First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to the organizers of the seminar for offering the opportunity to address this representative forum which, we are sure, will help to expand the existing areas of international cooperation and identify new areas. The subject of my paper: “Security in Asia: new approaches, new horizons” is sufficiently broad, and its presentation—given limited time—is, in fact, a mere attempt at suggesting possible main avenues of international cooperation in resolving the problems facing the world community.

Today it is becoming ever more evident that mankind is going through a crisis and is in the critical stage of its development, and that, in fact, does not have a guaranteed future. The existing stocks of nuclear weapons create a technical possibility of a cut off, the end of history. “The ecological bomb” is no less dangerous. Scientific and technological progress, though beneficial for mankind, leads to increasing poisoning of air, water and food. The very process of life threatens to turn into a slow suicide. Highly disproportionate rates of economic and social development, contrasts between poverty and wealth create dangerous fields of tensions both on a global and regional levels. Apprehension, anxiety, a sense of instability and lack of certainty traumatize the social consciousness of our epoch.

It is quite clear that no country, no matter how strong or large, can tackle global problems all by itself. Nor are individual groups
of states able to accomplish this task. Consequently, these problems can be resolved only through constructive and creative interaction of states and peoples. There is an increasingly acute need for effective and equitable international procedures and mechanisms which would provide for a rational management of world affairs. Renunciation of force, adoption of non-confrontational methods of resolving problems, concern for common security, and for using the resources of our planet as a heritage of the entire mankind—all this is becoming an imperative of our time.

Notwithstanding divisions created by confrontation and enmity in our world, the latter is one when faced with a need to preserve itself and ensure the survival of the human race. Today this objective reality changes the balance between national and global considerations. Genuine national interests cannot be opposed to those that are common to all mankind.

Naturally, we rejoice at those positive processes that are emerging in world politics. Mankind has now a chance to check a continuous slide toward self-destruction. Nevertheless, this trend is not uniform, is contradictory and far from being simple, and sometimes is painful. In some regions it is developing at a faster pace, in others—at a slower one. My task is to make an analysis of the development of this trend in Asia, of what has been achieved and what is yet to be done in order to impart to it necessary dynamism.

2. The Soviet Union is an integral part of the Asia-Pacific region. More than three quarters of its territory is in Asia where there are immense natural resources. Our plans, the plans of perestroika provide for an accelerated development of the Asiatic region of the Soviet Union, particularly of the region of the Far East. So we view an increased role of this region with a global system of international relations not from outside, like a bystander, but as an equitable, active and constructive participant in this historical process.

We would like to see effective foreign economic ties that Soviet Central Asia, Far East and Siberia maintain with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region contribute to social and industrial development of both this part of the Soviet Union and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. This is not a consideration of expediency, but a long-term task; not a tactical, but strategic objective.

Moreover, we realize that unless there is decreased international tension in the Asia-Pacific region, it will not be possible to success-
fully move toward a comprehensive system of international security. The Soviet Union assumes that the Asia-Pacific region—a major region of the world—can and should become a zone of political stability and economic cooperation on the basis of collective and individual efforts of all interested states.

With a view to radically improving the situation in the region there was developed a comprehensive program to ensure peace, security and cooperation in Asia and the adjacent waters of the Pacific and Indian oceans which, as is known, was put forward by M.S. Gorbachev in his speech in Vladivostok on 28 July 1986 and was further elaborated in his interview given to the Indonesian newspaper “Merdeka” on 21 June 1987, and in his Krasnoyarsk address on 16 September 1988.

In its most concise form our program provides for more active foreign policy activities in four main areas: practical measures to reduce the level of military confrontation; innovative and decisive steps to resolve regional conflicts; a quick and wide-ranging build-up in efforts by our country to develop regional economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation; making bilateral relations of the USSR with all the countries of the Asia-Pacific region without any exception more dynamic and constructive.

3. In putting forward its Vladivostok-Krasnoyarsk platform my country realized that one could check the process of a never-ending arms race in the Asia-Pacific region only by way of setting personal example and undertaking decisive unilateral measures to reduce arms. Asia had become accustomed to peaceable speeches by great powers, so concrete actions were needed to convince the peoples that our intentions were serious.

Analyzing the results of more than four years of our activities in Asia and the Pacific, one can safely claim that we have done a lot to reduce the military confrontation in this, I would say, most troubled region of the world.

