

Report by the Supreme Commander¹ on the Work Completed by the Unified Command²

Dear Comrades!

Five years have passed since the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee decided on March 17, 1969, to set up the new military organs of the Warsaw Treaty and accepted documents regarding their rights and obligations. The meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in January 1972 examined the activities of these organs.

Allow me to report on the work of the Unified Command in the period since then. It was the main task of the leadership of all the organs of the Unified Armed Forces to take a step forward in increasing the defensive capabilities of the Warsaw Treaty member-states, along with the mobilization readiness and fighting capabilities of the Unified Command.

In six meetings of the Committee of the Ministers of Defense the following questions were examined: increasing the combat and mobilization readiness of the Unified Armed Forces; improving the level of training for our ground and naval forces; improving the forces and tools for army reconnaissance forces; the principles of rear logistics for the allied forces in joint operations; and the problems of radio and electronic warfare. The Military Council devoted great attention to the improvement of command.

All the efforts of the Unified Command were guided by the practical implementation of the resolutions of the Political Consultative Committee and the Committee of the Ministers of Defense. Its measures further enhanced the mobilization and combat readiness of the Unified Armed Forces.

The ten meetings of the Military Council examined the following questions: raising the mobilization and combat readiness of the Unified Armed Forces; improvement of the training for the army and the naval forces; improvement of the forces and equipment for the army reconnaissance forces; the logistical principles for the allied armies in joint military maneuvers; questions of radio and electronic combat. The Military Council devoted great attention to improving command.

We examined and approved a number of directives and manuals related to the activities of the Unified Armed Forces. The Headquarters and Committee on Technology of the Unified Armed Forces did a significant amount of work. These organs introduced measures based on the resolutions of the Unified Command and the guidelines of the Military Council. A number of basic documents were prepared that are important for the activities of the Unified Command.

The Headquarters and the Committee on Technology began to work in a coordinated fashion; they prepared and carried out multifaceted, joint measures.

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² The report is an excerpt from the Hungarian transcript of the meeting at <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&id=18172&navinfo=14465>.

The Committee on Technology and the Military Scientific-Technical Committee dealt with the questions of improving weapons systems and war materiel by coordinating scientific research and experimentally editing works of mutual interest.

A great deal of work was done by the representatives of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Command and military experts. In close contact with the leadership of the fraternal armies, they extended on-the-spot, concrete assistance in the development and training of ground and naval forces in order to increase their mobilization and combat readiness and to strengthen and expand the sense of fighting camaraderie among the allied armies.

The Unified Command and the national commands concentrated in their work on supplying the ground and naval forces with modern weapons and war materiel, improving the organizational structure of every large branch unit and the rear, improving the command organs, and stockpiling materiel and technical equipment on the territory of each country.

We equipped the armies with more modern missile complexes, tanks, artillery, anti-tank and air defense systems, combat engineering and communication equipment, and protective equipment against weapons of mass destruction. We instituted measures to standardize the motorized rifle units and tank divisions.

Units of our unified air defense system converted to the new types of fighter aircraft and introduced automated control systems. We strengthened the antiaircraft missile units in order to protect the most important state installations.

New operational and coordination plans were developed for the unified air defense system. The ministers of defense signed off, and they were approved by the governments of all the allied countries except the Socialist Republic of Romania.

The combat power of the air forces increased as a result of their receiving modern aircraft and an improvement in the organizational structure of its large units.

Those allied armies that did not previously have a tactical air arm received separate air units. The military transport capabilities of these air forces were increased by supplying them with new transport airplanes and helicopters.

The stock of naval vessels was refurbished, and new weapons and war materiel were introduced. We continued to work on improving naval command and the system of naval bases.

Every allied army introduced measures to increase the mobility of organs in the rear, to increase the load capacity of transport vehicles, and to expand the capacity of the hospital system. We continued to accumulate and to decentralize our basic materiel reserves and to bring it up to norms. Work has been undertaken to improve the conventional equipment on the territories of our countries, the masking of air force technical equipment, the combat engineering equipment at command posts and the disposition of antiaircraft missile and radio engineering units.

