

## STATEMENT

By the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the  
Bulgarian Communist Party, Todor Zhivkov, at the meeting of the  
Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization

Budapest, 10 June 1986

Comrade Chairman,

Dear Comrades,

The period following the Political Consultative Committee meeting in Sofia has been rife with significant events that have confirmed once again the conclusion that the current international environment remains tense and dangerous. Despite the various problems the humanity is facing, the problem of peace and security currently stands above them all.

Lenin previously predicted that as the revolutionary process progressed, the turning points in human history would become much more complex.

We are now at a turning point that presents radically new tasks. These tasks require new approaches and decisions; they require close interaction and cooperation between our parties and countries.

We support the realistic and constructive course of action of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government, the initiatives and proposals of Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev to save mankind from a war, to improve international relations on a global scale, to establish an international order based on cooperation among the nations, rather than on military force.

While I support the assessments and considerations presented here by Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev and the thoughts and proposals put forward by other comrades, allow me to share some of my visions and to outline some ideas arising from the new global situation.

First. Given the existence of modern nuclear weapons, it is an obsolete idea to believe that if our socialist countries become a target of a nuclear attack, our counterstrike would bring about the end of imperialism. This is a concept we have been promoting for decades.

The reality of today dictates another concept. Nowadays, the two systems can either jointly co-exist or jointly perish; it is a matter of the survival or the death of humanity.

This is the will of history.

This situation does not mean that we should become fatalists and believe that war is inevitable. Nothing of the kind. There are sufficient forces in the world to prevent a nuclear catastrophe.

Our main weapon now is the political struggle and political decisions.

- These are our political, diplomatic and other steps and initiatives; our efforts to win over the international community; to activate public opinion and all the factors promoting peace and security.

Now, as we highlight the importance of political decisions, can we say that military parity is not playing a crucial role?

No. Something more. Today it is gaining a completely new meaning. Therefore, we should not allow any disruptions to harm us.

Parity remains for us the main focus. We realize, however, that it will continue to be dynamic in future. We are also aware that the purpose of imperialism is to exhaust us.

Second. A modern concept for the dialectics of our time is needed. The modern age is the age of transition from capitalism to socialism on a global scale. This is the essential point in the class struggle between the socialist system and capitalism in resolving the issue of “who – whom.” The struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries is inseparable from the struggle between socialism and capitalism.

Along with this, a new reality is emerging: the prevention of thermonuclear war is taking priority; it is becoming the problem of all problems. This is the time when war becomes absurd, as Lenin foresaw. Now, we are facing the historical responsibility of saving human civilization. From this perspective, the interests of all nations merge; the world must be united. In the face of this common threat, the struggle for unity becomes a global issue.

All this is shaping a new attitude toward the problems of peaceful co-existence between the two systems. No one has illusions that the opposition between the two systems will vanish. Right now, though, there is no alternative but competition [sic?], which under current conditions means:

- The exclusion of war from the life of humanity;
- Not only good neighborly relations and cooperation, but also a political approach to guarantee the peace and security to all nations;
- Scientific and technical cooperation for peaceful purposes, for the solution of common human issues.

Third. The point here is to overcome in a short period our lagging behind in the scientific and technical revolution, to establish parity in the economic area, and to improve labor productivity.

It is not by accident that this issue has become central at the congresses of our fraternal parties.

We welcome the decisions of the Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to enhance the social and economic development of the Soviet state. We have given wide publicity to all the innovations recently launched in the USSR.

We, the fraternal countries, are making efforts now to implement the Complex Program for Scientific and Technical Development until the year 2000.

What we are going to achieve in the next 15-20 years will be essential for the development of the socialist system and the issues related to our competition with capitalism.

All this is very good.

Judging from our personal experience, however, we are aware that during the scientific and technical revolution many issues arise. There is one particular issue that is of crucial importance. Unless we identify it, the results will be far less than expected. I have in mind the issue of the objective laws governing the development of our society, the necessity of taking their specifics into consideration, of turning these laws into our ally.

The Law of Value and the related commodity-money relations have a leading role among them.

This Law has been underestimated by our theoreticians. Until recently, they did not recognize its existence in the socialist environment, nor the related commodity-money relations and equal exchange. This has done much harm to the development of our system. This is an extremely important issue we need to discuss together. The Law of Value and commodity-money relations deal with many problems that have an impact upon the entire production process, its management, the establishment and functioning of self-governing organizations, the initiatives of the economic management and workers, including economic relationships among the socialist countries.

Unless we take into account the impact of the Law, unless we draw practical conclusions for our development and cooperation, none of the programs that we have approved or will approve will be implemented successfully.

Neglecting the Law of Value, we have built a huge administrative structure. Taking into consideration the practice in Bulgaria, it would be difficult to make this body function effectively.

Many state and economic bodies pretend to have accepted the new approaches, although in practice they are ruining our efforts.

Under these conditions, the workers - the socialist manufacturers – are “out of the game” in the planning process, in the investment process, in commerce, etc. Thus, they are not able to perform

consistently the functions that are set by us as the owners of socialist property, as the real producers of goods.

It is obvious that the steps taken are not leading to radical changes. This structure is a major evil. It has turned into a machine for bureaucracy and paperwork. It is the source of abuses.

