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Annex IV/e
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Speech of the General Secretary of the CC of the Bulgarian Communist Party and Chairman of the State Council of the PRB, Comrade Todor Zhivkov, at the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States in Prague, January 4, 1983

Comrades,

First and foremost, I would like to express my happiness and deep satisfaction that we are meeting again. I would like to thank our hosts, Comrade Gustáv Husák and all the Czechoslovak comrades for their hospitality and warm welcome.

More than two years have passed since the last meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member-states. Considerable changes have occurred in the world since then. Which of them do I consider the most significant? The most significant is that the most reactionary imperialist circles have launched a kind of a “crusade” to “bury” socialism and to take “revenge” for the Great October [Socialist Revolution] and all other manifestations of the revolutionary reconstruction of our planet.

We all know quite well that it would not be easy and simple for us to find a correct response to the gross provocations of our opponents. Through their irresponsible actions they are trying to compel us to take steps that will increase international tensions; they have been trying to make us accomplices in their efforts to discredit the idea of détente and to revive the politics of “cold war.” I must state that Leonid Il’ich Brezhnev made an invaluable contribution in formulating our coordinated foreign policy line – a line that combined stout resistance, when

necessary, with constructive efforts and positive initiatives to halt the arms race and to avert a global nuclear war.

We can now rightly say that our agreed line has withstood the test of time. It has already thwarted a number of aims of the most aggressive imperialist circles. This line has already contributed to the unmasking and isolation of the militaristic groups most dangerous to mankind; it has already expanded the room of maneuver for realistic politicians in Western Europe and even in the USA of America; this line has already provided impetus to the peace-loving social forces in the capitalist countries to become even more active.

It is in the spirit of this line that we should now consider our initiatives and activities for the near future.

The Bulgarian delegation voices its full agreement with the deep and comprehensive analysis of today's international situation, the evaluation and the conclusions presented by Comrade Iurii Andropov. The Bulgarian delegation supports the proposed approaches and actions to strengthen our socialist commonwealth and the Warsaw Treaty; to counter the attacks of the imperialist forces; to halt the arms race, to achieve disarmament, and to consolidate world peace.

Please allow me now to express our opinion regarding certain issues.

We fully agree with the assessment that international tensions have been growing, that the risk of the outbreak of a new world war is increasing, and that the nations of Europe and the entire world are living in dangerous times, perhaps the most dangerous times since the end of World War II. We agree that all of this is due to the policy of the most aggressive imperialist

forces. The facts indicate that we are facing the extreme right-wing segment of bourgeoisie, which Lenin called “the military party.” The accuracy of this description is substantiated by the current behavior of the military-political circles of the USA. The “military party” does not want to accept the changed correlation of forces in favor of socialism and has been trying to change it in favor of imperialism and to establish the global domination of the USA. This situation is reflected in their efforts to upset the military-strategic balance between the USSR and the USA, between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO. It is also the basis of the doctrines and “directives” for conducting nuclear war against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, as well as the efforts to convince nations that nuclear war is survivable, that there is a “possibility to achieve victory” in it. This may explain the counteroffensive against détente, along with the new wave of anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism.

What are the features of this imperialist offensive? Its characteristics include an almost utter disregard for political means in dealing with global problems and an orientation toward military solutions, including the provocation of military conflicts. I am thinking of such regions as the Middle East, Southwest Asia, the Persian Gulf, Southern Africa, Central America, etc. Most of the political means being used by the imperialists are demagogic, aimed at misleading the public and blunting the edge of the forces for peace in the world.

Without understating the difficulties and tensions that the “military party” has brought into international relations, we can rightfully say that the attack on détente has failed to achieve its principal objective of destroying it.

Washington’s efforts to unite the countries of Western Europe into a single front against the Soviet Union and the other members of the socialist commonwealth have not yet brought the anticipated results. It is true that the West unanimously believes that a common strategy is

needed in the fight against socialism. However, there are different opinions regarding what the strategy should look like. Unlike the leaders of the USA, many official representatives of the West European states believe that there is no alternative to the policy of détente, which offers them, among other things, broader possibilities than a direct confrontation aimed at destroying socialism. At the same time, they understand that the common policy and concerted actions that Washington has been pushing so militantly correspond to the interests and objectives of the USA rather than those of the world capitalist system. And the West European bourgeoisie has been pursuing its own economic and security goals and interests and is seeking to play an independent political role. This is causing deepening dissension between the USA and Western Europe—an important factor that we must take into account and exploit as much as possible. Of course, it would be inappropriate to overestimate these antagonisms, as in many cases common class interests and class solidarity prevail.

The anti-missile, anti-nuclear and general antiwar movement in Western Europe, the USA, and Canada, which has now reached an unprecedented strength in terms of its mass character and activities, has not yet become a force capable of compelling governments to halt the arms race and to reject the deployment of the new US intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe. Still, the governments must take this movement into account.

Today's anti-socialist "crusaders" have not succeeded in stopping the national liberation movement, either. Despite difficulties and problems, it has been advancing, although not with equal success in every area.

It is clear to all of us that the military and strategic balance between the USSR and the USA, between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, is a crucial prerequisite for averting a nuclear war. This is why there is no reasonable alternative to parity and equal security. Any other solution would be wrong and – I would say – detrimental for mankind. It is obvious that we must

keep pursuing, consistently and relentlessly, the policy of parity and détente, détente and parity. The balance achieved in the military realm is an extraordinary accomplishment, a unique achievement of the Soviet Union. Until the late 1960s and early 1970s, our posture was, in fact, defensive, as there was military imbalance in favor of imperialism. At that time, we were forced to make some concessions, although we did not abandon any of our major positions.

The situation is utterly different now, when there is real military parity. The countries of the socialist commonwealth now have much stronger economies and a research and development potential capable of thwarting the imperialists' attempts at military superiority. The socialist commonwealth now accounts for more than 40 percent of the world's industrial production.

Our foreign policy is based on clear and unchanging principles and objectives – the struggle for peace, peaceful coexistence and détente, and military parity.

Naturally, we are concerned about the level at which the military and strategic balance with imperialism will be maintained. The higher it is, the higher is the risk of war and the more difficult it will be to achieve an arms control agreement. This is why we are for a balance that will not lead to another round of the arms race, but will lead to a step-by-step reduction of armaments and eventual disarmament. On the other hand, the military expenditures that we are forced to make in order to maintain our defensive capabilities are not the best use for our national product. We agree that the efforts to stop the arms race, especially with respect to nuclear weapons, now occupy the central place in the struggle to avert war.

What should we do to halt this process? The answer to this question is contained in the many constructive initiatives of the fraternal socialist states. The answer to this question will also be given in the political declaration that we will adopt at this meeting. Basically, it is a broad and

effective program of action to avert nuclear war and to curtail the arms race. Its contents, tone, and language prove that a spirit of confrontation is alien to the Warsaw Treaty and that the interests of our socialist countries conform to the vital interests of all nations.

The Soviet commitment to the non-first-use of nuclear weapons is historically important. It brings a qualitatively new moment to the world's political scene; we must do our utmost to ensure its broadest popular support.

It is equally important to give new impetus to the negotiations now being conducted at various international forums – in Geneva, Vienna, the UN, and Madrid.

We must not allow NATO to use the disarmament talks to gain time to step up its armament, to lie to the people in the Western states, to stem the vigilance and blunt the pressure of the anti-missile and anti-nuclear movements and organizations. We must expose these tactics not only through propaganda but also by taking new steps in terms of expressing our readiness for a practical solution to these problems. This would also show who is in favor of disarmament and who is not.

Dear Comrades!

As I mentioned here, we also believe that the integration and activation of anti-militarist forces, both nationally and internationally, is an extremely important and urgent task of today.

The decision to deploy the American Pershing-2 and cruise missiles in Europe, whose implementation will start at the end of this year, requires the mobilization and the unity of action of everyone who opposes this decision by NATO. It is necessary to prevent the imperialist circles from splitting the peace movement. It is not an easy task. We know that these movements differ in their social and political character. Anti-Communist and anti-Soviet prejudices occupy the minds of a substantial portion of their followers. Our opponents exploit the big lie of the "Soviet threat," and not without success.

These are major obstacles on the road to unified action. There is another important task – to destroy the myth of the "Soviet threat" and to reveal in a convincing fashion where the real threat of war comes from, who is trying to liquidate the

disarmament process and to ignite a second “cold war,” and who seeks to conduct a policy from a position of military superiority.

It is necessary to fight a battle for the trust of millions of people. In this battle, no weapon is or could be stronger than the peace initiatives and proposals of the socialist countries. Our present declaration is one such mighty weapon. It would be advisable to consider what should be done to prevent our opponents from reacting to this document with silence or by downplaying the significance of the declaration, especially its central part—the proposal to sign a Warsaw Treaty-NATO agreement on the non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations. In our opinion, it would be good to take measures that would elicit a broad international response and make the broadest possible public aware of our countries’ ideas and proposals.

Trust is born in cooperation. In this respect, contacts between the peace movements in the socialist countries and the anti-militarist movements and organizations in the Western countries can play a very useful role. These contacts should be developed even more broadly, also along the lines of various bodies and organizations – parliamentary, trade union, youth, student, women etc.

Socialist or social democratic parties are governing in France, Greece, Finland, Sweden, Austria, and Spain; some of them have openly expressed their disagreement with NATO’s line. This situation presents new opportunities for cooperation on issues of peace and disarmament.

The battle for trust has yet another aspect – namely, our resistance to hostile campaigns against the socialist countries.

Since World War II, our opponents have amassed not only heaps of weapons but also heaps of lies and slanders against socialism. Currently, they are waging what is, for all intents and purposes, a psychological war against the socialist countries.

The campaign against fraternal Poland is particularly tough. We want to reassure our Polish comrades once again that the Bulgarian nation sympathizes with socialist Poland and strongly condemns the imperialists’ attempts to dictate to Poland what it can and cannot do. We want to reassure them that the People’s Republic of Bulgaria will provide, within its capabilities, all-round support and assistance.

Our country, too, has recently become the target of a malevolent anti-Bulgarian campaign. There is no need to convince each other here that hidden behind this campaign

is the USA's Central Intelligence Agency. As a matter of fact, it not only targets Bulgaria but has another, more far-reaching goal.

It would be advisable that our foreign policy and propaganda institutions mount even more effective resistance against imperialism's political-ideological diversion in such cases as what happened in Poland and Bulgaria.

Obviously, the importance of the socialist commonwealth's coordinated foreign policy is growing in various areas. It must be admitted that the capitalist world, despite its internal contradictions, has not been doing a bad job of putting coordinated political, diplomatic, economic and military pressure on socialism.

The need to closely coordinate our actions is dictated by the fact that the West has been stubbornly trying to use trade relations, scientific and technical relations, loans etc. to dictate its "political conditions" and to pit the European socialist countries against the Soviet Union.

We all know that there are many problems related to our economic integration that need to be solved. We will hold an extraordinary session of the CMEA on this issue. I hope that these problems will be dealt with and resolved there. Nevertheless, I want to emphasize now – and the facts support my opinion – that the imperialists have not succeeded and will not succeed in halting our development with economic "sanctions" and "blockades." Nevertheless, we must draw appropriate conclusions from the difficulties and problems that the imperialists have been trying to create with regard to the development of international economic relations between the West and the socialist countries. We must also be aware of and resolve our internal problems, which are creating economic and other difficulties for us.

It is necessary to deepen and strengthen our economic integration and our relations with the developing countries and with the states that have opted for a non-capitalist path of development.

Comrades!

We fully concur in the CPSU's initiatives as presented here by Comrade Iurii Andropov, which seek to develop and improve relations with all socialist countries. This is our wish, too. We support the Soviet Union's efforts to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China. Bulgaria has recently made some progress in normalizing its relations with China. They have responded to some of our proposals and have themselves

proposed an expansion in cooperation in various areas. Both parties are now examining each other's proposals. However, we have made it quite clear to the Chinese that any progress in relations between our two countries will depend on how Soviet-Chinese relations develop. We will stand by this opinion. We believe that such a joint position is natural and will make progress in improving Soviet-Chinese relations easier.

In the current situation, the ruling circles in the West, particularly in the USA, do not want to attain any positive results in the Geneva and Vienna talks; they merely seek to use them as a cover for accelerating the arms race and preparations for war. We must therefore keep alert and not relent in our efforts to consolidate our security. It is a well-known fact that the Soviet Union is the greatest contributor in this regard.

However, each of our countries is clearly obligated to do its part.

Now, very briefly with regard to the situation in the Balkans. The cold winds blowing in from the ocean have reached our territory as well. The USA and NATO have stepped up their efforts to rekindle mistrust and tension among the Balkan states and peoples and to undermine relations among the Balkan socialist countries and, if possible, between them and the Soviet Union. They are trying to resolve the disputes between Greece and Turkey and to stabilize NATO's southern flank. Our assessments indicate that their efforts have not yet borne any substantive results and that the situation in the Balkans remains relatively satisfactory, although it will require greater attention and vigilance.

Our party and country have been implementing a consistent policy, coordinated with the other socialist states, to counter the imperialists' efforts in the Balkan Peninsula. It is a program to further develop cooperation in economics, culture, tourism, sports, and other areas; the purpose of this is to strengthen trust among the Balkan countries and peoples, to stabilize and deepen the détente process and, in particular, to transform the Balkans into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The Balkan policy implemented by the fraternal socialist states makes it fairly difficult for the imperialists to reintroduce tensions into relations between the states on the peninsula and is stimulating the struggle of the progressive forces to maintain peace.

We are deeply concerned about the situation in the Middle East. We cannot ignore the fact that the USA has achieved some successes in implementing its plans for the region.

The presence of armed forces from three NATO member-states in Lebanon amounts to an expansion of NATO's sphere of influence beyond its European and North Atlantic boundaries. It is a precedent that may have very grave consequences for peace, and not merely in this part of the world.

We support the proposal to convene an international conference on the Middle East and are prepared to do our part.

Comrades!

It looks as if 1983 is going to be a year of hard, complex, and tense ideological and political struggle, especially with regard to Europe. As properly indicated in our joint document, the forces of peace are stronger than those of war. Everything will depend on our unity and cohesion in our struggle for peace, life, and progress.

Therefore, the Bulgarian delegation supports the proposal to convene the Political Consultative Committee at least once a year, or even more frequently, if necessary, so that we can exchange views and coordinate our actions. The interests of our socialist commonwealth, as well as all progressive and peace-loving forces, require it.

Thank you for your attention.

[Translation from the Czech by Jiří Mareš]