If we analyze the implementation of the bilateral protocols regarding the development of ground and naval units subordinated to the Unified Command for 1971-1975, we can conclude that overall, the measures codified in them have been accomplished. For example, in 1971-1973, a significant number of tactical-operational and operational missile launchers, artillery, T-55 tanks, guns, and modern aircraft were distributed for the rearmament of the allied armies. More than a hundred vessels were put into service in the allied naval forces.

Significant work has been done to increase mobilization and combat readiness. Every allied army introduced measures to reorganize the alert system for ground and naval forces. The armies and reserves are closer to full strength in terms of personnel and war materiel. Their order and period of alert was revised. Mobilization measures are being closely linked to operational plans and form part of a unified system for **converting the armed forces from a state of peace to a state of war**. Every army is proceeding with the preparation and assembly of reservists with military training.

A number of steps have been taken to improve the command of ground and naval forces.

Significant work has been accomplished in constructing and improving fortified and mobile command posts, in activating important communication centers and lines, in constructing and renovating key cables, and in improving the organizational structure of the command organs.

With the exception of the Socialist Republic of Romania, each member-state has signed an agreement to construct fortified command posts for the Unified Armed Forces in theaters of war. Such a post is under construction in Bulgaria, and the construction of a command post will begin on Polish territory in 1976. The allied armies are coordinating their efforts to create the conditions for an automated field system for the armies and a unified air defense system for the Warsaw Treaty.

Certain measures were implemented to improve high-frequency radio service and electronic warfare.

To some extent parallel and dual capabilities in developing war materiel and in raising the level of technical research were reduced. Measures are being implemented to increase the combat capabilities of existing weaponry and war materiel, to modernize tanks and to replenish our reserves of artillery munitions.

Contacts are expanding in the production and exchange of war materiel. In the current five-year-plan, in addition to the shipments of arms and equipment from the Soviet Union, the other allied countries are contributing to the supplies of the Unified Armed Forces by producing and shipping medium tanks, infantry vehicles, armored personal carriers, naval vessels, aircraft, helicopters, launching sites and other equipment. The production and turnover of arms and military equipment between the countries of the Warsaw Treaty has been growing year by year. Altogether, the indicators are twice as large as in the previous five-year plan.

We are focusing our attention on the operational and tactical preparation of our ground and navy forces so that they can engage in combat under the conditions of modern warfare.

In this context it is important for us to implement joint measures. In the implementation of these measures the main efforts of the command organs, the political organs and the headquarters have been aimed at raising the troops' level of training, strengthening cooperation and raising the fighting camaraderie among the allied armies.

Between 1969 and 1973, the Unified Command has held some 150 war games and exercises. Several headquarters and units of the allied armies took part in all of them. The largest and most complicated were usually prepared and conducted by the defense ministers together with the Unified Command. These exercises included the following: the "Spring-72" exercise on the territory of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. Participants: the general staffs of the Bulgarian People's Army, the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Soviet Army. During the exercise, we worked on forming up and disbursal into the theater of war during actions and offensive operations of the allied army groups.

A tactical war game was conducted on the territory of the People's Republic of Hungary with the participation of the front and army commands and the operative groups of the headquarters of the air defense and air force units of the Bulgarian People's Army, the Soviet Army and the Hungarian People's Army. The war game focused on joint actions in the South-Eastern theater of war.

On the territory of the German Democratic Republic we conducted a large tactical-operational exercise called "Camaraderie in Arms" with the participation of the army headquarters of all seven fraternal armies and the naval forces of three states. This exercise concentrated on the problems of ground, naval and airborne military actions.

The Oder-Neisse tactical-operational exercise on the territory of the People's Republic of Poland. The headquarters and units of four armies – the Polish People's Army, the National People's Army of the GDR, the Czechoslovak People's Army and the Soviet Army – participated and worked out entire complexes of questions, including naval and airborne operations and coastal defense.

The tactical war game "Soyuz 73" on the territory of the Socialist Republic of Romania. The general staffs of all the branches of the Bulgarian People's Republic, the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Soviet Army took part in it. The war game practiced questions such as the forming up of allied army groups in the theater of war, the conduct of offensive operations and the elimination of the consequences of the use of weapons of mass destruction.

