

Draft – 29 March 1961

SPEECH
DELIVERED BY COMRADE TODOR ZHIVKOV¹

AT THE MEETING OF THE POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
WARSAW TREATY COUNTRIES HELD IN MOSCOW,
28 – 29 MARCH 1961

Comrades,

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government for initiating this meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries, and to state that we believe it is very timely, necessary and beneficial.

This meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries is taking place nearly four months after the Moscow meeting of representatives from the communist and workers parties. Clearly, our work today will be influenced by the Moscow meeting, by the thorough analysis of the current international situation and the correlation of forces in the international arena, by the theoretical and political conclusions, assessments and common positions on important issues decided upon at the Moscow meeting.

Obviously, we should consider the comments of Comrade [Nikita] Khrushchev, who repeatedly underlined that we should protect ourselves from being blackmailed by the imperialists and involved in a war; that we need to strengthen the socialist camp and its defensive capabilities and be prepared to prevent any attempt to start a war. Considering the new capabilities of modern weapons of mass destruction, it is very important not to let the enemy surprise us, to keep our armed forces combat-ready and always to take the initiative.

Comrades,

Having summarized the analyses, conclusions and positions taken at the Moscow meeting of the communist and workers parties, our delegation believes that the assessments and

¹ Todor Zhivkov – CC BCP First Secretary (1954-1981) and Secretary General (1981-1989); Prime Minister (1962-1971); Chairman of the State Council (1971-1989).

measures undertaken to equip and prepare the Warsaw Treaty states' armed forces discussed in the report of the Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Treaty's Unified Armed Forces, Marshal [Andrei] Grechko, are correct. These activities and measures are related to the nature of a future war against the socialist countries, which will inevitably² be a world war using nuclear missiles; they are related to the main requirement – to prepare our armed forces for this kind of war. Our task is to transform our armed forces to correspond to the nature and new requirements of a future, worldwide nuclear war.³

The Central Committee of our party and our government are constantly making efforts to strengthen the defensive capabilities of the Peoples' Republic of Bulgaria as a Warsaw Treaty member-state and to enhance the combat readiness and combat capabilities of our armed forces. In this regard, we believe that we have achieved considerable success.

I feel obliged to express here on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation, on behalf of our Central Committee and our government, our special appreciation to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government for the valuable and continuous support rendered by the Soviet Union in equipping our army and improving its organization and combat capabilities. During his visit to Bulgaria earlier this year in February, Marshal Grechko made some very valuable recommendations regarding the further consolidation of our armed forces.

Despite the progress that we have made in enhancing our defensive capabilities, we must say that our military forces are not armed in accordance with the needs of modern warfare. Currently, most of the weapons are obsolete. Therefore, we have a serious task before us – the complete rearmament of our armed forces with new, modern missiles and other combat equipment. At the same time, we are aware that this rearmament will be an additional⁴ burden on our economy and will cause considerable tension.

We realize very well, though, that the interests of the socialist community and of each country, the international interests of our common idea – socialism – call for each socialist country to increase its contribution to the further development of the defensive capabilities of the socialist camp and to make more sacrifices. The burden of strengthening the socialist community's armed forces should not be borne by one country alone. It would be fair to distribute the expenses among all fraternal nations according to their development and economic potential.

² In the draft "surely" was changed to "inevitably."

³ A deleted paragraph in the draft read: "This is a principal task of the armed forces of all the Warsaw Treaty member-states, including the Bulgarian armed forces."

⁴ In the draft "great" was changed to "additional."

In this regard, our delegation approves the comments and suggestions made by the Vice Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the Soviet Union, Comrade [Mikhail] Khrunichev, on specialization and cooperation in defense production among the Warsaw Treaty member-states.

Currently, the People's Republic of Bulgaria is not participating in the specialization of defense production, although we have our own defense industry that produces some types of small arms and ammunition.

Therefore, we fully support Comrade Khrunichev's suggestion in his report regarding our country, and we ask the Warsaw Treaty countries to give their consent to the PR Bulgaria's specialization in the production of some models of small arms and some models of radio equipment, in order to cover at least partially the expenses that we have incurred in acquiring arms.

Comrades,

The Politburo of the Central Committee of our party reviewed Comrade Enver Hoxha's statement at the Fourth Congress of the Albanian Labor Party that Albania had recently been attacked by Yugoslavia and Greece with the support of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. As members of the Warsaw Treaty, we were surprised and worried. We had a question: If Albania had really been attacked, or if there had been a threat of invasion, why didn't the Albanian government inform our government? It turned out that not only were we not informed about this "invasion." It turned out that none of the Warsaw Treaty member-states knew anything about it. Even the Warsaw Treaty's Unified Command knew nothing about it.

Publicizing such a fact is not a unilateral issue that affects Albania only. Rather, it is a common problem for the entire Warsaw Treaty Organization, a problem that affects all the Warsaw Treaty member-states. Don't the Albanian comrades realize what an invasion against Albania or against any other socialist country means? It means an invasion against all socialist countries, against the entire socialist camp. Everyone can imagine the consequences of this fact.

A simple duty of every Warsaw Treaty member-country arising from its membership is to notify the [other] Warsaw Treaty member-countries about an invasion or even the threat of an invasion.

Given that the People's Republic of Albania is a member of the Warsaw Treaty

Organization, it is a responsibility for the Albanian government as well; they are obliged to fulfill all their duties to the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Unfortunately, we have not yet received any detailed information from the Albanian comrades about an attack.

We believe that the Warsaw Treaty should verify this matter and inform all the countries.

During the consultations of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty, we were made aware of a copy of the letter sent by the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces, Marshal Grechko, to Albanian Defense Minister General Beqir Balluku in reply to his letter.

We are not just worried, we are indignant at the actions of the Albanian leadership, which is creating an intolerable situation at Vlorë Naval Base – a significant installation of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. It is hampering the combat training of ship crews and engaging in insulting and humiliating acts against the Soviet military and other experts. We need to point out that these are provocations, rude violations of Albania's allied duties and that they undermine military cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Such acts of the Albanian leadership are far removed from the friendship between the Albanian and Soviet peoples, far removed from the valuable manifold support rendered by the Soviet Union to the People's Republic of Albania. These acts are incompatible with the basic requirements of our friendly joint work, our relations and mutual understandings in the Warsaw Treaty, which have developed not only on the basis of allied responsibilities but also according to the principles of proletarian internationalism.

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[Translation by Jordan Baev]