

WASHINGTON — Following is the text of President Reagan's New Year's message to the people of the Soviet Union:

Good evening, this is Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America.

I am pleased to speak to you on the occasion of the new year. This is a time for reflection and for hope. As we look back on the year just concluded and on the year that is to come, I want to share with you my hopes for the new year, hopes for peace, prosperity and good will that the American and Soviet people share.

Just over a month ago, General Secretary Gorbachev and I met for the first time in Geneva. Our purpose was to begin a fresh chapter in the relations between our two countries and to try to reduce the suspicions and mistrusts between us. I think we made a good beginning.

Mr. Gorbachev and I spent many hours together, speaking frankly and seriously about the most important issues of our time--reducing the massive nuclear arsenals on both sides, resolving regional conflicts, ensuring respect for human rights as guaranteed under international agreements and other questions of mutual interest.

As the elected representative of the American people, I told Mr. Gorbachev of our deep desire for peace and that the American people do not wish the Soviet people any harm. While there were many areas (in) which we did not agree, which was to be expected, we left Geneva with a better understanding of one another and of the goals we each have. We are determined to build on that understanding in the coming months and years.

Reduction of Nuclear Arms

One of the most important things on which we agreed was the need to reduce the massive nuclear arsenals on both sides. As I have said many times, a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Therefore, we agreed to accelerate negotiations where there is common ground to reduce and eventually eliminate the means of nuclear destruction.

Our negotiators will soon be returning to the Geneva talks on nuclear and space arms where Mr. Gorbachev and I agreed we will seek agreements on the principle of 50% reductions in offensive nuclear arms and an interim agreement on intermediate-range nuclear systems.

And it is my hope that one day we will be able to eliminate these weapons altogether and rely increasingly for our security on defense systems that threaten no one.

Research on Defense

Both the United States and the Soviet Union are doing research on the possibilities of applying new technologies to the cause of defense. If these technologies become a reality, it is my dream that, well, to one day free us all from the threat of nuclear destruction.

One of the best ways to build mutual understanding is to allow the American and Soviet peoples to get to know one another better. In Geneva, we signed a new agreement to exchange our most accomplished artists and academics. We also agreed to expand the contacts between our peoples so that students, teachers and young people can get to know each other directly.

Bonds of Understanding

If people in both countries can visit, study and work together, then we will strengthen the bonds of understanding and build a true foundation for lasting peace.

I also discussed the American people's strong interest in humanitarian issues. Our democratic system is founded on the belief in the sanctity of human life and the rights of the individual--rights such as freedom of speech, of assembly, of movement and of worship.

It is a sacred truth to us that every individual is a unique creation of God with his or her own special talents, abilities, hopes and dreams. Respect for all

people is essential to peace and as agreed in Geneva, the progress in resolving humanitarian issues in a spirit of cooperation would go a long way to making 1986 a better year for all of us.

A safe and lasting peace also requires finding peaceful settlements to armed conflicts which cause so much human suffering in many parts of the world. I have proposed several concrete steps to help resolve such conflicts. It is my hope that in 1986 we will make progress toward this end.

I see a busy year ahead in building on the foundations laid in Geneva. There is much work to be done. Mr. Gorbachev will visit the United States later this year and I look forward to showing him our country. In 1987, I plan to visit your country and hope to meet many of you.

On behalf of the American people, I wish you all a happy and healthy new year. Let's work together to make it a year of peace. There is no better goal for 1986 or for any year. Let us look forward to a future of *chistoye nyebo* (clear sky) for all mankind. Thank you. *Spaseba* (thank you).