

Statement of Comrade L.I. Brezhnev  
at the Meeting of the Leaders of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States in Moscow

20 August 1970

Comrades!

The Treaty between the USSR and the FRG, signed a week ago, added a number of new and – from our point of view – rather important points to the political situation in Europe, and not only in Europe. This is why we needed to meet and exchange opinions regarding our future political course. For our part, we would like to express some ideas on behalf of the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government.

The treaty between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany is the result on the consistent implementation of a coordinated policy by the fraternal socialist countries in Europe.

From a practical standpoint, the issue of normalizing relations between the FRG, the Soviet Union, and several other socialist countries emerged more than four years ago. As you all know, Bonn wanted to exploit this issue for political demagogy by boiling it down to insignificant statements on “renunciation of force.” The FRG government was constantly trying to avoid any responsibility for the other, important issues of European security – first and foremost, the responsibility for resolving the territorial issues that are of utmost importance to our countries. From the very beginning, we have sought to encourage a renunciation-of-force agreement that would be filled with specific and legally-binding content.

After the Brandt government came to power, evidence of a more realistic assessment of the European situation appeared in FRG policy. This enabled us to open negotiations with the FRG based on the decisions that we made collectively with you last December. These negotiations have been successfully concluded.

We have every reason to assert that our assessments and conclusions at the previous meeting were confirmed. The environment was conducive for steering our exchange of opinions with the FRG down avenues that serve the interests of our socialist commonwealth and for taking a major step forward towards formalizing the most significant results of World War II and the postwar period.

Please permit me not to dwell on the details of our negotiations with the FRG officials. These negotiations were not easy up to the very end. A long and intensive struggle ensued over every clause, and these struggles, of course, did not take place only at the negotiating table.

During the entire course of the negotiations, and virtually up to the moment of the initialing of the treaty's text, the West German side sought to include provisions that might somehow weaken the recognition of the integrity of the existing borders and permit the FRG to still cast doubt upon the GDR's rights as a sovereign, independent state.

By firmly and decisively upholding the common policy of the socialist countries throughout the treaty negotiations, we were able to parry such attempts by the West German side. The Treaty does not contain references to the absence of a peaceful resolution of the German question; there is no mention of West Berlin or of "German unification"—i.e., there is nothing upon which the Bonn officials had insisted. However, after the treaty's signing, the West Germans sent us a letter regarding its goal of attaining unification. But this letter is not part of the treaty and, therefore, does not commit us in any way. We did not even confirm its receipt.

In addition to the text of the Treaty, we agreed with the West German side on another document, which reflects rather important commitments assumed by the FRG government during the negotiations. This document is actually an agreement, whose text was officially initialed by representatives from both sides, although we agreed to call this document "Declaration of Intent." You have this document. It contains the West German government's commitments regarding the FRG's relations with the GDR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; the facilitation of the entry of the GDR and the FRG into the UN; and the convocation of an all-European conference. Brandt, during his talks with us, and FRG Minister of Foreign Affairs Scheel, in his discussions with Comrade Gromyko, announced that the FRG government would base its policies on this agreement. At the request of the West German side, the Declaration of Intent was not published. We have thus refrained from referring to this document in our press.

As we prepared the treaty and the Declaration of Intent, we encountered resistance from reactionary forces not only in the FRG, but also in the entire NATO bloc – primarily, in the USA. They understood that the successful outcome of these negotiations between the USSR and the FRG would weaken their position in Europe.

The negotiations' success was greatly facilitated by the fact that, in parallel with the CPSU and the Soviet Union, concerted efforts were also undertaken by the Central

Committees of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Polish United Workers' Party, and other fraternal parties.

Comrades!

In order to appreciate the significance of the treaty that was signed in Moscow on August 12, we should compare its contents with the goals for which we have been striving for over two decades, as we developed and implemented unified policies with respect to German affairs and European affairs in general. To put it succinctly, the main goal of our policy was strengthening the results of the people's anti-fascist struggle for liberation during World War II as reflected in the Potsdam agreements – i.e., strengthening the forces of socialism in Europe and the security of the peoples of Europe. This was the goal underlying the specific demands that were spelled out in a number of joint documents of the Warsaw Treaty countries: the resolutions adopted at the conference of European communist parties in Karlovy Vary and at last year's International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties.

Let us recall what we demanded.

We demanded that the FRG government:

- Recognize the integrity of the existing European borders, especially the border between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany and the border along the Oder-Neisse Line;
- Relinquish its claim that Bonn should act on behalf of "all Germans" and recognize the GDR as a sovereign, independent nation in the full sense of the word;
- Deny the FRG any opportunities to have access to nuclear weapons in any form;
- Declare the Munich Agreement, dictated by Hitler, invalid from the very moment of its signing.

