

(Excerpt from a draft prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be used for information at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, scheduled for March 14, 1968)

Confidential!
Draft!

Comrades,

As you already know, a Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization took place in Sofia on March 6-7. This meeting was initiated by the Socialist Republic of Romania at the beginning of 1967 to discuss the draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. We responded to the Romanian comrades that this issue had already been discussed during the consultations between the USSR and the other fraternal states. Actually, we believe that the text, coordinated by the USSR and the USA, is acceptable; therefore, we agreed that it be taken to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee in Geneva.

Our response stated that the Political Consultative Committee could review the draft treaty if there were significant arguments. We requested the complete and exact comments of the Romanian side. We stated that we would bring up more questions for discussion by the Political Consultative Committee.

The other fraternal states provided similar responses to the Romanian proposal from 1967 to hold a Political Consultative Committee Meeting.

In February of this year, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party reviewed a letter from the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu, who once again brought up the issue of a Political Consultative Committee meeting. The topic of the meeting was to be the nuclear nonproliferation and the submission of the revised draft treaty to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee on 18 January [1968] by the USSR.

Our reply to Comrade Ceausescu's letter shared the idea that the draft treaty could be improved. Under the current international situation, however, a revision of the Soviet draft would bring unnecessary complications and defer or even frustrate the signing of the treaty, which is not in the interest of peace.

The response from our Politburo also stated that if the other Warsaw Treaty states considered it necessary to hold a Political Consultative Committee meeting to review the draft nuclear nonproliferation treaty or any other issues, our country would participate with a delegation at the appropriate level.

After a period of consultations, the Warsaw Treaty states agreed to hold a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee on March 6 of this year to discuss the following issues: the nuclear nonproliferation, Vietnam, and some military problems.

To ensure appropriate preparation for the Political Consultative Committee meeting in Sofia, two preliminary meetings were held of the deputy foreign ministers and the deputy defense ministers of the Warsaw Treaty states (except Albania, which is unwilling to participate in the Warsaw Treaty Organization). The first meeting was held in [East] Berlin from February 26 to 27, and the second one, in Prague, beginning on February 29.

The deputy foreign ministers' meeting in [East] Berlin showed the differences between Romania's positions, on the one hand, and those of the other six states (Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the USSR), on the other. These disagreements can be summarized as follows:

- a) The representatives of the six countries declared their approval of the draft treaty on nuclear nonproliferation, submitted by the USSR to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee. The Romanian representative assessed this draft as unsatisfactory and insisted that some changes be made.
- b) Representatives of the six nations stated that the deputy ministers' meeting should review the issues. The Romanian participants opposed this statement and insisted that this be done at the highest level in Sofia.
- c) The six countries believe that the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee should finish work by March 15 of this year, as foreseen in the resolution of the UN General Assembly, and send a report to the General Assembly for approval so that the treaty could be signed as soon as possible. Romania does not consider this issue to be so urgent and believes that discussions in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee should continue.
- d) The six nations are convinced that under current international circumstances, negotiations with the USA and the other Western countries will not bring any further progress. The Romanians, however, believe that now is the time to make the USA step back.

During the meeting in [East] Berlin, the Romanian comrades made it clear that the Romanian government was prepared to submit amendments to the Soviet draft treaty to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee in Geneva without waiting for the Political Consultative Committee to complete its work. The Romanian comrades had already submitted their amendments to the draft, except for the ones referring to the problem of international control over non-nuclear-weapon states to see whether they are fulfilling their obligations (Article III). They submitted the amendments regarding Article III after the conclusion of the deputy ministers' meeting in [East] Berlin.

I have no intention of providing detailed comments regarding the Romanian proposals now. I am going to refer to them later, when I analyze the position of the Romanian delegation regarding item one on the agenda of the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee.

Although no agreement was reached with the Romanian comrades, the deputy foreign ministers' meeting was beneficial because it solved some practical problems, the most important one being the establishment of a working group of representatives from the USSR, Poland and Bulgaria to work out a draft declaration on the Vietnamese question to be submitted to the other countries by March 3. This task was completed on time – a fact that facilitated the work of the Sofia meeting on the second agenda item.

Due to the position of the Romanian delegation, the deputy defense ministers' meeting in Prague did not reach agreement, either.

This was the situation when the Political Consultative Committee started work in Sofia. The meeting was opened by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Comrade Todor Zhivkov. After the agenda's approval, the meeting proceeded to the problem of nuclear nonproliferation.

In order to better clarify our disagreements with the Romanian comrades on nuclear nonproliferation, I am going to comment on the essence and significance of this issue. Then, I am going to analyze Romania's ideas, as laid out in their proposals and in Comrade Ceaușescu's speech at the meeting.

