

**Speech by Nicolae Ceaușescu at the
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Dear Comrades!

The main theme of the meeting of the Warsaw Treaty's Political Consultative Committee is European security: one of the most important contemporary problems for the nations of our continent. In examining the changes that have recently occurred and analyzing the present situation on our continent, we must focus our attention on the measures necessary to convene the all-European conference and to hold it in the most successful way possible, preferably in the near future.

Twenty-seven years have gone by since the conclusion of the Second World War, the largest military confrontation in history. But as we approach the end of the third decade since it ended - and this is unprecedented - there is still no peace treaty; numerous problems caused by the war remain unresolved; it still causes hostility and suspicion, and it influences both the European atmosphere and international life as a whole. European security needs to be consolidated all the more since there are still forces in Europe that would like to turn back the wheel of history, fight for revenge, work to incite hostility, and ruin inter-state relations in favor of warmongering and propagating racist, chauvinist and quasi-fascist ideas.

Europe is the continent where the complexity of postwar socio-political conditions, the great changes that took place in the international balance of power, and the conflicts and tendencies brought about by the new phase of history are the most apparent. The turning point in postwar Europe was the establishment of eight socialist states in addition to the Soviet Union, which have played an important role in the political life of our continent and the world. After the Second World War, the workers' and democratic movements received new impetus and were joined as well by sizeable forces from the anti-fascist movements. In several large Western European countries, the Communist Parties went through profound political changes, were hardened and consolidated in struggle and gained respect and broad popularity among the working masses and public opinion.

At the same time, continental politics were strongly influenced by the presence of the armed forces of the United States, the establishment of NATO, the division of the continent into two opposing military blocs and the creation of a closed, monopolistic bloc. At the same time, there are a number of countries recognized as neutral on the political map of the continent. Great changes have taken place in the level of development of the European capitalist countries, in their political and economic positions, which have led to a series of other conflicts. In this respect, it is of particular

significance that the Western European countries are trying to rid themselves of the political tutelage of the United States.

Given the complexity of the existing factors on the continent, it should be viewed positively that in the past 27 years peace has prevailed in Europe. This is explained by the efforts of the socialist countries; the appearance and development of new, great forces of progress; and the drastic growth of the social movement supporting peaceful coexistence. As a result, political life in Europe has developed lately in a favorable direction, the disconcerting symptoms of the “cold war” are behind us, and contacts and cooperation have grown.

The Bucharest meeting of the socialist countries in the summer of 1966, at which we analyzed the new conditions that had come about in Europe, pointed out this positive trend – namely, the sober tendencies in public opinion, the changes in the correlation of forces – and laid emphasis on the need for and the possibility of concretely raising the problem of European security. The Bucharest meeting was an important moment in the political development of postwar Europe; for the first time – with full resolution and a practical approach – we put on the agenda the need to concentrate the efforts of the socialist countries, the public opinion of the continent on the creation of a solid system of security, the convocation of an all-European conference. The declaration issued by the Bucharest meeting states: “By the joint efforts of the European states, of all social forces campaigning for peace – irrespective of their ideological, religious or other concepts – the problem of European security can be solved.” This conclusion gave a strong impetus to the work done thereafter by the socialist countries and the democratic, progressive and realistic forces in the Western democracies. In the past few years, the socialist countries have taken new steps and moves toward the convocation of the European conference. As is known, the heads of state and government and the foreign ministers of the socialist countries have met, the draft agenda for the conference has been outlined along with a list of participants, and it has met with approval on the part of broad segments of European public opinion, and it can be said, by every country.

In looking back, we must consider that during the past few years, as the positive tendency toward multilateral cooperation among the European states and the positive trends toward various exchanges have been reinforced, the idea of an all-European conference has become more popular. We can state that practically all the European states recognize the necessity of establishing European security, of holding the conference, and have supported in various ways the launching of preparations for the conference.

Romania tried to actively contribute to these successes. During this time, our country made persistent efforts to normalize relations with all European countries. We developed contacts, exchanges and multilateral cooperation with countries such as France, England, Finland, and other Western and Northern countries in our continent.

Romania considers it a principal task to improve the political atmosphere in the Balkan area, to develop good-neighborly relations and cooperation with all countries in this part of Europe. In this context, it can be said that there are particular opportunities to take concrete steps in the area of Balkan regional cooperation.

Life has verified the correctness of the evaluation in 1966 that positive tendencies had been shown and were developing in the FRG and that circles were rising and gaining strength in that country that favored East-West cooperation. On the basis of the conclusions drawn at the Bucharest meeting, Romania took steps toward the normalization of relations with the Federal Republic of Germany. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1967 had a positive influence on the development of the European policies of the FRG and promoted the course of détente on the continent.

