our belief that truth and freedom are better guarantees of peace than fearfulness and surrender.

GEOFFREY HOWE