The Soviet Union decided to completely eliminate its medium and shorter-range missiles in Asia. We began implementing the plan to reduce our armed forces in the eastern part of the country by 200,000 troops. The number of troops in the Far East will, as a result, decrease by 120,000. Sixteen war ships of our Pacific fleet will be decommissioned and scrapped. We began withdrawing 75 per cent of our troops from Mongolia, and we are prepared—given an agreement
with Mongolia—to completely withdraw our troops from this country. When M.S. Gorbachev visited Beijing an agreement was reached to set up a working group of Soviet and Chinese diplomats and military men to prepare an agreement on the principles of balanced and mutual reductions of the armed forces and armaments of both sides.

Generally speaking, we are now restructuring Soviet strategy at the eastern flank to make it exclusively defensive in nature and conform to the principle of reasonable sufficiency. The Soviet side invited the representatives of the countries of Asia and the Pacific to attend as observers the exercises of the Pacific fleet in the Sea of Japan in July 1989. The presence of representatives of India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam at those exercises confirmed the possibility of implementing in practice confidence-building measures in the military field in the Asia and Pacific region as well.

The accession by the Soviet Union to the Rarotonga Treaty, which formalized the creation of the first nuclear-free zone in the Asia-Pacific region, was a concrete measure confirming our desire to reduce nuclear confrontation in that region. We are also prepared to engage in consultations with the ASEAN nations, both bilaterally and collectively, on the basic elements of the ASEAN concept of a nuclear-free zone in South-East Asia. We reaffirm our support to the idea of making South East Asia a zone of peace and creating a nuclear-free zone on the Korean peninsula.

All these factors combined have positively influenced the political climate in Asia and reduced military tension. However, there has been no radical improvement in the military and political situation in the region. Deployment of nuclear missiles continues, naval activities are on the rise, the level of confrontation on the Korean peninsula is high, and a number of Asian states have been drawn into a dangerous arms race, involving increasingly sophisticated modern weapon systems, including missiles.

The main cause for this situation is the position of our principal opponents in the region, i.e. the United States and Japan, who believe that the realization of the Soviet initiatives would decrease their influence in the region. The United States, for instance, has a clear superiority in naval armaments in the Asia-Pacific region and is obviously unwilling to discuss issues relating to the limitation of naval activities in this region.
Prejudiced attitudes and suspicion, as well as a lack of trust as regards the goals and intentions of the Soviet Union in Asia that persist in the political circles in some countries of Asia and the Pacific, in a certain way also contribute to this situation. In part, this is also a result of our being slow in implementing the decisions we take.

I would like to leave no doubt that the Soviet Union is well on the way toward military detente in Asia and will not digress from it. We will put special emphasis on the creation of a negotiating mechanism to discuss issues related to ensuring security in the region at bilateral as well as multilateral level.

4. Besides military confrontation, another important factor, that is blocking the construction of a peaceful Asian community are regional conflicts that crop up throughout the Asian continent. The Asia-Pacific region holds an undisputed lead in the number of such conflicts. I have counted 38 armed conflicts in the region between 1945-1988 with 20 million people dead as a result. Unless we find a way to unlock the existing conflict situations, they will continue to be gigantic thorns in the side of the continent, spoiling the atmosphere of nascent confidence. That is why our new Asian doctrine puts much emphasis on the need to settle regional conflicts. Here as well we have chosen to take the lead. In 1989 we swiftly and effectively pulled out our troops from Afghanistan, and now it seems the world has become convinced that our military presence was far from being the main cause of the situation in that country. The conflict there is more profound, complex and extensive. The Kabul regime is well and alive, is fighting and is quite sure of itself. Nevertheless, Kabul has already proposed scores of compromises and solutions to impasse situations.

The latest package of proposals to this effect was put forward by President Najibulla in Belgrade. They are based on holding free elections in Afghanistan under UN auspices. Meanwhile, from Peshawar we hear nothing but calls for continuing the civil war to the last. We realize that the possibilities for the Soviet Union to decisively influence the situation in Afghanistan are limited and that the conflict will persist as long as an endless flow of money and arms from the United States, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan keeps pouring into Afghanistan. To my mind, there is only one solution: the world, and primarily Asian community, should unequivocally
and strongly demand that the flow of arms into Afghanistan be stopped, a coalition government created, and free elections under UN auspices held. Otherwise, Afghanistan will become a second Lebanon for many years to come.

