

December 27, 1979

**Soviet Foreign Ministry Circular to Soviet
Ambassadors on the Situation in Afghanistan,
Instructions for Meeting with Heads of Government**

Citation:

"Soviet Foreign Ministry Circular to Soviet Ambassadors on the Situation in Afghanistan, Instructions for Meeting with Heads of Government", December 27, 1979, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Boris Gromov, "Ogranichenny Kontingent ("Limited Contingent")", Progress, Moscow, 1994 <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/113143>

Summary:

'Outside Interference' in Afghan affairs lead Soviet officials to provide limited military aid and supplies in order to stabilize Afghanistan. Soviets, in pointing to a time-table for their involvement, stated that they would leave Afghanistan as soon as the foreign interference no longer exists.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Top Secret
Special Folder

TO ALL SOVIET AMBASSADORS[1]
(except Berlin, Warsaw, Budapest, Prague, Sofia, Havana, Ulan Bator, and Hanoi)

Immediately visit the head of government (or the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the person acting for him) and, referring to instructions of the Soviet government, announce the following:

As is well known everywhere in the world, including the government of...for a long time there has been outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, including the direct use of armed force. It is completely evident that the purpose of this interference is the overthrow of the democratic system established as a result of the victory of the April Revolution of 1978. The Afghan people and their armed forces are actively repelling these aggressive acts and giving a rebuff to assaults on the democratic achievements, sovereignty, and national dignity of the new Afghanistan. However the acts of external aggression continue in ever wider scale; armed formations and weapons are being sent from abroad to this day.

In these conditions the leaders of the government of Afghanistan have turned to the Soviet Union for aid and assistance in the struggle against foreign aggression. The Soviet Union, proceeding from a commonality of interests between Afghanistan and our country on security issues which has also been recorded in the 1978 Treaty of Friendship, Neighborliness, and Cooperation, and in the interest of preserving of peace in the region, has responded to this request of the Afghan leadership with approval and has decided to send a limited military contingent to Afghanistan to carry out missions requested by the Afghan government. The Soviet Union thereby proceeds from the corresponding articles of the UN Charter, in particular Article 51, which stipulate the right of states to individual and collective self-defense to repel aggression and restore peace.

The Soviet government, in informing the government of... of all this, considers it necessary to also announce that when the reasons which prompted this action of the Soviet Union no longer exist it intends to withdraw its military contingent from the territory of Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union again stresses that, as before, its sole wish is to see Afghanistan as an independent, sovereign state conducting a policy of good-neighborliness and peace, firmly respecting and carrying out its international obligations, including those according to the UN Charter.

The text of this announcement can be left with the interlocutor.

Report by telegraph when these instructions have been carried out.

[1] This circular is an implementation of Attachment 2 of the document agreed upon at the 27 December 1979 Politburo meeting, "Our Steps in Connection with the Development of the Situation Around Afghanistan"; the Politburo decision also carries the notation "Regarding Point 151 of Minutes N^o 177" and the classification "Top Secret"]