The border issue was the central part, the political core, of this package. As is now clear to everyone, this key, central question has been resolved in accordance with our common position.

We think it is significant that the treaty's border provisions were formulated not in an abstract manner, not as wishful thinking, but rather in the form of specific commitments

to respect those borders that have caused the sharpest controversy to date. Everyone knows what intense political heat surrounded the issues of Poland's western border, the Oder-Neisse Line, and the recognition of the border between the FRG and the GDR. The treaty thoroughly clarifies these questions.

We will now review the status of our other general demands on the FRG.

Denial of the FRG's access to nuclear weapons. A major step has been taken toward resolving this question: Bonn has signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. We still must undertake efforts to facilitate the FRG's ratification of this treaty.

The Munich Agreement. The relevant provision in the Declaration of Intent leads us to believe that the FRG government is almost ready to resolve this question as well, although it seems, of course, that a lengthy debate lies ahead regarding the language that this *diktat* was invalid "from the very beginning."

The so-called "sole representation." Our nations achieved a success even here. The FRG government has renounced its claim.

In terms of strengthening the GDR's status in international law as a sovereign state, our treaty with the FRG and the Declaration of Intent represent a major step forward in this regard.

In this connection, allow me to quote point "2" from the Declaration of Intent:

"The government of the Federal Republic of Germany states its readiness to conclude an agreement with the government of the German Democratic Republic which will have the same binding force as is usual between states and as other agreements which the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic conclude with third countries. It accordingly wishes to establish its relations with the German Democratic Republic on the basis of full equality, non-discrimination, and respect for the independence and autonomy of each of the two states in affairs which concern their internal competence within their corresponding borders. The government of the Federal Republic of Germany starts from the principle that the relations of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany to third countries will

develop on this basis, according to which neither of the two countries can represent the other abroad or act in its name.”<sup>1</sup>

I have quoted from the Declaration of Intent.

Naturally, there will be considerable difficulties with the practical implementation of the agreement with the FRG. Nevertheless, one can already say that life and the course of political events have completely confirmed the fairness and validity of our joint approach to settling our relations with West Germany. These efforts, aimed at strengthening of the western frontiers of our socialist commonwealth and stabilizing the situation in Central Europe, are bringing tangible results. And this, comrades, is the great success of our common course, our coordinated policies.

All of us have been criticized for having made overly harsh demands on the FRG. Yes, indeed, we did not soften our demands through artifice; we did not seek trade-offs; we firmly adhered to the principles we jointly developed. And this strategy produced results. The signing of the treaty between the Soviet Union and the FRG represents a significant surrender of positions on the part of the FRG’s ruling circles.

All of this defines the political significance of the Treaty. It is the first international document in which the FRG government recognizes the integrity of the European borders that resulted from World War II and postwar developments. Such an acknowledgement undermines the positions of all kinds of political opportunists who are active in the leadership of the CDU/CSU,<sup>2</sup> the NPD,<sup>3</sup> and other West German reactionary organizations. This will strengthen the peoples’ belief that peace in Europe can be defended.

We do not believe that the treaty resolves all matters relating to European security. NATO still exists, headed by the largest imperialist power – the USA. However, it is clear that the treaty with the FRG creates new opportunities for strengthening the forces

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<sup>1</sup> Transl. note: The excerpt from the Declaration of Intent presented here was taken from the official English translation held by the U.S. Department of State. See National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 59, Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs, Office of Central European Affairs, Berlin Desk, Political Subject Files, 1970-1972, Box 1, German-Soviet Treaty & Accompanying Documents.

<sup>2</sup> Transl. note: the West German Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its Bavarian sister-party, the Christian Social Union (CSU).

<sup>3</sup> Transl. noted: *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD), a right-wing, pan-German, white nationalist and racist West German party.

of socialism in Europe and for initiating and developing peaceful cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe. Besides, it provides additional leverage for influencing West Germany's policy and the European situation as a whole.

It can even be expected that our treaty with the FRG will help further deepen conflicts within the NATO bloc. Of course, the Washington-Bonn axis has not ceased to exist. Nevertheless, it is clearly showing cracks. It is known that the ruling circles in the USA have been growing more anxious about the effectiveness of American policy in Europe.

Comrades, this treaty is a political act – and not only on a European scale. It is no coincidence that most countries have said that its signing represents a convincing victory for the policy of peaceful coexistence. It is yet another piece of evidence demonstrating that controversial questions – even if they are extremely complex and sensitive – can and should be resolved through negotiation.