We would like to express our highest appreciation of the extremely important contribution that the Soviet Union has made in the interest of European détente. The Soviet Union – its foreign policy, diplomatic actions and international prestige – is an important factor in the worldwide struggle for security and cooperation among the peoples. Romania has a high regard for the efforts of the other socialist states as well, which are directed toward opening the path for European security. The conclusion of the treaties between the Soviet Union and the FRG and between Poland and the FRG was of great significance in terms of eliminating the remnants of World War II and normalizing relations among the states. We want their ratification as soon as possible. The Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin, along with the initialing and signing of the agreements between the GDR and the FRG and the one between the GDR and West Berlin Senate, was also an important contribution to improving the European atmosphere; this question has been one of the key questions on our continent.

The activities that the socialist states have carried out in connection with the normalization of relations with the FRG and political détente in general helped to launch the talks between the GDR and the FRG, the process of normalization between the two states and the tendencies toward international recognition of two German states. The party and the government of our country have always stood resolutely by the first German workers' and peasants' state, the GDR, to take its rightful place in international life and to obtain all the rights due to a sovereign country.

Of course, we cannot forget that there are still forces that have a negative attitude toward the creation of a firm system of security in Europe, which do not share our views about the all-European conference and are conducting hostile activities against this task. This obligates us to intensify our political work to mobilize all progressive forces and to mobilize the peoples themselves to stand up for the cause of security. In the final analysis, the creation of peace in Europe is a task not only for governments but also for the broader masses and the public in all countries. Considering the positive forces

operating in the political life of our continent, we think that the favorable conditions are ripe to convene the all-European conference and to begin the practical resolution of the most important issues concerning European security.

Dear Comrades! A brief Marxist-Leninist appraisal of the international situation shows that great and profound changes have occurred in the international correlation of forces lately. In this regard, it can be said that the year 1971 was a real turning point. I am thinking about the exacerbation of the conflicts between the larger imperialist states. The growth of the economic and political power of the Common Market and particularly of the FRG in Europe and Japan in Asia has led to the obvious diminution of the political influence of the United States in the capitalist world and has forced it to share power with its competitors. The currency crisis that erupted lately clearly reveals that the conflicts between the larger capitalist states have become sharper and that the power of the United States has weakened. A close scrutiny of these processes is indispensable so that we can adjust our foreign policy to the changes around the world, to the new facts of international life.

Presently, many peoples are fighting for their liberation from colonial rule, are striving to control their own national treasures, to control the use of their human and natural resources, and to set their social and foreign policies on their own. The recently-liberated peoples have clearly stated that they want to participate actively in the solution of international problems, in the resolution of crises around the world, and in consolidating peace and security. The broad development of multilateral contacts with these peoples may facilitate the growth of their role in international political life, the consolidation of their anti-imperialist stance and a change in the correlation of forces worldwide in favor of peace and development.

The role of the socialist countries in the field of peace and friendship has grown considerably. The further growth of their financial potential and authority helps tip the balance towards the forces of peace and progress. In this respect, this past year was characterized by the powerful entry of China as a socialist country into the international scene and the growth in its authority. The entrance of the People's Republic of China into the UN and its recognition by countless countries is another indication of the changes that have occurred in power relations around the world and bears witness to the further growth in the prestige and influence of socialism around the world. We are obliged to do everything possible so that the influence of socialism, of the socialist countries as a whole, will lead to a strengthening of our unity and solidarity and overcome our existing differences of opinion.

And although the anti-imperialist forces have scored great successes, armed conflicts have erupted and are erupting in various regions of the world, and aggression continues against various peoples. In our view, the most commanding imperative of our days is to eliminate the seeds of war, the imperative to eliminate all armed conflict among

the states. For this reason, we must stand up with complete dedication for the liquidation of the war that the United States is waging in Indochina so that the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos can decide their fate on their own. The requirements of peace and security necessitate the elimination of the conflict in the Middle East on the basis of the Security Council's 1967 resolution. We must do our best to avoid any belligerent activity, which can in no way settle conflicts among the states but only exacerbate them; we must do everything possible so that the only way to resolve conflicts among states will be exclusively political and peaceful.

In today's world, it is essential that every country in the world – great and small – should participate in the resolution of international disputes with equal rights. Only in this way can we guarantee adherence to the principles of international law and collective security.

Dear Comrades! The struggle waged for European security is an organic part of the general fight against imperialist politics, war and aggression and for peace and international cooperation. In our view, European security must result in the establishment of a new type of relationship on the continent that excludes the use of force and the threat of the use of force, that guarantees that no state can fall victim to aggression, and that states should be able to develop freely in accordance with their own volition and be able to cooperate without obstacles in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and full equality. In this sense European security assumes the establishment of a system of voluntary, clear and unambiguous obligations that require concrete measures on the part of all states. In our fight for security, we must assume that there will be capitalist and socialist states in Europe that must live peaceably side-by-side and will establish normal relations with each other irrespective of their social order.

