

THE ALMA-ATA DECLARATION

Signed by eleven heads of state on December 21, 1991.

PREAMBLE

The independent states:

The Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkmenistan, the Republic of Ukraine and the Republic of Uzbekistan;

seeking to build democratic law-governed states, the relations between which will develop on the basis of mutual recognition and respect for state sovereignty and sovereign equality, the inalienable right to self-determination, principles of equality and noninterference in the internal affairs, the rejection of the use of force, the threat of force and economic and any other methods of pressure, a peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for human rights and freedoms, including the rights of national minorities, a conscientious fulfillment of commitments and other generally recognized principles and standards of international law;

recognizing and respecting each other's territorial integrity and the inviolability of the existing borders;

believing that the strengthening of the relations of friendship, good neighborliness and mutually advantageous co-operation, which has deep historic roots, meets the basic interests of nations and promotes the cause of peace and security;

being aware of their responsibility for the preservation of civilian peace and inter-ethnic accord;

being loyal to the objectives and principles of the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States;

are making the following statement:

THE DECLARATION

Co-operation between members of the Commonwealth will be carried out in accordance with the principle of equality through coordinating institutions formed on a parity basis and operating in the way established by the agreements between members of the Commonwealth, which is neither a state, nor a super-state structure.

In order to ensure international strategic stability and security, allied command of the military-strategic forces and a single control over nuclear weapons will be preserved, the sides will respect each other's desire to attain the status of a non- nuclear and (or) neutral state.

The Commonwealth of Independent States is open, with the agreement of all its participants, to the states--members of the former USSR, as well as other states--sharing the goals and principles of the Commonwealth.

The allegiance to co-operation in the formation and development of the common economic space, and all-European and Eurasian markets, is being confirmed.

With the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States the USSR ceases to exist. Member states of the Commonwealth guarantee, in accordance with their constitutional procedures, the fulfillment of international obligations, stemming from the treaties and agreements of the former USSR.

Member states of the Commonwealth pledge to observe strictly the principles of this declaration.

Agreement on Councils of Heads of State and Government

A provisional agreement on the membership and conduct of Councils of Heads of State and Government was concluded between the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States on December 30, 1991.

PREAMBLE

The member states of this agreement, guided by the aims and principles of the agreement on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States of 8 December 1991 and the protocol to the agreement of 21 December 1991, taking into consideration the desire of the Commonwealth states to pursue joint activity through the Commonwealth's common coordinating institutions, and deeming it

essential to establish, for the consistent implementation of the provisions of the said agreement, the appropriate inter-state and inter-governmental institutions capable of ensuring effective co-ordination, and of promoting the development of equal and mutually advantageous co-operation, have agreed on the following:

ARTICLE 1

The Council of Heads of State is the supreme body, on which all the member-states of the Commonwealth are represented at the level of head of state, for discussion of fundamental issues connected with coordinating the activity of the Commonwealth states in the sphere of their common interests.

The Council of Heads of State is empowered to discuss issues provided for by the Minsk Agreement on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States and other documents for the development of the said Agreement, including the problems of legal succession, which have arisen as a result of ending the existence of the USSR and the abolition of Union structures.

The activities of the Council of Heads of State and of the Council of Heads of Government are pursued on the basis of mutual recognition of and respect for the state sovereignty and sovereign equality of the member-states of the Agreement, their inalienable right to self-determination, the principles of equality and non-interference in internal affairs, the renunciation of the use of force and the threat of force, territorial integrity and the inviolability of existing borders, and the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for human rights and liberties, including the rights of national minorities, conscientious fulfillment of obligations and other commonly accepted principles and norms of international law.

ARTICLE 2

The activities of the activities of the Council of Heads of State and of the Council of Heads of Government are regulated by the Minsk Agreement on setting up the Commonwealth of Independent States, the present agreement and agreements adopted in development of them, and also by the rules of procedure of these institutes.

Each state in the council has one vote. The decisions of the council are taken by common consent.

The official languages of the Councils are the state languages of the Commonwealth states.

The working language is the Russian language.

ARTICLE 3

The Council of Heads of State and of the Council of Heads of Government discuss and where necessary take decisions on the more important domestic and external issues.

Any state may declare its having no interest in a particular issue or issues.

ARTICLE 4

The Council of Heads of State convenes for meetings no less than twice a year. The decision on the time for holding and the provisional agenda of each successive meeting of the Council is taken at the routine meeting of the Council, unless the Council agrees otherwise. Extraordinary meetings of the Council of Heads of State are convened on the initiative of the majority of Commonwealth heads of state.

The heads of state chair the meetings of the Council in turn, according to the Russian alphabetical order of the names of the Commonwealth states.