The settlement of regional conflicts and establishment of an effective mechanism in Asia for preventing and resolving such conflicts will, in my opinion, be the most formidable task for the present and future makers of a new Asia. However, there is certain movement toward this end. This is primarily true as regards Cambodia. At last there is a chance to settle this most agonizing and protracted conflict in the Asia-Pacific region after Afghanistan.

From 30 July to 30 August 1989, the first session of the International Conference on Cambodia was held in Paris. It was an important and necessary stage in the settlement of the Cambodian problem. On 26 September Vietnam completed the withdrawal of its troops from Cambodia, and there are indications that this conflict is on the way to becoming mainly an intra-Khmer struggle which, if military support to the rival groups does not stop, could escalate into an endless war. The dramatic experience of Afghanistan lends probability to this prospect.

In Cambodian affairs the Soviet Union will seek, first, continuation of the negotiating process leading to a comprehensive settlement, be that in the form of meetings between the Khmers or regional and international conferences; second, it will promote active measures aimed at preventing further expansion of the civil war in Cambodia, and—what is most important—at preventing the re-establishment of the Pol Pot genocide regime. We are prepared to do all we can to help untie the Cambodian knot once and for all.

In addition to Afghanistan and Cambodia we can point to many other trouble spots in Asia. There is yet no final settlement in the relations between Iran and Iraq; dangerous military confrontation continues on the Korean peninsula, nor is everything fine in South Asia where we now hold our meeting.

Three armed conflicts, deep-rooted mutual mistrust and an unresolved territorial problem naturally do not contribute to the growth of mutual understanding between India and Pakistan. Statesmanship and continued efforts aimed at stabilizing Indo-Pakistani relations will be required on the part of the leaders of
both States. The agreement on the prohibition of attack against each others' nuclear installations and facilities, signed in December last year, as well as personal contacts between Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto demonstrate that, given political will, it will be possible to build normal interstate relations, even between recent adversaries. However, the road towards this goal seems to be not an easy one. We are aware of the contradictions that India has with Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. As I understand, it will be difficult to eliminate these contradictions at one stroke, but they may be mitigated by common effort. In this context, the main thing is to renounce violence, no matter what motives stand behind it, and rise above national egoism, as well as resolve all problems on the basis of the principles of peaceful co-existence which, as is rightfully considered, originated on this subcontinent. It seems to me that a certain role in ensuring movement from confrontation to dialogue can be played by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which is in a position to contribute to making less acute those problems in the region, which should be resolved meticulously and in a businesslike manner.

The Soviet Union is prepared to render political, economic and moral support with a view to unlocking conflict situations in Asia and the Pacific. We are most serious about it, for we understand that, unless it is done, all our hopes to build a safe Asia will be only wishful thinking.

5. The desire of my country to become most actively involved in economic cooperation in Asia and the Pacific is another major element of Soviet policies in Asia. We have already made a number of proposals aimed at creating stable conditions for broad economic cooperation of all the states of Asia and the Pacific regardless of their political system. Efforts by the Soviet Union to advance the concept of international economic security presuppose an involvement of all the countries of the region in this work. It would be possible to discuss on a bilateral basis the problem of external debt of the developing countries within the framework of such dialogue. You undoubtedly know about the Soviet Union's approach to this problem from Mikhail S. Gorbachev's address at the United Nations in December 1988.

I must say that though we have something to boast of with respect to implementing the set of ideas advanced in Vladivostok and Krasnoyarsk in the political and military fields, our record in
the economic area is poor indeed. I must frankly recognize it. We are clearly lagging behind in the implementation of the program of comprehensive development of the Far East economic region. The reasons for this are well-known. The restructuring of the Soviet economic mechanism is proceeding with difficulties. We lack funds for developing our infrastructure. We still experience a shortage of manpower and trained personnel, especially in the area of foreign economic activities. In this connection, it is not surprising that Soviet participation in economic activities of the region is very modest (the share of leading countries of Asia and the Pacific in total goods turnover of the USSR amounts to 5.8 per cent). I believe that it is mainly due to weak economic potential of the Asian part of our country. For instance, only 2.6 per cent of the country's population live in the Soviet Far East, which produces 2.9 per cent of our total industrial output. Of course, we try to rectify the existing situation.

As of January 1, 1991 our Far East will become fully independent in foreign currency activities. More favourable conditions will be created for joint ventures located in this region. We are completing work on the concept of the Far East zone of joint Soviet and foreign business activities. We encourage our Far Easterners to establish direct ties with the Chinese, American, Japanese and South Korean partners. We have already acquired a positive experience in employing Chinese manpower in the Soviet Far East. We have established direct trade ties with South Korea. The fact that the Soviet Union, due to objective reasons, is not in a position to become fully involved in meaningful regional economic cooperation cannot serve as a pretext for excluding it from emerging multilateral dialogue on regional economic problems. In this regard I, for one, cannot understand why the Soviet Union had not been invited, at least as an observer, to the meeting convened in November this year in Canberra to discuss the idea of establishing a regional economic organization.

The Soviet Union understands the desire of the states of Asia and the Pacific to more fully utilize the opportunities presented by regional cooperation in solving economic and social problems; it proceeds from the assumption that multilateral economic cooperation in the region should be based on the principles of non-discrimination, mutual benefit and equality with due account of the interests of all countries rather than lead to the establishment of closed and isolated blocks.
The Soviet Union is prepared to participate honestly and constructively in the discussion and resolution of regional economic problems, contribute to the improvement of cooperation in such fields as uses of new energy sources including nuclear energy, peaceful space research, development of ocean resources, joint natural disaster relief work and prevention of environmental pollution.

Soviet foreign policy efforts in Asia and the Pacific are aimed, in the final analysis, at establishing a firm and comprehensive structure of stable and interdependent cooperation of countries and nations, which would organically combine political and economic interests of each participant. It is precisely from these positions that we consider our work in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Under its auspices a ministerial-level conference devoted to environmental protection in the region will be held in May 1990. The Soviet Union is actively preparing to make its contribution to the work of this international forum. At the same time we are establishing businesslike contacts with the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference.

We are also studying the option of our country's joining the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in which case we could have an opportunity of acquiring highly indispensable experience of participation in international monetary and financial organization. Soviet representatives are already attending as observers in the sessions of the ADB governing board.

6. In my opinion, there is yet another important area of cooperation that can unite all Asian nations—prevention of an environmental catastrophe. True, it is a problem, but it is most acute for Asian countries. In a number of states in Asia poor and hungry people cut forests, add to depletion of soil, let their cattle ruin pastures and reconcile themselves with pollution of their habitat in case there is even a small chance of improving their standard of living, which they consider as most important. Should developing countries in Asia comply with the ecological standards adopted, for example, in the United States, their direct expenditures on pollution control would run into billions of dollars. Naturally, at the present stage of their development they are not in a position to do so. International cooperation is the only way out. As early as last December we proposed that a center for emergency environmental assistance should be established at the United Nations. In September of this year India and Bangladesh advanced interesting proposals concerning...
international cooperation in the field of environmental protection. I am convinced that ecology is precisely the sphere where the countries of Asia and the Pacific may without any delay initiate bilateral and multilateral consultations with a view to establishing broad international cooperation aimed at making Asia not only a safe continent, but also a clean one.

Given serious environmental pollution in Asia and the Pacific we suggest that a thought should be given to establishing regional cooperation in this field. There is also an urgent need to include such an important topic as natural disaster relief in the agenda of cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.

7. Taking stock of more than four years of work on the Asia-Pacific aspect, one may say that progress has been most visible and tangible in our bilateral relations with the countries of Asia and the Pacific. During a relatively short period of time we have managed to develop, and in certain cases start afresh, a political dialogue, including at the highest level, with many countries of the region. It can be said that over the past years an effective mechanism of bilateral political dialogue on topical issues has been established or restored with the majority of the states of Asia and the Pacific.

Normalizing Soviet-Chinese relations is of special importance. Both the Soviet and Chinese peoples have paid dearly for the decades of alienation between our two countries. The Soviet-Chinese confrontation has proved detrimental to both countries and left a negative imprint on the situation in Asia and the Pacific as a whole. Deterioration in the relations between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China had become so profound that even after efforts were initiated to normalize them, years have passed before this task has been accomplished.

The fact that the process of normalizing Soviet-Chinese relations has been practically completed does not mean that all the problems and differences which have accumulated in the relations between our two countries are immediately and automatically removed. Moreover, there is no guarantee that certain new problems or different points of view might not arise. By now both sides have arrived at a common understanding to the effect that any problem in their relations can and will be resolved through constructive dialogue, on the basis of agreed principles, mutual respect and trust, while renouncing attempts of applying pressure and imposing
one's own views on the other side. Having normalized relations with the People's Republic of China, our diplomacy solved one of the most important problems which obstructed the way toward genuine Asian security.

We hope that our relations with India will continue to be an important factor of world and Asian politics. Our cooperation is based on commonality of interests and positions on key issues of contemporary life, on the high level of relations in most diverse fields. It was with India that one of the first major documents of the new political thinking was signed in 1986—the Delhi Declaration on Principles for a Nuclear Weapon Free and Non-Violent World. This, of course, does not mean that there are no differences between us and India as regards international problems. Naturally, we regret that India has not yet joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. For example, we take an unbiased attitude as regards the desire of the Nepal leadership to declare their country a zone of peace, or as regards appeals to proclaim South Asia a nuclear-free zone, although we are aware of and understand the arguments of India on this score.

We have a deep-felt sympathy for the efforts by Bangladesh to set their country moving along the way of accelerated economic development and we are prepared to continue strengthening comprehensive ties with this country.

We shall continue a purposeful political dialogue with Pakistan, above all on Afghan matters while seeking points of contact with it through various channels, including the United Nations. There is every ground to believe that there exists good prospects in our relations with that country. However, much will depend on positive efforts of Pakistan itself, first of all on issues related to Afghan settlement.

Our relations with Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, the Republic of Maldives are developing in a traditionally friendly manner, while our interaction with them in the international arena is becoming ever more close.

Our relations with the countries of Indochina are becoming more profound and are characterized by a high degree of mutual understanding; our relations with the ASEAN states have been raised to entirely new levels. The Soviet Union is doing much to make political dialogue with Japan, Australia and New Zealand as active as possible.
8. On the whole, the Soviet comprehensive program of improving international relations in Asia and the adjacent areas of the Pacific and Indian oceans is effective and bears positive results both for our country, and for the world at large. The situation in Asia and the Pacific is revealing a clear trend of changing for the better. A gradual transition from confrontation to dialogue has begun. New approaches are emerging toward resolving outstanding problems and creating conditions for a more secure life for the peoples of Asia and the Pacific. A change for the better is noticeable in the attitude of the states of Asia and the Pacific toward the Soviet Union.

It is also important that improvement in our relations with many countries of the region is closely linked with a noticeable improvement in relations between other countries of Asia and the Pacific. The dialogues under way between India and China, India and Pakistan, as well as China-Indonesia and Vietnam-China contacts hold much promise in this respect. One can be sure that improved relations within the USSR-China-India triangle in Asia will be an important basis for a general stabilization of the situation in Asia and the Pacific. In short, the situation in the region is obviously showing signs of reduced tensions and of attempts to find mutually acceptable solutions to existing conflicts. At the same time this process is on at its initial stage. New efforts, new initiatives, bold and unorthodox solutions, new approaches are necessary to open up a new page in the life of Great Asia.

9. Further movement toward this goal could, in our view, be achieved by establishing a negotiating mechanism which could serve as a framework for starting discussion of specific and realistic steps leading to a new and secure Asia. I do not think that the present stage warrants holding an all-Asian conference. This is hardly realistic. It might be more appropriate to start with subregional fora on specific problems, i.e. the reduction of a military threat, economic security, ecology etc.

The potential of public organizations in Asian countries, of their scholars, experts and businessmen is yet to be fully tapped. The time is ripe for establishing an infrastructure of public conferences, committees, and seminars which would, first, educate the public and, second, lay the ground for holding fora at the government level.

More active and determined efforts are required to clear regional crisis minefields. This has to do primarily with the situations around
Afghanistan and Cambodia. An early resolution of these problems means making substantial headway toward a secure Asia. It is necessary to intensify the search for ways of resolving the Korean issue assuming that normalizing relations between the two Korean states would be the most realistic option.

Convening an Asian ecological congress and establishing a standing consultative ecological council can also be discussed. There might be other proposals, initiatives and suggestions. The main thing is to press forward and not to fear that the road will be a long and difficult one. The Soviet Union takes a serious and responsible stand as regards the task of creating a secure Asia and will build up its political and economic efforts toward achieving this goal.