The issue of nuclear nonproliferation is a crucial issue because it is related to European security and the future of peace throughout the world. The issue of nuclear nonproliferation should be regarded as inseparable from the main task of the socialist countries of the Warsaw Treaty: preventing the nuclear armament of West Germany, whose ruling circles are striving for nuclear weapons in order to implement their crazy plans to redraw the map of Europe. Thus, the socialist states must struggle defiantly to eliminate the possibility of West Germany's attaining access to nuclear weapons in any form – directly or indirectly, or through a grouping of countries.

The issue of nuclear nonproliferation is of extreme importance also from the perspective of combating the aggressive policy of imperialism.

The alternative, as defined by Comrade [Leonid] Brezhnev at the meeting, is either to take steps for the prevention of nuclear proliferation, or in five, ten or fifteen years the number of nuclear states in the world will sharply rise. The problem is that not only West Germany, but also countries like Japan, Israel, Italy, Canada, the Republic of South Africa, India, Sweden, Brazil, and a number of others have reached the level of scientific and technological progress to start nuclear weapons production. Along with the growing number of nuclear states, there will be more countries wanting to possess nuclear weapons. The potential for nuclear production will grow along with progress in science and technologies.

There is no doubt that through the process of nuclear proliferation in the capitalist camp, nuclear weapons will become available to the countries that – along with the USA and West Germany – are conducting the most reactionary and aggressive policies, like Israel, the Republic of South Africa and others. The imperialist countries will receive additional opportunities to organize dangerous provocations in various parts of the world.

It is not difficult to predict the consequences of the emergence of new nuclear-weapon states in regions where tensions already exist in relations between countries. For example, if Israel has an atomic bomb, the Arab states will strive for nuclear weapons, too. If India becomes a nuclear state, Pakistan will produce nuclear weapons, too. We can expect similar situations in Africa and Latin America. Under these conditions, so-called “local” conflicts with nuclear weapons could easily expand into global thermo-nuclear conflict.

The emergence of new nuclear states in the capitalist world would impose new and considerable expenditures for the defensive capabilities of the socialist countries, including the People’s Republic of Bulgaria.

All this proves, as the Soviet leader has stated, that the issue of nuclear nonproliferation is of crucial importance. It is one of the key aspects in the struggle between the two systems – socialism and capitalism. If we are successful in solving this problem, we will have more favorable conditions for the anti-imperialist struggle, for countering the militaristic and adventuristic ambitions of the imperialist camp. If we do not reach a solution, the struggle against imperialism will continue under more complex and less favorable conditions.

This does not mean, however, that we are trying to preserve the status quo in which the world is divided into nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states. The Soviet Union and the other socialist states have persistently struggled for nuclear disarmament, for a complete ban on and the elimination of nuclear weapons. The nuclear nonproliferation treaty will undoubtedly represent a significant step in the struggle for nuclear disarmament and progress toward our ultimate goal – total disarmament.

As a result of the continuous and hard negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, which Comrade Todor Zhivkov called a great success for Soviet diplomacy, a draft treaty on nuclear nonproliferation was reached. The United States was compelled to retreat on a number of issues related to the main responsibilities of the states with regard to nuclear nonproliferation.

I have in mind here the two main passages of the current draft treaty (Articles I & II). They ban any kind of transfer of nuclear weapons or control over such weapons, directly or indirectly. The articles ban the production of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear-weapon states. These passages in the draft treaty stand in opposition to the establishment of multilateral or any other nuclear forces by NATO.

With regard to control, the West German government has tried to bring the negotiations on nonproliferation to a deadlock. The United States of America had to retreat on the control issue as well. The draft treaty foresees that each non-nuclear-weapon state that is a party to the treaty agrees to accept inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Procedures for inspection have been worked out by qualified experts with the participation of scientists from the Soviet Union and other socialist states, and have been recognized by practically all the states of the world. The team of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency includes experts from socialist countries as well.

In the drafting of the final formulations relating to the basic obligations of nonproliferation and verification, the views of many states, both members and non-members of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, were taken into account. The draft treaty also reflects a number of suggestions made by the Romanian comrades.

In the view of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the other fraternal parties, except Romania, the draft treaty secures the main goals of the socialist countries and the interests of the socialist community.

Of course, the draft treaty is a compromise. As Comrade Brezhnev said, this is a compromise in form, rather than the content of the work, which does not encroach upon the principled positions of the socialist states.

The Soviet delegation announced that the Soviet government has come to the conclusion that there is a possibility to complete the work – i.e., to sign a nonproliferation treaty. There are still more obstacles to be overcome, generated by the most aggressive imperialist circles.

West Germany is still opposed to signing the nonproliferation treaty. The efforts of the West German diplomacy have been directed toward supporting the group of opponents.

