

**Speech by the General Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of
Czechoslovakia, Comrade Miloš Jakeš, at the Meeting of the PCC of the
Warsaw Treaty Member-States,
Bucharest, 7-8 July 1989**

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We have become conscious of the most important lesson to be drawn from the course of socialist construction so far. It can be expressed as follows: When the party develops new forms of societal life, it must take the initiative; it cannot lose control over the situation even for a moment; it must stand at the forefront of the working population and implement the changes for which society is ripe, resolutely and unwaveringly. Furthermore, we have understood that the party can only consolidate its political leadership if it produces concrete results and earns the trust of the people every day. The main precondition for the success of society's restructuring is the activation of the human factor, both in terms of material interest in the results of one's labor and in terms of consciousness.

We have begun to implement a political reform and are activating the entire system of the national front, as the basis of socialist pluralism of opinions and interests. In this connection, the political parties, the mass organizations and the citizens' interest groups that are united in the national front are taking more initiative and playing a growing role in the elaboration, implementation and control of policies. Laws have been enacted that extend the authority, responsibility and economic independence of the national committees as bodies of state power and people's self-government. We are creating the preconditions for the complete exploitation of all functions of our parliamentary system,

above all the Federal Assembly of the ČSSR and the Czech and Slovak National Councils, as the highest decision-making and representative bodies. The draft of a new constitution for the ČSSR is being elaborated, which will then become a matter of public debate.

We are, however, not only improving the political system but also conducting an economic reform. We have completed the restructuring of the technical basis of production, the area of circulation and the central bodies. The laws on state enterprises and on the unions are in force and should above all increase the independence and responsibility of the enterprises on the basis of economic bookkeeping, self-financing and self-management. In the state enterprises, the directors and the self-management bodies are being elected. This is a way to strengthen the positive attitude of the working people toward socialist property and their position as owners of the factories and production plants. We have initiated a change in industrial and purchasing prices; the next stage will be to constantly update them. We are continuing work on developing economic levers; elaboration of the necessary legislation to regulate the restructuring of the economic mechanisms is almost concluded. A new law on the planning of the national economy has been passed. All of this will ensure that the entire national economy can work on the basis of the new economic principles, which have already been in place in the agricultural-industrial complex and in the social security sector since the beginning of this year, from 1 January 1990 – i.e. one year earlier than originally planned.

We are paying a great deal of attention to fulfilling the tasks associated with the development of the national economy and the economy's socialist orientation. Although the national economy's development shows certain positive trends, including a more rapid growth in national income, we are nevertheless not succeeding in completely

fulfilling the tasks of the ninth five-year plan; this is particularly true for its qualitative indices, the reduction of costs, qualitative improvement and raising the technological level of production, and the effectiveness of increasing investment and exports.

Restructuring is progressing sluggishly. Our efforts are directed at achieving internal and external economic equilibrium and stability, in order to supply the internal market without delay and to secure further social and economic development, without incurring more debts in freely convertible currencies. We are accompanying the restructuring of the national economy with attention to professional qualifications and raising citizens' level of education and general culture, ensuring a good education for the upcoming generation. This was recently discussed at a plenum of the CC of the CPC devoted exclusively to these issues.

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The issues of European security and cooperation have assumed a prominent position in our foreign-policy activity. We thus expressed our unlimited willingness to continue to participate

Actively in the development of the CSCE process in Europe in all areas and in the spirit of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the concluding document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting. At the end of last year, a committee for human rights and humanitarian cooperation – constituted on the basis of a broad, societal forum of our population – began its work in our country. The committee's experiences to date show that it is possible to come to grips with the gradual resolution of humanitarian questions not only in our country but also abroad. We greet the stance of those Western governments, political parties, and societal forces that are constructive and open-minded with regard to the CSCE process. We do not intend, however, to capitulate

before those forces that often quite baldly attempt to misuse the Vienna document in order to intervene in our internal affairs and to subvert the socialist order of our society and of others.

I would like to state the opinion that by increasing the effectiveness of our participation in the further development of the CSCE process in Europe, as the basis for building our common European house, we could work out a long-term plan for joint action, not only in the military and humanitarian areas but also in economics, science, technology and the environment. In this connection, we welcome the extraordinarily valuable and constructive proposals submitted by Comrade Gorbachev in Strasbourg.

Our proposal to establish a zone of confidence, cooperation and good-neighbory relations in Europe at the dividing line between the member states of the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is based upon our wish to strengthen security and cooperation in Europe. We are making efforts to develop relations that are free of the usual prejudices and free of mistrust – i.e. relations that are based on common or similar interests. We are giving priority to regular and comprehensive dialogue on issues of mutual interest in all areas of the CSCE process.

We can rightly claim that a whole series of proposals submitted by our partners to us are already being implemented; this applies especially to our relations with the FRG and neutral Austria as well, which has announced its interest in contributing to the establishment of a zone of confidence. During the negotiations to date with the interested parties, a certain expansion in the initiative's content has taken place. Here we also took into account the concluding document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting. Now, we are entering the second round of bilateral expert consultations, with the goal of making the

measures for confidence-building and cooperation more concrete and establishing the conditions for their multilateral expansion.

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As experience has shown, it is possible to find common solutions with the countries of Western Europe, even with regard to highly complicated and difficult issues, if goodwill exists. An example of this is the joint Czechoslovak-British initiative for the signing of an international accord against the misuse of plastic explosives for terrorist purposes. The initiative came about thanks to a Czechoslovak proposal. It has already been included on the agenda of the UN Security Council and has found a positive reception.

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It would correspond to the spirit and demands of the times to create a permanent political working body of the Warsaw Treaty; it would represent a qualitative step forward. Such a body could discuss in particular the whole range of foreign-policy, economic and social issues on a democratic and equal basis and develop recommendations and proposals.

An expansion of the authority of the General Secretaries of the Political Consultative Committee would greatly expand our international influence and provide for more rational collaboration within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty.

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[Translation from the German by Ursula Froese]