Respect for full equality, independence, and national sovereignty; non-intervention in domestic affairs; mutual benefit, the right of all peoples to be masters of their own fate – these must become the basis of a firm relationship among the European states. Only if all states observe these principles consistently, which form a whole and have gained recognition from the broadest segments of world public opinion, can real détente, unobstructed cooperation between peoples, and the establishment of real security in Europe and the world be guaranteed.

The precondition for security is recognition and acknowledgement of the historical realities that came about in Europe as a result of the Second World War and of all the social and political changes that took place on the continent during this period. Guaranteeing the recognition and inviolability of current state boundaries is of particular significance. Any attempt to dispute this can only lead to conflict, differences of opinion, and cataclysm and will endanger peace and security.

In this context, we need to intensify our efforts to support the currents that favor international recognition of the GDR by all West European and other states of the world

and the admission of both German states as full members into the UN and other international organizations. We must also assist the normalization of relations between the ČSSR and the FRG on the basis of the complete rejection of the Munich Agreement. At the same time, we also think that it would have a positive influence on the political life of the continent if the rest of the socialist countries would also normalize their relations with the FRG.

Europe can only live in an atmosphere of détente if it unconditionally renounces the use of force, the threat of the use of force and all measures that rest on violence or the threat of violence, or the use of pressure aimed at intimidating one state or the other. Only with the final elimination of such methods and procedures from international life can it be guaranteed that all peoples and nations may feel secure.

The strengthening of European security assumes the development of broad contacts, good-neighborly relations and friendship among all the peoples. In mutual relations, a central place must be assumed by the exchange of material goods, economic and scientific cooperation, from which nobody can exclude themselves without lagging behind and depriving oneself of the benefits of the international division of labor. This assumes the elimination of all constraints and discrimination, along with a renunciation of all political conditions for cooperation; and the free development of bi- and multilateral cooperation through the elimination of barriers created by closed economic groupings.

In this connection, I would also like to make mention of our relations with the Common Market. We think that our starting point should be that the Common Market is a reality; that there will need to be cooperation between our countries and the countries of the Common Market; and that it is necessary in this regard that the Comecon move toward discussion of certain questions regarding duties and other kinds of barriers as soon as possible. At the same time we believe that it is necessary for all states directly interested – taking into account the fact that the economic interests of the individual socialist countries with respect to the West are divergent – to negotiate the resolution of a series of questions with the EEC directly. I must state openly that our party and state leadership have examined this issue, and it has concluded that we are directly interested in the resolution of some issues relating to duties and other taxes on Romanian products.

Consequently we believe, bearing in mind precisely the interests of European security and cooperation, that it is necessary to launch talks both on the part of the Comecon and on the part of the individual socialist countries that are interested in approaching these questions in a spirit reflecting our common aim: the strengthening of European security, socialism and peace on our continent.

Increasing the exchange of intellectual treasures, cooperation in the field of culture, and tourism will play an important role. There is a chance for cooperation among the countries of Europe in the solution of such tasks as environmental protection, better

utilization of state resources, cooperation in industry, transport and postal affairs, in the development of energy systems, etc. Joint measures are conceivable in the fight against such negative phenomena as drug abuse, crime and alcoholism. Friendship among nations is of particular importance in the field of education; in this field cooperation between the masses and education for solidarity – especially among the younger generation in the spirit of respect for nations – will help bring a better world to life.

A relaxation of tensions and European security also require that all countries act against war propaganda, racist and chauvinistic ideas and neo-fascist ideology, which are causing serious harm to the political atmosphere on our continent. All peoples must openly condemn propaganda weapons such as Radio Free Europe and the like, which incite hostility among peoples, slander and try to mislead the public. Life shows that the broad development of cooperation in all walks of life is not only indispensable for the development of each country and of world civilization but also is the best road to improved mutual understanding, to closer relations and friendship among the peoples. We believe that the socialist countries, by broadly facilitating the establishment of conditions conducive to just cooperation, may serve as motivating examples and exert a substantial influence upon the development of international life.

In the minds of the peoples of our continent, guaranteeing European security is closely linked to the perspective of eliminating the opposing military blocs. Talks among the countries involved would be of particularly great significance in terms of decreasing the number of foreign troops stationed in Europe and decreasing national armies.

Decreasing the number of troops, withdrawing all troops to within national borders, eliminating foreign military bases, renouncing war games in the proximity of borders, creating nuclear-free zones – all these measures will mean new steps forward on the path to consolidating European security if all interested states participate in them.

Given the desire of the peoples and the positive trends manifested on our continent, we can safely say that the present situation is conducive to holding the all-European conference in the near future. It is therefore the duty of all countries to take organizational measures in preparation for the conference in order to ensure that it succeeds. Our governments need to designate their representatives, who should initiate talks with other countries without delay in order to finalize the agenda of the conference and to set the level of representation. The goal of all this should be that the all-European meeting takes place as soon as possible.

Our proposals, we believe, form a good basis for discussion, but when we pass the final resolutions, we will have to take into account the views of all the other states as well. Furthermore, we must consider that we still have to overcome a certain degree of reserve that some countries demonstrate, especially the representatives of the United States, who are trying to delay convocation of the conference.

Surely, the first European conference will not be able to solve all the important tasks at the first go and will not be able to fulfill all the demands that the peoples of the continent put forward; more meetings will be needed for this, along with persistent, long work. But the first conference can fulfill the positive role of taking the initiative and may open the road to active organizational cooperation between all the states for the sake of solving all the questions of security gradually. We should accept the documents relating to the agenda: recognition of the postwar social and political reality; renunciation of force; and the development of broad cooperation between states.

It will be necessary to set up a permanent organ, the formation of a kind of – if I may call it such – a united nations of Europe organization, which would deal with the practical implementation of security and the creation of a Europe united by fruitful cooperation and which would bring forward new measures in preparation for further conferences. At the same time, the international organizations already existing in Europe must be activated and new ones brought to life in order to promote economic cooperation and to facilitate scientific cooperation, cultural relations and joint actions. When I mentioned international organizations in Europe, I meant of course ones like the UN Economic Committee and similar organs, which – I think – should be used to a greater extent.

We are convinced that the viewpoints and proposals approved by our session will contribute positively to accelerating the preparation of the all-European conference and will be favorably received by other countries and by public opinion on our continent, and will move forward the preparation of these important events.

Dear Comrades! The holding of the all-European conference, the consolidation of continental security in full conformity with the aims of the United Nations -- with the principles established in the UN charter – will serve the interests of peace and détente in the entire world.

Thus, the interests of European security require efforts to increase the role of the UN in the political life of the world, to abide by legal norms and international law, to beat back all attempts opposing the independence and freedom of the peoples, and to take up arms against certain manifestations of aggression and war. It is especially important for our continent and the whole world that the United Nations and its organs implement a policy that brings nations closer together irrespective of the differences in their social orders, and that it inspires the sort of cooperation that makes civilization flourish in all regions of the world.

One of the most pressing issues of our day is the question of universal disarmament. We must propose concrete measures for disarmament, for halting the arms race and first of all terminating the production of nuclear arms, for the liquidation of existing nuclear-weapons depots, and for banning all weapons of mass destruction; we must establish these as primary tasks for our states, tasks in the worldwide struggle for

détente and security. I agree that at today's meeting we cannot deal with all these questions, but I think that it will be necessary to find time for a profound debate on them and to work out a common program for disarmament because this issue is becoming one of the most important ones of our times.

The implementation of the complex measures that I have discussed, which are vitally important in terms of the fate of mankind, also conform to the vital interests and desires of the socialist countries and will directly promote the cause of socialism and communism. Under peaceful conditions, it will be possible for the socialist countries to prove the superiority of their new mode of production, to prove that they are capable of guaranteeing social progress and the well-being of their peoples. Given that there is a close relationship, a mutually-reinforcing relationship between the phenomena of international life, we believe that it is of decisive importance in terms of achieving the peace we desire and the aspirations for social advancement of all peoples that the unity of the anti-imperialist forces be consolidated and their struggle be increased all over the globe. The establishment of peace and security on Earth can result only from the struggle of the democratic forces, of the whole anti-imperialist world front. In this regard, the need to strengthen the unity of the socialist countries and to overcome their differences, to strengthen the unity of the whole international communist and workers movement, to strengthen the cooperation of the forces of peace and progress in international life has only grown in significance.

Romania considers its primary duty to be working together with the other socialist countries and all the progressive, anti-imperialist forces of the world for peace and security so that an atmosphere of friendship among peoples will come about in Europe and in the whole world. Our country's government will contribute to the preparatory work for the convocation of the all-European conference, to its successful course, and to the success of the efforts directed toward bringing about a system of relations and cooperation among the nations that system may serve as a model and exercise a beneficial impact in terms of the cause of peace and friendship among all the peoples inhabiting our planet.

In conclusion, I would like to express our warm gratitude to our hosts, the leaders of the Communist Party and the government of Czechoslovakia, for creating conditions for the success of our meeting. Thank you for your attention.

[Translation by László Borhi]