

Points for Press Backgrounder on Arms Control and
Regional Security Working Group Meeting - 15-17 Sep 1992

- o We have just completed a very successful round of discussions for the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group of the Middle East Peace Process.
- o We would like to thank our Russian hosts for their superb organizational efforts and their warm Russian hospitality.
- o The multilateral negotiations are an integral part of the Arab-Israeli peace process started in Madrid last year.
- o They are specifically designed to complement and act as a catalyst to progress in the bilateral negotiations, which are currently in session in Washington, and are the crux of the peace process.
- o For this round of the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group thirteen countries from the Middle East region participated, together with nine countries from outside the region.
- o A primary objective going into this round was to build on the improved atmosphere and tone of the bilateral peace talks, and on the success of the previous ACRS meetings. We feel we achieved this objective, given the highly constructive and businesslike atmosphere which prevailed here.
- o At the suggestion of the regional parties, following the previous Washington round in May, the agenda for this round focussed less on U.S.-Soviet experience (the main topic last round) and more on the experience of the Middle East region.
- o The parties discussed general concepts and approaches to arms control and confidence building and drew on European and South Asian experiences. Specific measures and their applicability to the Middle East were discussed.
- o Of particular interest for this round was the fact that a discussion took place among the regional parties about possible steps that could move the process forward.
- o The next meeting of the ACRS working group will be held in Washington, the exact date for which will be determined in consultations with the co-sponsors and the parties.