Extremist US circles are working toward the same goal. They are working in unison with the West German revanchists. The West German revanchists and the US extremists are gambling on some hesitant states, whose production and scientific and technological development are close to the possibility of creating their own atomic bomb. These countries are truly uncertain. Among them we can name Israel, the Republic of South Africa, Japan, Italy, India, and Brazil.

The plot of the treaty opponents is clear. Their primary goal is to defer negotiations and to fail to meet the March 15 deadline set by the General Assembly for this year. Thus, we must counter this provocation. Time is now a very important factor. The forces of imperialism are of a different opinion. The common efforts of the socialist and the peace-loving countries have made it possible to isolate the most extreme imperialist circles. It is very important that we take advantage of the situation.

All these considerations will be taken into account in our analysis and assessment of the nature and impact of the Romanian proposals. What, actually, do the Romanian comrades want?

The Romanian comrades believe that given the growing aggressiveness of the reactionary forces of international imperialism, and especially U.S. imperialism, the issue of preventing the use of nuclear weapons, of preventing a thermonuclear war is a critical current international problem. They agree that on the path to eliminating the nuclear threat, even partial measures might be acceptable, like the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, for example. In order to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear-weapon states, to bolster world security, the treaty envisages specific obligations for the nuclear states in terms of nuclear disarmament, reduction of nuclear stockpiles, and cessation of the nuclear arms race, as well as guarantees that non-nuclear-weapon states will not become victims of a nuclear attack. Thus, the nonproliferation treaty will serve the interests of the people, contribute to a weakening of international tensions and consolidate security in the world.

The Romanian comrades believe that the text of the current draft does not meet the requirements of a nonproliferation treaty. It does not give any guarantees for non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states. It does not include any obligations that the nuclear-weapon states take steps toward nuclear disarmament. It does not provide sufficient guarantees for the development and peaceful use of nuclear energy or for a system of control that does not extend beyond the limits and goals of the treaty. According to their views, the socialist and other peace-loving states need to make further efforts to improve the draft treaty. According to the Romanians, improvements need to be made along the following lines:

- a) Inclusion of a new passage in the treaty stipulating that the nuclear-weapon states are obliged never and under no circumstances to use nuclear weapons or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states.

It is well-known that the issue of guarantees for the security of non-nuclear-weapon states against the use of nuclear weapons has been raised repeatedly by a number of non-aligned countries. In response to these requests, the Soviet Union agreed in 1966 to include a provision in the treaty banning the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon parties to the Treaty that have no nuclear weapons on their territory. The United States of America, however, opposed this proposal, and it was not included in the draft.

A comparison of the Soviet and Romanian proposals regarding guarantees has clearly convinced us that the Romanian formulation lacks a very significant element: only states without nuclear weapons on their territory should benefit from the guarantees. This detail is crucial and refers mainly to West Germany. West Germany is a non-nuclear-weapon state; however, there are nuclear weapons on its territory.

Responding to the concern of the non-nuclear-weapon states about their security, the Soviet Union has taken the initiative to resolve these complex issues outside the framework of the treaty.

Based on available information, a text has already been coordinated between the USSR, the USA and Great Britain on this issue.

- b) It suggests the adoption of measures to curtail the production of nuclear weapons, to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons and the means for delivering them to a target in the short term. If such measures are not taken within five years after the treaty enters into force, the states will review the situation and decide what measures to take.

The Romanian proposal goes beyond the scope and goals of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. It implies that the fate of the Treaty is dependent upon other disarmament measures and would allow states interested in acquiring nuclear weapons to withdraw from the treaty after this five-year period. The measures cited in the Romanian text were copied from the Soviet draft treaty on complete disarmament and other Soviet proposals. Negotiations on disarmament so far have proved, however, that the United States and its allies are unwilling to undertake such obligations now. This makes the Romanian proposal unrealistic. Given the situation, the socialist states need to decide whether to link in one package the nonproliferation issue with other disarmament measures and to launch futile discussions, or to accept the nonproliferation treaty and then take further steps toward disarmament. No doubt, the nuclear nonproliferation treaty will be an important step towards nuclear disarmament and toward our ultimate goal – complete disarmament. Any maximalist demands right now would undermine the agreement that has been reached on this question up to now.

- c) The Romanian comrades disagree with the current version of Article III of the treaty regarding the control of treaty obligations. They believe that based on the draft treaty, the International Atomic Energy Agency will inspect areas that do not represent any danger of proliferation, including exclusively peaceful nuclear activities. Therefore, they consider it necessary to limit the area of inspections to those states where a possibility exists of transferring nuclear energy from peaceful to military purposes. They propose that non-nuclear-weapon states that are party to the treaty should be subject to inspections only with regard to those peaceful activities that by their nature or in terms of the quantity of original and special fissionable material they produce represent a danger of nuclear proliferation.