In short, we have every reason to add this treaty to our political assets. Of course, it will play its full role only if the FRG faithfully fulfills its commitments. We will have to monitor this constantly and attentively. We plan also to undertake new steps in various areas in order to realize the opportunities created by the treaty.

While analyzing the political consequences of the treaty, we cannot help but ask ourselves: Since the treaty indeed serves the cause of peace, since it strengthens the forces of socialism in Europe, since it strikes a blow against militaristic and revanchist forces, how can we explain that the West German imperialists decided to sign such a treaty? Why have the FRG's allies in NATO and, above all, the United States allowed Bonn to take such steps?

The main reason, it seems to us, is that the correlation of forces in Europe and in the world, between socialism and imperialism, has demonstrated the futility of the FRG's postwar policies toward the Soviet Union, the GDR, and other socialist countries.

Adenauer,<sup>4</sup> as well as Erhard<sup>5</sup> and Kiesinger<sup>6</sup> after him, was expecting the policies of "cold war" to undermine the forces of socialism in Europe. However, these expectations fell through. The social demarcation between the GDR and the FRG has been deepening year by year. West Berlin was separated from the GDR by a national boundary, and the

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<sup>4</sup> Transl. note: West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, 1949-1963.

<sup>5</sup> Transl. note: West German Chancellor Ludwig Erhard, 1963-1966.

<sup>6</sup> Transl. note: West German Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger, 1966-1969.



FRG's attempts to annex it met with due resistance. The GDR's international position was significantly strengthened during this period. The resolute stance of the fraternal socialist countries regarding the events in Czechoslovakia had a sobering effect upon the FRG's ruling circles.

The situation in Europe confronted the FRG's policymakers with the choice of either trying to stick with the same policies, which had already proven futile, or replace them with ones based upon a more realistic assessment of the situation in Europe and the correlation of forces between socialism and imperialism. The Brandt government, reflecting the broad range of West German public opinion, seems to have chosen the latter. Its future actions will demonstrate whether it will follow through on this decision.

One of the motivations pushing the FRG toward improving relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is Bonn's effort to lessen its dependence upon the Western Powers. Without improving its relations to the socialist states, the FRG may not have sufficient room for maneuver in its relations with the Western countries. This is certainly one of the reasons why Bonn has agreed to sign the treaty between the USSR and the FRG.

Certain economic factors are also prompting the FRG to improve its relations with the socialist countries. Given the character of its postwar development, the FRG's economic structure is markedly oriented towards the production of goods for civilian consumption. This makes it particularly sensitive to the volatility of capitalist markets while at the same time it has increased its interest in strong trade and economic ties with the socialist states.

Of course, we cannot neglect the fact that in deciding to sign treaties with the socialist countries, the ruling circles in the FRG are hoping to exploit the resulting new environment for their own purposes, hostile to socialism. While they have displayed some flexibility in their approach to resolving a number of foreign policy questions, the West German Social Democrats nevertheless expect to improve the chances for the FRG's penetration of the socialist countries – above all, the GDR – and in this way to have a corrupting influence upon these countries' policies and internal development.

While we have noted the prospects that the treaty has created for our general policy toward the FRG, we must not forget, of course, that the FRG remains an imperialist power within the NATO bloc and has no intention of leaving it. It will remain under strong American influence and will serve as a U.S. military foothold in Europe for a long time. We cannot ignore this fact.

However, it is also true that a clear differentiation has emerged among the monopolistic West German bourgeoisie in recent years. One of its elements, whose political representatives are Adenauer's CDU/CSU and, particularly, Strauss's<sup>7</sup> faction, has taken a position on the extreme right and continues to maintain a revanchist stance. The neo-fascist National Democratic Party has practically joined this group.

Other elements of the West German bourgeoisie are supporting the Brandt government's efforts to place relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries on a more rational basis. Naturally, even these bourgeois circles in the FRG are ultimately pursuing the same class-related goals as the faction on the extreme right. However, they expect to achieve them by different methods.

Objectively speaking, the treaty with the USSR, it seems to us, will contribute to a deepening of the conflicts among these groups. Continuous implementation of the policies formulated in the Treaty will, most likely, strengthen the positions of the more realistically-minded forces in West Germany. And this, undoubtedly, serves the interests of our countries and the cause of peace in general.

The fragmentation of the West German bourgeoisie into various groups objectively promotes the strengthening of the position of democratic forces in the FRG. It also creates preconditions for the uniting of the democratic forces in their struggle for European security, the eradication of revanchism, and a peaceful FRG foreign policy.

