

13.2.1968

Memorandum of Conversation between Comrade Walter Ulbricht and Comrade
Ambassador Abrassimov on 13.2.1968

Comrade Abrassimov informed us that the Central Committee of the CPSU had received a written proposal from the CC of the RCP¹ to convene the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty in order to discuss Romania's comments on the draft nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

The CC of the CPSU replied along these lines: In terms of the essence of the proposal of the CC of the RCP, the CC of the CPSU agrees in principle that a consultation should be held with regard to the draft nuclear non-proliferation treaty in the Political Consultative Committee. With regard to the timing, the CC of the CPSU drew attention to the fact that in February, the Consultative Meeting² is taking place in Budapest; at the same time, regional and district party conferences, in which members of the Politburo are participating, are taking place in the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the festivities for the 50th anniversary of the Soviet army and the Trade Union Congress are coming up in Moscow, and a plenum of the CC of the CPSU is planned for March. Therefore, the best time for convening the Political Consultative Committee would be the middle or the second half of March. In the meantime, it would be useful to hold a meeting of the deputy foreign ministers of the Warsaw Treaty member-states. It could take place in February, if the member-states agree.

¹ Transl. Note: Central Committee (CC) of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP).

² Transl. Note: Consultative Meeting of the World's Communist and Workers' Parties.

If all member-states speak in favor of convening the Political Consultative Committee, it would be useful also to discuss the problem of Vietnam, given the most recent events. A declaration or a statement in support of Vietnam could possibly be adopted, denouncing the actions of the USA.

Furthermore, consultations could be held regarding the establishment of a staff and a military council of the Warsaw Treaty. This matter was broached in Bucharest, but no conclusion was reached.

The CPSU agreed to Sofia as the venue, if the Bulgarian comrades give their consent, since this also corresponds to the custom of convening the Political Consultative Committee in the capitals of the member-states.

The letter draws attention to the fact that the full text of the draft treaty has now been presented to the Eighteen Nations Committee.³ Prior to this, in consultations among the members of the Warsaw Treaty, agreement had been reached about the submission of the new text. Romania had not raised any objections at that time. The letter of the CC of the RCP of January 31 emphasized the necessity of holding consultations among the states of the Warsaw Treaty before any of its representatives speaks on the draft treaty in Geneva. But on February 6, the Romanian representative in Geneva sharply attacked the current draft. This stands in gross contradiction to the thoughts expressed in the Romanian letter, which also found expression in the Romanian-Italian communiqué.

³ Transl. Note: Eighteen-Nations Disarmament Committee of the United Nations.

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In conclusion, Cde. Abrassimov reported that Comrade Ponomar'ev has returned from Korea. His talks with Kim Il-Sung had gone well. The minutes also stated that Kim Il-Sung had shown understanding for the fact that the situation must not be aggravated to the point of a military conflict. However, practical measures (for instance, the release of the crew of the spy ship) had not yet been taken. The Korean leadership still wants to consult on this and would then inform the Soviet Union.

[Translation from the German by Ursula Froese]