What were the reasons for détente and examples of it?

Détente is a French term, which means « relaxation », and is used to characterize the period in the Cold War during which the United States and the USSR eased the international tensions (1960’s/1970’s). As the arms race was quickening, both the USA and the USSR were fearful of a nuclear catastrophe, out of which none of the two would be victorious. Moreover, the horrors of the Vietnam War had shocked both sides. Though, the USA and the USSR had their own motives for Détente. The USSR was having financial difficulties keeping up with the Arms Race, because they needed to focus their money on consumer goods. Also, the USSR was on bad terms with China and did not want to be left out when relations would improve between China and the USA in 1971. The Americans were realizing there had to be a better way of cooperating with the USSR. The situation in Vietnam was worrying all sides and increased the desire of Détente. Plus, it had clearly revealed the limits of American power: the White House was reconsidering isolationism. Détente was first witnessed during the establishment of a « hot-line » telephone link between the USSR and the USA, as well as the agreement to test nuclear weapons only underground, both in 1963. Later on, many agreements were signed about the use of nuclear weaponry: in 1967 was banned the use of nuclear weapons in outer space. The SALT agreements came in 1972 and in 1979 which were definite examples of Détente. Moreover, the Helsinki Agreements, which set the European frontiers after WWII, were signed and President Carter recognized the People’s Republic of China. Détente trends in Europe were also witnessed: Willy Brandt’s Ostpolitik.