We believe that now is the right time for us to increase our support for the FRG's progressive forces. This implies an active development of our ties with the West German communists, with other progressive strata, and with broad circles of the West German public interested in consolidating peace.

Also allow me to address briefly the question of our attitude toward Germany's Social Democratic Party.

Of course, we all know very well that the ideology and policy of the Social Democrats and the communists are not only different; they are irreconcilable. Clearly, cooperation in these areas is not possible. However, it would be unreasonable for us to forego the opportunity to collaborate with the Social Democrats, especially with those Social Democratic parties in power, on issues such as the struggle for peace, the consolidation of European security, disarmament, and so on. The development of such collaboration

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<sup>7</sup> CSU leader Franz Josef Strauss.



could, in our opinion, encourage processes that will strengthen left-oriented forces within the Western Social Democratic parties. At the same time, we clearly recognize that the Social Democrats will try to influence our movement, the socialist countries, and the communist parties. Under these conditions, unremitting vigilance toward bourgeois and Social Democratic ideology is required. Vigilance by itself, however, is not enough – we need to take vigorous offensive action in this ideological struggle.

We intend to take into account these considerations in developing our future policy toward West German Social Democracy.

Comrades! The favorable opportunities that have opened up before us are also creating an array of new foreign-policy questions. Permit me, with little elaboration, to paint a general picture of a few problems that we may need to resolve.

First of all, I will speak about the recently-signed treaty between the USSR and the FRG. Here we face the task of obstructing the efforts of right-wing, revanchist circles in the FRG and powerful forces in the Western states to block the treaty's ratification.

We have thought this question through and have reached the following conclusions.

In our public appearances, in our press, radio, and television, we must implement a policy that will not complicate the position of the Brandt government and the forces that support him and that will not give any reasons to support the Strauss group and other right-wing forces in the FRG.

Naturally, the agreement reached with the Brandt government marks a retreat by the FRG's ruling circles from political positions of the utmost importance that they had held for many years. Such a retreat certainly strengthens the positions of our socialist camp in a rather important area. However, it would probably make little sense to dwell on it at the present time. It is more tactical to emphasize the other side of the matter: A mutually beneficial agreement was concluded; the treaty serves the cause of security for the nations of Europe and broadens their peaceful cooperation. Conducting our propaganda in this manner will help spread sympathy for the socialist countries among the public in the capitalist world.

All of this, of course, does not preclude, if necessary, sharp rebuffs for slanderers and instigators attempting to openly sabotage the treaty.

Our representatives can conduct an active explanatory campaign among political circles in the FRG that are not adverse to it. Opposing Western attempts to impede the treaty's ratification remains an important goal for our diplomats. It would be helpful for our comrades involved in international affairs to systematically keep in touch on all these issues.

Comrades! The countries of the socialist commonwealth are united in their efforts to develop relations with the FRG. The negotiations with Bonn currently being conducted by the Polish comrades are of great importance. As we conducted our negotiations with the FRG in parallel to theirs, we remained constantly in touch with each other and maintained coordinated positions. The successful conclusion of negotiations between the PRP and the FRG will represent a new contribution to the strengthening of socialism in Europe and of peace on our continent.

We know from our Czechoslovak comrades that the FRG has hinted at a desire to begin negotiations with the ČSSR as well. Bonn's commitments under item "4" of our Declaration of Intent might be used to resolve completely the issue of the Munich Agreement's invalidity and related questions and thus further strengthen the political position of the ČSSR.

We face a long and difficult road in further reinforcing the GDR's international standing as a sovereign and independent socialist state, as a member-state of the socialist commonwealth and the Warsaw Treaty. The path to this goal will most likely require a clearer demarcation between the GDR and the FRG and the development of their relations based on international legal norms.

In this connection, I would like to highlight a specific question. In the Declaration of Intent, the FRG assumed the commitment of facilitating the GDR's entry into the UN. Comrades, I believe that it is our common duty to do everything possible to compel the FRG to influence the Western powers in such a fashion as to achieve the GDR's admission, along with the FRG, into the United Nations in the near future. It is hardly necessary to note that joining the UN would constitute yet another convincing recognition of the GDR's status in international law. I believe that each of our countries can contribute to the accomplishment of this goal. The work should be carried out especially among the neutral and so-called third world countries.

In the general context of political events of the recent past and the immediate future, the issue of West Berlin figures prominently. As you know, we have been exchanging

opinions on this topic at the ambassadorial level with the United States, Great Britain, and France.