On the territory of the Soviet Union the practice of military operations under local conditions took place in 1973. The troops of the Hungarian People's Army, the Bulgarian People's Army and the Soviet Army took part in the exercise.

A large tactical-operational exercise, "Shield-72," took place on the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic with the participation of the headquarters and units of five allied armies. This exercise focused on coordination between the headquarters and units of the allied armies in joint operations conducted under complicated ground and air conditions.

In addition, the exercises "Wave-72" and "Baltika-72" were conducted on the Black-Sea and the Baltic Sea with the participation of allied naval and mock enemy units. The exercise dealt with questions of eliminating the strike forces of the enemy navy and cooperating with the ground forces of the allied armies.

Exercises such as "Zenit-70" and "Granite-72" were conducted with the participation of the air defense headquarters and units of all the Warsaw Treaty states. The exercises dealt with repulsing air strikes.

In the training of troops, a special place is held by artillery and live shooting maneuvers at the Soviet Union's firing ranges under conditions simulating reality as closely as possible.

Every national army introduced a significant number of measures with respect to combat and tactical training.

Leaders of the communist and workers' parties and heads of governments from the allied countries participated in several exercises.

As a result of the work that has been accomplished, the Unified Armed Forces Command has significantly raised the level of training of the ground, naval and air forces; it has achieved a coordinated functioning of the groups and units of all the branches; and they have become capable of carrying out combat missions in various situations and conditions. The level of tactical-operational and technical knowledge of the headquarters, generals and officers has increased.

In consolidating the Unified Armed Forces, the Warsaw Treaty's military organs and the allied national commands have found it to be of great importance to expand contacts between the allied armies.

An analysis of the existing links and contacts shows that as a result of the collective efforts of the communist and workers parties and the governments, a system of cooperation has come into being that has proved to be entirely correct and that ensures the implementation of common measures for improving the socialist countries' combat readiness and combat capabilities and consolidating the fraternal friendship among them.

The Unified Command and the national commands also realized the tasks set by the governments of the Warsaw Treaty member-states in terms of providing internationalist assistance at the predetermined level in the form of war materiel and arms to the Arab peoples in their struggle against Israeli aggression. In a short period of time a significant number of tanks, planes, antitank equipment and war materiel were delivered to Syria.

Comrades! Because the communist and workers parties of the allied states take good care of their armed forces, and as a result of the constant efforts of all the leading organs of the national commands, the Unified Command and the Unified Armed Forces, the combat readiness of the ground and naval troops has grown and been strengthened. Their organizational structure and supply with new types of weapons and materiel has improved, and the friendly relations among the allied countries have been expanded and consolidated.

At the same time, we can also see deficiencies in the condition and training of the Unified Armed Forces.

There is still a significant amount of outdated weapons and war materiel in the allied armies – especially tanks, aircraft and artillery pieces. Air defense for the ground troops continues to be based on automatic machine guns.

In the Warsaw Treaty countries' unified air defense system, we have not fully achieved the missile-based air defense of important installations, the masking of aircraft, or the creation of low-altitude radar coverage for the whole area. We have not yet worked out cooperation between the air defense groups and units of some allied countries, on the one hand, and the Socialist Republic of Romania on the other.

There are still a significant number of outdated naval vessels. Submarine counter-intelligence and protection of fleets are still poor.

We have not quite resolved a number of problems with regard to the mobilization readiness of ground and naval forces. Construction of shelters, warehouses, and bases for missile and radar equipment is progressing at a slow pace.

The command of troops does not quite extend to the level of the Unified Armed Forces. The technical equipment for troop command is particularly insufficient under conditions of electronic warfare.

These are serious deficiencies, which influence the combat readiness of our troops, and they will require increased attention and preventive measures to eliminate them. Based on the Unified Command's plans, appropriate measures will be taken to remove all the obstacles to the improvement of the allied armies' combat readiness in the implementation of the bilateral protocols for 1974-1975 and in the preparation of the developmental plans for the Unified Armed Forces for 1976-1980.

Allow me to provide a brief report on the main trends in the development and improvement of the Unified Armed Forces.

