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NATIONAL SPACE COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

June 17, 1992

FACT SHEET - RUSSIAN SPACE LAUNCH

Reflecting its support for economic reform in Russia, at the July 1992 meeting of the International Maritime Satellite Organization (INMARSAT), the United States will support acceptance of a Russian bid to launch an INMARSAT 3 satellite from Russia.

The INMARSAT 3 satellite is manufactured primarily in the United States by General Electric. This would mark the first time that a U.S. manufactured commercial satellite would be launched from Russia. The INMARSAT launch is a one time exception to U.S. policy which prohibits issuance of export licenses for such launches.

INMARSAT

INMARSAT, the International Maritime Satellite Organization, was founded in 1978. It is an international satellite consortium whose charter is to provide mobile satellite communications to ships, aircraft and land vehicles on a global basis. The United States is the largest shareholder with approximately 25% ownership. INMARSAT, headquartered in London, is composed of 64 countries, including Russia which is a charter member. The United States is represented in INMARSAT by the U.S. Communications Satellite Corporation.

Trade Agreement

As noted in the Summit Joint Statement, a condition of United States support was provision by Russia of an assurance that the terms and conditions, including pricing, of its INMARSAT launch bid are consistent with those that would normally be offered in the international market. In order to allow the United States to deal with future launches by Russia, and recognizing Russia's current transition to a market economy, the Russian Federation has agreed to enter into international negotiations on issues related to competition in the international commercial launch market. The ultimate objective of the United States is a multilateral agreement among the world's launch providers in order to prevent distortions of the market. It may be necessary to begin with bilateral discussions with Russia.

Technology Security Agreement

In order to protect sensitive technology, the United States and Russia will develop a bilateral agreement on technology safeguards. Because each satellite launch is unique the safeguards developed may be different from those previously established with China.