In contact and in unity with our German friends, we have repulsed all attempts by the Western powers to obtain some sort of “rights” for the FRG with regard to West Berlin. We are striving to compel the Western powers to limit the provocative political activities of the FRG in West Berlin.

The socialist countries are not interested in West Berlin’s remaining a source of tension in the center of Europe and a weapon in the hands of the aggressive imperialist powers.

In order to reach an agreement with the Western nations to achieve these goals, we may take steps – compatible with the interests of the USSR and GDR – to facilitate West Berlin’s contacts with the capital of the GDR and the outside world.

With goodwill on both sides, some basis for signing a limited agreement on West Berlin may be found at the current negotiations. However, everything depends on whether the Western powers will demonstrate such goodwill.

So far, the facts suggest otherwise. The three powers are exploiting the negotiations on West Berlin primarily as a means to pressure Bonn. I am referring to the well-known position that was dictated, as we know, to the Brandt government by the Western powers and the FRG’s right-wing forces. The main idea is that the West Germans will ratify the treaty with the Soviet Union only if the four-power negotiations on West Berlin “yield satisfactory results.”

When Brandt was in Moscow, we pointed out to him how absurd it was for the FRG government to formulate the question in this manner. In response, Brandt assured us that the FRG was not making make the treaty’s ratification legally contingent upon the results of the four-power negotiations on West Berlin, but was rather expressing a shared political wish. We shall see how things turn out in the future. Overall, it seems that it is not in the interests of the Brandt government to make the development of its relations to the USSR and the other socialist countries completely dependent upon Washington.

During the negotiations on West Berlin, which will continue in September, we will strictly adhere to our principled policies and act in close coordination with our GDR comrades. I would like to emphasize that it is very important for all our countries to have a single, principled position that protects the interests of the socialist community. The more we insist on West Berlin’s independence from the FRG and the more consistently

we behave accordingly, the easier it will be to parry Bonn's claims and deny the United States and its NATO allies the opportunity to exploit West Berlin in their political game in opposition to the socialist countries' interests.

Incidentally, since we are treating West Berlin as an independent political unit, it might be worthwhile to consider ways of activating direct communication and contact between our countries and West Berlin, its public organizations, and its governmental organs.

I will now say a few words about the prospects of developing economic ties with the FRG under the new circumstances. Clearly, the FRG government, under pressure from many West German monopolies, will want to expand economic ties with our countries. The problem of coordinating our activities in this area thus arises. I am talking about the main aspect of this coordination. It will involve using the FRG's technology and resources for the benefit of our countries without allowing for any kind of dependence, without giving the West German imperialists the slightest opportunity to determine our economic development, and without permitting them to harm the economic interests of the socialist community.

Comrades! It is clear that the conclusion of the treaty with the FRG has created favorable conditions for achieving one of our important aims in Europe – the convocation of an all-European conference on security and peaceful cooperation. In the Declaration of Intent, Bonn gave its consent to the conference and asserted a readiness to facilitate its success. We should therefore engage the FRG government in preparing for the all-European conference.

It may also be wise to consider further measures to activate the European public's support for the idea of strengthening security on our continent. As you know, preparations are under way for the convening of a Congress of the Peoples of Europe for Peace. The next preliminary meeting of communists from European countries to discuss the details of these preparations is scheduled for October in Moscow. It would be worthwhile to focus our attention on this work, given that authoritative statements by the European public could become important in terms of putting pressure on the governments of various countries – especially the FRG government – for the sake of strengthening European peace and security.

The conclusion of the treaty with the FRG and other European developments could have consequences for our relations with the United States. The fact of our signing an agreement with the Brandt government cannot but have a favorable impact upon Nixon's

policies. The existing situation could also affect the attitudes of the French and British governments.

Comrades! In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that our ability to use the new opportunities arising before the socialist countries in Europe will very much depend on how unified and coordinated our actions are.

In recent years, we have gained positive experience in the joint conduct of foreign policy and have found ways to interact efficiently on the world stage. In our opinion, the current situation calls for the implementation of new measures to improve foreign policy coordination. Such coordination is especially important for such major international issues as strengthening the socialist community's position on the world stage, providing for European security, dealing with German affairs (especially in view of our new relations with the FRG), eliminating the consequences of Israel's aggression in the Middle East, and fighting against American aggression in Indochina, among other issues.

Of course, all this will require further discussion. However, I would already like to speak in favor of such a step as creating special bodies within the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty's member-states for both regular and ad hoc review of foreign policy questions. The issue is ripe for consideration, although other forms are of course possible.

Comrades, these are the matters that we considered necessary to address at our meeting today.

*[Translation by Julia La Villa Nossova]*