In the new five-year period it would be expedient to develop the Unified Armed Forces in the following directions: augmenting the strike capability, maneuverability and firing intensity of all branches by introducing new types of weapons and war materiel and exchanging or modernizing outdated types; further improving the organizational structure of groups, units and command organs through the introduction of more technical equipment; increasing the combat and mobilization readiness of troops and control organs; increasing the survivability and controllability of army and tactical deep rear

areas; and further accumulating and decentralizing the necessary materiel reserves and equipment for the theater of war.

We must continue to equip the ground forces with R-17³ short-range tactical-missile systems and “Luna-M”⁴ type operational systems, which are effective means for subduing the enemy.

We must increase the strike capabilities of the ground troops by increasing the number of new tanks, infantry combat vehicles and armed personal carriers.

We must increase the ground troops’ firing intensity by providing them with towed -and self-propelled guns, multiple rocket launchers, antitank guided missiles and other new materiel.

The ground forces’ air defense will be augmented by the introduction of new, highly- efficient antiaircraft missile systems.

With the introduction of the new materiel and armaments the organizational structure of the armed forces will improve.

The main efforts of the units of the Warsaw Treaty’s unified air defense system should be directed toward the establishment of an air defense system in echelon, the formation of mixed antiaircraft missile units for the protection of the most important state installations, the establishment of complete low-altitude radar coverage and measures aimed at complex, automated command of the air defense troops.

The MIG-21 will remain the basic interceptor-fighter aircraft for the Warsaw Treaty air defense units. Modernized antiaircraft missile complexes will remain the basic types of missile weaponry for the air defense units. The equipping of the air defense units with improved radar technology will proceed.

The air forces’ combat and transport capabilities will be improved with the introduction of new aircraft and combat helicopters and through the creation of an army air force.

MIGs will remain the basic type of front fighter aircraft. We are planning to equip the air forces with new fighter-bombers.

According to our plans, new naval fleets will be developed through the qualitative and quantitative reinforcement of the anti-submarine, airborne and mine-detection units and the accumulation of materiel to solve tasks in closed marine theaters and areas beyond the zone of straits. The system of naval bases should be improved; we must strengthen the protection of our vessels and facilities against airstrikes and improve our technical capabilities for anti-mine warfare.

In developing the rear we are planning to increase its maneuverability, survivability and controllability; to further accumulate materiel reserves until we reach

³ Transl. note: The R-17 short-range tactical missile was more popularly known in the West as the “Scud” missile.

⁴ Transl. note: The “Luna-M” short-range Soviet artillery rocket was more popularly known as the “FROG-7” within NATO; it was capable of delivering conventional, chemical, or nuclear payloads.

the two-three-month norm; to decentralize and mask them; and also to improve the organizational structure of units and institutions in the rear.

Organization of our countries' territory as theaters of war is proceeding according to plan – i.e., creating conditions that will make possible the timely forming up and disbursement of our troops, constant troop command, and uninterrupted materiel-technical and health services.

Permit me to report that the North Atlantic bloc is devoting considerable attention to developing and improving its armed forces; it is further improving the combat readiness and capabilities of its ground and naval forces.

The NATO military budget is growing every year and exceeded 120 billion dollars in 1973. The European members of the bloc were planning to increase their military expenditures by two billion dollars by 1974.

NATO plans to increase the capabilities and durability of their strategic nuclear-attack vehicles. With regard to their ground forces, they are planning to increase the number of tank and mechanized units, to introduce new and more efficient means for employing nuclear arms, to introduce new anti-tank and antiaircraft equipment and to expand the capabilities of their army air forces.

In the next few years, the ground forces of the European NATO countries alone will be receiving more than 2000 tanks, over 4000 infantry combat vehicles and armored personal carriers, 10 thousand anti-tank weapons, 500 transport aircraft and helicopters and other weapons.

At the same time, they are planning to equip their air forces with more fighter aircraft and more efficient rockets and bombs.

Their fleets are building new vessels, and all the vessels are being equipped with the latest missile systems, anti-submarine and antiaircraft equipment. The U.S. and Great Britain are keeping significant naval forces in constant battle readiness on the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. We know that they are making preparations to maintain a fleet in the Indian Ocean, too.

