

No. 17086

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**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
and  
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

**Agreement on the prevention of accidental nuclear war.  
Signed at Moscow on 10 October 1977**

*Authentic texts: English and Russian.*

*Registered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
on 19 September 1978.*

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**ROYAUME-UNI DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE  
ET D'IRLANDE DU NORD  
et  
UNION DES RÉPUBLIQUES SOCIALISTES  
SOVIÉTIQUES**

**Accord relatif à la prévention d'une guerre nucléaire acci-  
dentelle. Signé à Moscou le 10 octobre 1977**

*Textes authentiques : anglais et russe.*

*Enregistré par le Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord  
le 19 septembre 1978.*

AGREEMENT<sup>1</sup> BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS ON THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTAL NUCLEAR WAR

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

Conscious of the devastating results of any nuclear war, and of the special responsibilities incumbent upon the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union as nuclear powers to do everything possible to avoid the risk of outbreak of such a war,

Have agreed as follows:

*Article I.* Each Party undertakes to maintain and, whenever it believes it necessary, to improve its existing organisational and technical arrangements for guarding against the accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons under its control.

*Article II.* The two Parties undertake to notify each other immediately of any accident or other unexplained or unauthorised incident which could result in the explosion of one of their nuclear weapons or could otherwise create the risk of outbreak of nuclear war. In the event of such an incident, the Party whose nuclear weapon is involved will immediately make every effort to take necessary measures to render harmless or destroy such weapon without its causing damage.

*Article III.* In the event of the occurrence of an incident of the type referred to in article II of this Agreement, each Party undertakes to act in such a manner as to reduce the possibilities of its action being misinterpreted by the other Party. In such circumstances each Party should provide to, or request from, the other such information as it considers necessary.

*Article IV.* The Parties shall use the direct communications link between their Governments for transmission of, or requests for, urgent information in situations requiring prompt clarification.

*Article V.* The Agreement shall enter into force on the day of signature.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

DONE in duplicate at Moscow this 10th day of October 1977 in the English and Russian languages, both texts being equally authoritative.

For the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

DAVID OWEN

For the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

A. GROMYKO

<sup>1</sup> Came into force on 10 October 1977 by signature, in accordance with article V.