As soon as the implementation of the decisions of the Thirteenth Party Congress started, our leadership concluded, not surprisingly, that the Party committees were taking over the new concepts, ideas and stipulations. They were becoming more active. The state machine and the economic bodies, however, were difficult to get moving.

Here are some of the main, problematic tasks that I consider necessary to touch upon.

Allow me to comment on some of the tactical issues, which have been discussed so far.

Our political, diplomatic, information and ideological activities have become very important lately.

- In our opinion, the efforts to eliminate the US "Star Wars" plan should continue and expand both in the diplomatic sphere and among the broad masses of the people through political, information and ideological means. The anti-military slogan of a peaceful outer space is becoming a unifying idea in the struggle against militarism.
- We need to become more active in gaining solid public support for our proposals in the West European States, in appealing to wider social circles in the struggle for the consolidation of peace and security on the continent.

Winning over public opinion is becoming of great significance.

- As for Western Europe, it is true that its dependency on the United States is growing. At the same time, there are contradictions between the Western countries and the USA on many issues, and we should skillfully take advantage of them.
- In this respect, it would be right to undertake new political and diplomatic steps, to bring up new proposals, to denounce the ambition of the U.S. military industry to turn West Europe into their nuclear rampart and hostage.
- We need to continue working to enhance the cooperation between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community, based on equality and mutual benefit. We need to discuss the issue of establishing relations with the bodies of

the European Economic Community that deal with international policy. I have in mind the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and others.

Our position regarding the international communist and workers' movement and toward the capitalist and developing countries is also setting new tasks.

New conclusions can be drawn regarding the struggle for peace. This struggle involves two different groups: on the one side are the millions of people who recognize the need to prevent a nuclear catastrophe, and on the other side are the militarists and their supporters, pursuing their class interests.

This position creates the possibility of involving millions of workers and peasants, intellectuals, members of the petty bourgeoisie, the middle class and even the upper middle class, socialist and social-democratic parties, agricultural, liberal and radical parties, the movement of independent states, and realistically-thinking political and state leaders in the capitalist world.

Conditions already exist to conduct more working meetings of communist party leaders and representatives of socialist and social-democratic parties in Europe to discuss issues of peace, security and cooperation on the continent. It would be reasonable to organize similar meetings with representatives of other parties as well – agrarian, liberal, etc.

In our opinion, this is an important direction for work in the international arena.

Second, we should not get involved in a confrontation if this can be avoided.

Experience proves that the imperialist forces will take advantage of confrontations. It goes without saying that we must do everything to prevent a conflict. It is obvious that the course of neo-globalism being followed by the United States is a long-term course.

This does not exclude strong resistance to this aggressive course, as was the case recently during the American provocation against Libya and the threat to Syria.

The steps taken by the Soviet Union regarding this provocation and threat were correct and timely, and we have fully supported them. This was an act of great political significance.

At the same time, given the nature of our work, we should resist any provocations.

The relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America are playing and will continue to play a crucial role in international developments. I share the idea that we need to work more actively with the other countries as well - both with our partners in the West and with the developing, independent and all the countries in the capitalist world. We must influence these countries, as well as political and cultural figures, for the benefit of peaceful development in the world.

Third. In my view, in light of our basic strategic concepts, we need a new vision and new methods in our ideological work.

We have to say that our ideological work is limited and ineffective.

I believe that we could discuss this issue at another meeting.

I support what has been said about terrorism and the speculations of imperialism regarding human rights.

There is a growing demand to take a more specific and offensive approach in the area of human rights, and generally in the humanitarian aspect.

Fourth. I believe that we would all agree that in terms of our strategic and tactical commitments we must revisit [the issue of] the work of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and our economic cooperation.

- It goes without saying that the current situation in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is a reflection of our development.
- There are serious economic, legal and bureaucratic obstacles within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and in our cooperation.
- If we are talking about a turning point and we are taking measures to enhance our economic development, to further integrate the efforts of the fraternal countries, specifically in the area of the scientific and technical revolution, it is obvious that a new vision and understanding are needed regarding the place and role of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. What is more, we need to go to the extremes and carry out a real transformation of this organization.

I believe that our practice of holding regular meetings of the central committee secretaries and leaders of other organizations has been very useful in previous years. Experience proves, however, that this form does not always bring the desired results. It would be wrong to criticize those comrades and bodies. You all understand that the issues that require a political decision are a priority in our work. Political decisions, to use contemporary terminology, must be made at the highest level.

Dear Comrades, allow me to assure you of our delegation's support for the documents that we will approve, the Statement on Armed Forces and Conventional Weapons Reductions, and the final communiqué.

Our country will continue to contribute to the strengthening of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

After we have made the decision to hold annual meetings, it would be reasonable to negotiate a specific period – the end of May or the beginning of June, for instance. We could organize the meetings of the Foreign Ministers' Committee in March and October.

I would suggest that the Secretary General of the Political Consultative Committee brief us on the work that has been completed done in implementing the decisions from the previous meeting.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to Comrade János Kádár and to the other Hungarian comrades for their warm hospitality and the wonderful working conditions.

Thank you for your attention.

*(Central State Archives, Sofia, Fond I-B, Opis 68, File 690-86)*

*[Translation by Jordan Baev]*