

297

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

June 12, 1975

National Security Decision Memorandum 297

TO: The Secretary of Defense
The Deputy Secretary of State
The Director, US Arms Control
and Disarmament Agency
The Administrator, Energy Research
and Development Agency

SUBJECT: Instructions for the US Delegation to the PNE
Negotiations, Moscow, June 3, 1975

The President has approved the following instructions for the negotiations on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes (PNEs) which resumed in Moscow on June 3, 1975. These instructions supplement those contained in NSDM 287.

1. If individual explosions in a contained PNE salvo can be identified and their yields adequately measured through agreed verification procedures, contained salvos with aggregate yields up to 500 KT could be permitted. With respect to verification of individual yields for contained salvos with aggregate yield above 100 KT, the Delegation should propose use of the SLIFER technique for determining yield.

2. The Delegation should reiterate our position that all PNEs must be fully consistent with existing treaty obligations, including the Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT). In addition, it should state that US studies indicate that it does not appear to be possible to carry out major excavation PNE projects without violating the LTBT. The Delegation should solicit Soviet views on how they plan to conduct PNE excavation projects without violating the provisions of the LTBT.

3. After presenting the above position on the LTBT issue, the Delegation should reiterate the position on excavation PNEs given in NSDM 287, with the exception of continuing to propose a 0.2 KT limit on the fission yield of each excavation PNE device. In this context, the Delegation should:



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(a) Reject the Soviet proposed gamma-mapping technique as inadequate for the determination of fission yield.

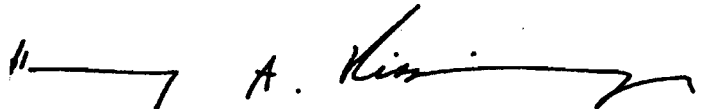
(b) Propose that the distance between any two explosives in an excavation salvo be limited to a distance greater than the emplacement depth of the deeper of the pair of explosives.

(c) Insist on the right of drillback to recover below-ground melt samples for any excavation event in which adequate above-ground samples are not available.

4. The basic means for yield verification of all PNEs should be national technical means (teleaseismic and photographic) augmented by provisions for information exchange and on-site observers. Observers should have rights to verify independently the information exchanged. However, for events smaller than 50 kilotons, independent verification by observers of information exchanged is not required and the US could forego the exchange of detailed geological information and detailed project descriptions.

5. The US is willing to declare an intention to cooperate in the PNE field on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit, in ways consistent with applicable domestic laws. However, verification requirements for a PNE agreement pursuant to Article III of the TTBT must be worked out before proceeding to discuss specific arrangements for US/USSR PNE cooperation.

6. The President has decided that, in principle, the US prefers a 150 KT limit on individual excavation PNEs and, in this context, would be willing to accept a one megaton limit on the aggregate yield of all salvos (contained and excavation) and forego the fission yield limit and associated melt samples verification technique for excavation PNEs. While this position is approved in substance, it should not be put forth by the Delegation until authorized by Washington.



Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence