

Statement by Assistant to the President for Press Relations Fitzwater on the Soviet-United States Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers Agreement

May 5, 1987

Yesterday representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union concluded 2 days of negotiations on the establishment of Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers. At these meetings the sides reached agreement on the establishment of such centers, which agreement will be referred for final approval to the leaders of both countries.

The delegations were headed by Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle and Special Assistant to the President Robert Linhard for the United States side and Ambassador Alexsei Obukhov for the Soviet side. Agreement to explore the establishment of such centers was reached at the summit between the President and General Secretary Gorbachev in Geneva, November 1985. Senators Sam Nunn and John Warner played a particularly helpful role in the deliberations that led to the President's proposal.

The administration welcomes this agreement as a practical measure that will reduce the risk of conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, particularly nuclear conflict that might result from accident, misinterpretation, or miscalculation. This agreement complements U.S. efforts in the nuclear and space talks to reach agreement on broad, deep, equitable, and effectively verifiable reductions in nuclear arms, as well as other U.S. efforts to achieve a more stable and secure international environment.