The construction of the NADGE⁵ automated control system is almost ready in NATO's air defense units, and significant work is being done to improve lines of communication. The development of pipelines, highways and the railroad system is proceeding.

NATO is intensively training its troops, headquarters and fleet. They are planning around 170 joint actions and 130 war exercises of various sizes and purposes in 1974. Every year, they are practicing the transfer of large U.S. forces to Europe.

We cannot disregard these activities of the North Atlantic bloc in the construction and training of the Unified Armed Forces.

⁵ Transl. note: NATO Air Defense Ground Environment (NADGE).

As for the expansion of relations between the allied armies, the Unified Command is implementing the Political Consultative Committee's resolution of January 1972 and is taking steps to expand relations between the armies of the Warsaw Treaty member-states and to strengthen their friendship.

First of all, intensive work is being done to coordinate the construction and development of national armed forces and to improve their combat and mobilization readiness. This is being done with an eye to the preparations that have gotten under way to implement the five-year plan for the development of allied forces for 1976-1980. Measures were taken to expand cooperation in the field of war materiel.

An important aspect of our work is to improve the ground forces' and navies' level of training, to work out the most expedient methods for training and educating personnel and to implement them in practice. For this purpose, we continue to attribute great significance to our joint military exercises; during them, we exchange the large amount of experience acquired by the allied armed forces, work out questions of cooperation between the allied armed forces and fleets, and strengthen the friendly relations between military personnel.

We intend to focus on developing military theory and working out unified views regarding the character and means of conducting operations.

We think it is necessary to intensify our cooperation in the field of educating the soldiers of the fraternal armies in an internationalist spirit.

We have also paid attention to expanding contacts between the Soviet army groups and the armies and populations of the countries where they are stationed and also to strengthening relations between the Black Sea and Baltic fleets of the allied states.

The drafting of the new five-year developmental program for the Unified Armed Forces is in progress. In April 1973, we sent our proposals regarding the general prospects for the development of the Unified Armed Forces to the ministries of defense, to which we attached a suggested list of military equipment and weapons for the ground and naval forces in the new five-year plan. We demonstrated the types of weapons and war materiel used by each nation to every allied army.

Intensive work is currently underway for the harmonization and preparation of the drafts of the bilateral protocols. We are planning to conclude this work at the level of the defense ministers and the Unified Command of the Unified Armed Forces by mid-1975, and in the second part of 1975, we will present the draft protocols for the five-year development of the allied armies and fleets to the governments for their approval.

Comrades!

Guided by the interests of increasing the security of the Unified Command and the member-states of the Warsaw Treaty along with the combat readiness of the Unified Armed Forces, I consider the implementation of the following coordinated measures to be expedient:

1. To increase the defensive capabilities of the allied countries by the end of the present five-year period (1971-1975), and to carry out the measures contained in the developmental plans for the national armies, whose aim is to qualitatively improve the ground and naval forces of the Unified Command.
2. The following should be considered in working out the developmental plans for our forces assigned to the Unified Armed Forces in 1976-1980: further increasing the combat readiness and combat effectiveness of the United Armed Forces; supplying the ground and naval forces with new, improved weaponry and war materiel; further improving the organizational structure of the groups, units and command organs for all branches; accumulating the necessary materiel reserves and improving the tactical preparation on the territories of our countries.
3. To strengthen the unified air defense system of the Warsaw Treaty and to increase its combat readiness. We must continue to construct an air defense system in echelon, to improve antiaircraft missile systems and automated troop control, and to increase the survivability of the missile defense system.
4. We must proceed with improving the organizational structure and command organs of the Unified Armed Forces and increasing the level of training of our forces on the ground, in the air and at sea. We must expand fraternal contacts and cooperation among the allied armies.

These are the basic results and directions of the activities carried out on the basis of the resolutions presented by the national commands, the Unified Command, and the meetings of the PCC of the Warsaw Treaty member-states in March 1969 and January 1972.

Allow me to assure the members of the Political Consultative Committee that the Unified Command and all the military command organs of the Warsaw Treaty Organization are doing their utmost and using all their experience to fully implement the tasks assigned to the Unified Armed Forces according to the highest standards.

Allow me to conclude my report. Thank you for your attention.

[Translation from the Hungarian by László Borhi]