With the introduction of these volatile and vague criteria for control, there is a real possibility that some states could avoid the controls of the International Atomic Energy Agency and begin nuclear-weapons production, thus violating their obligations. The Romanians' fears that controls could lead to intervention in states' internal affairs are irrational. The only purpose of controls is to ensure that peaceful nuclear activities in non-nuclear weapon states will not be used for nuclear production. Article IV states the inalienable right of all parties to the treaty to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, along with the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of scientific and technological information on this issue. The purpose of controls in the treaty is to ensure the strict observance of the obligations contained in Articles I and II and to avoid any possibility of nuclear-weapons proliferation.

Along with the inspections of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Romanian amendment includes inspections by the Security Council over those states on whose territory foreign military bases are located. The purpose is to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons through these bases.

This proposal is unrealistic. We cannot expect that the states with foreign military bases on their territory, or the states owning these bases, would permit such inspections

- d) Another Romanian amendment proposes that a conference be held every five years to review whether all the obligations have been met by the states that are parties to the treaty. This amendment would bring considerable instability to the treaty and could be abused by the opponents of nuclear nonproliferation. Article VIII of the draft states that five years after the treaty enters into force, a conference of the parties to the treaty will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, to review the treaty's implementation. This is a sufficient guarantee that the treaty's goals and provisions are being met and will ensure the necessary stability for the treaty.
- e) The last Romanian amendment proposes that a party to the treaty that wants to withdraw should announce to the United Nations Security Council the extreme circumstances that threaten its interests and compels it to make this decision. Comrade Ceausescu justified this amendment by citing the principle of sovereign equality between states and their exclusive right to make decisions regarding developments that threaten their interests.

Including this text in the treaty as a measure of deterrence was proposed by some delegations during the negotiations on nuclear nonproliferation in 1966. It is an additional guarantee for the treaty's stability and is based on the deterring effect of world public opinion. This provision does not contradict the principle of state sovereignty or international law, as the Romanian delegation seeks to prove.

I have made detailed comments on the Romanian amendments because unless we analyze them, we will not be able to clarify Romania's position on this particular issue at the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee.

How should one assess politically the Romanian position on nuclear nonproliferation? First, we need to say that the Socialist Republic of Romania has brought up requests for amendments to the Soviet draft that are unacceptable in essence and unrealistic in terms of the current international situation. Regardless of their intents and wishes, the Romanian comrades' approach lends support to the opponents of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, including West Germany. This approach means that the socialist states that are members of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, will not adopt a common position on the Committee regarding some basic problems of disarmament. This will create additional difficulties for the socialist states in their struggle for peace and disarmament. Finally, the Romanian position will inevitably lead to further

disagreements between Romania and the fraternal states. We express deep regret for all this. Yet, the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and our government must take these facts into account and consider them in their practical work, especially in foreign policy.

The Romanian delegation did not respond to the appeals of the other fraternal states to adopt the common position on nuclear nonproliferation. The Romanian delegation declared that Romania was going to submit its amendments to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee and thus adopt a course of postponing the Geneva talks. Undoubtedly, Romania will continue with this line in April, when the General Assembly is expected to discuss this question. We can also expect that the Romanian party and state leadership will misinterpret the position of the other fraternal states on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons when they inform Romanian party members about the Political Consultative Committee meeting.

These considerations led the six countries to come up with a public statement of their own, not as members of the Warsaw Treaty. This statement voices a declaration of support for the Soviet draft; their willingness to complete negotiations in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee by 15 March 1968; an appeal to the UN General Assembly to approve the draft; and their desire that the treaty be signed and enter into force.

This [declaration] was necessitated by the extreme importance of the issue of nuclear weapon nonproliferation and by the irreconcilability of the Romanian position. In fact, the six fraternal states had no other choice but to come up with a statement, and they did. The text of this statement was published in our mass media; therefore, I have no intention to further comment on it.

Before I conclude, I would like to inform the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party that our delegation, led by Comrade Todor Zhivkov, was in full support of the Soviet draft treaty on nuclear nonproliferation. Our delegation demonstrated its solidarity with the considerations and conclusions in favor of immediately signing the treaty presented by the Soviet and other fraternal delegations.

Item two on the agenda of the Political Consultative Committee meeting included discussion of the Vietnamese issue. The Warsaw Treaty member-states represented at the Political Consultative Committee Meeting in Sofia adopted a special declaration on the threat to peace created by the expansion of the U.S. aggression in Vietnam. This declaration was published in the media, and all the comrades have had the opportunity to read it. Therefore, I am going to make one or two comments.¹

(Diplomatic Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sofia, Opis 32, File 30)

[Translation by Jordan Baev]

¹ Translation note: The document ends abruptly at this point.