Sittings of the Council of Heads of State are generally to be held in Minsk. A sitting of the Council may be held in another of the Commonwealth states by agreement among those taking part.

ARTICLE 5

The Council of Heads of Government convenes for meetings no less frequently than once every three months. The decision concerning the scheduling of and preliminary agenda for each subsequent sitting is to be made at a routine session of the Council, unless the Council arranges otherwise.

Extraordinary sittings of the Council of Heads of Government may be convened at the initiative of a majority of heads of government of the commonwealth states.

The heads of government chair meetings of the Council in turn, according to the Russian alphabetical order of the names of the Commonwealth states.

Sittings of the Council of Heads of Government are generally to be held in Minsk. A sitting of the Council may be held in another of the Commonwealth states by agreement among the heads of government.

ARTICLE 6

The Council of Heads of State and of the Council of Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Independent States may hold joint sittings.

ARTICLE 7

Working and auxiliary bodies may be set up on both a permanent and interim basis on the decision of the Council of Heads of State and of the Council of Heads of Government of the Commonwealth states.

These are composed of authorized representatives of the participating states. Experts and consultants may be invited to take part in their sittings.

Agreement on Strategic Forces

Concluded between the 11 members of the Commonwealth of Independent States on December 30, 1991.

PREAMBLE

Guided by the necessity for a coordinated and organized solution to issues in the sphere of the control of the strategic forces and the single control over nuclear weapons, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkmenistan, the Republic of Ukraine and the Republic of Uzbekistan, subsequently referred to as 'the member-states of the Commonwealth,' have agreed on the following:

ARTICLE 1

The term 'strategic forces' means: groupings, formations, units, institutions, the military training institutes for the strategic missile troops, for the air force, for the navy and for the air defenses; the directorates of the Space Command and of the airborne troops, and of strategic and operational intelligence, and the nuclear technical units and also the forces, equipment and other military facilities designed for the control and maintenance of the strategic forces of the former USSR (the schedule is to be determined for each state participating in the Commonwealth in a separate protocol).

ARTICLE 2

The member-states of the Commonwealth undertake to observe the international treaties of the former USSR, to pursue a coordinated policy in the area of international security, disarmament and arms control, and to participate in the preparation and implementation of programs for reductions in arms and armed forces. The member- states of the Commonwealth are immediately entering into negotiations with one another and also with other states which were formerly part of the USSR, but which have not joined the commonwealth, with the aim of ensuring guarantees and developing mechanisms for implementing the aforementioned treaties.

ARTICLE 3

The member-states of the Commonwealth recognize the need for joint command of strategic forces and for maintaining unified control of nuclear weapons, and other types of weapons of mass destruction, of the armed forces of the former USSR.

ARTICLE 4

Until the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the decision on the need for their use is taken by the president of the Russian Federation in agreement with the heads of the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Ukraine, and in consultation with the heads of the other member-states of the Commonwealth.

Until their destruction in full, nuclear weapons located on the territory of the Republic of Ukraine shall be under the control of the Combined Strategic Forces Command, with the aim that they not be used and be dismantled by the end of 1994, including tactical nuclear weapons by 1 July 1992.

The process of destruction of nuclear weapons located on the territory of the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Ukraine shall take place with the participation of the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Ukraine under the joint control of the Commonwealth states.

ARTICLE 5

The status of strategic forces and the procedure for service in them shall be defined in a special agreement.

ARTICLE 6

This agreement shall enter into force from the moment of its signing and shall be terminated by decision of the signatory states or the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth.

This agreement shall cease to apply to a signatory state from whose territory strategic forces or nuclear weapons are withdrawn.

Agreement on Armed Forces and Border Troops

Concluded between the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States on December 30, 1991.

PREAMBLE

Proceeding from the need for a mutually acceptable settlement of matters of defense and security, including guarding the borders of the Commonwealth member-states, the member-states of the Commonwealth of Independent States have agreed the following:

THE AGREEMENT

The commonwealth member-states confirm their legitimate right to set up their own armed forces;

jointly with the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, to examine and settle, within two months of the date of this agreement, the issue of the procedure for controlling general purpose forces, taking account of the national legislations of the Commonwealth states and also the issue of the consistent implementation by the Commonwealth states of their right to set up their own armed forces. For the Republic of Ukraine, this will be from 3 January 1991;

to appoint I. Ya. Kalini[n]chenko Commander-in-Chief of Border Troops;

to instruct the Commander-in-Chief of Border Troops to work out, within two months and in conjunction with the leaders of the Commonwealth member-states, a mechanism for the activity of the Border Troops, taking account of the national legislations [sic] of the Commonwealth states, with the exception of states with which a mechanism for the activity of Border Troops has already been agreed.

Note: In addition, Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov was confirmed as acting Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States.