

**Speech by the General Secretary of the CC of the Bulgarian Communist Party and
Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Comrade
Todor Zhivkov, at the Meeting of the PCC of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States**

Bucharest, 7-8 July 1989

[EXCERPTS]

[. . .]

We welcome the position of the Soviet leadership, that every attempt to destabilize the situation in any particular socialist country will affect the process of confidence-building between East and West and destroy what has already been achieved.

We welcome the fact that the Soviet Union is unwaveringly maintaining its position – that it holds its fraternal friendship and cooperation with the socialist countries dear and forever inviolable. Clearly, for each of the socialist countries, this position will serve both as a political guarantee and as a strong impulse and support – in a word, the key element – in preserving its socialist present and future. We recognize and feel the need to join forces and unite even more. We must not underestimate the danger of the disintegration and destabilization of some of our member-countries of the Warsaw Treaty and the socialist commonwealth. It would certainly be a big mistake to wait until this has actually happened to begin searching for a way out of the situation. It is essential that we join forces already now and try to resolve the issue by political means. We must try to find new forms of cooperation. The improvement of our political cooperation is also on the agenda.

When we speak of strengthening our cooperation, we must of course take into account the realities and difficulties that each of our countries has to overcome to its own particular extent and in its own particular way.

I think we all know very well that economic development and effective collaboration in this area are crucial for a successful restructuring in our countries and for the protection of the interests of socialism on an international scale.

Keeping all this in mind, the Peoples' Republic of Bulgaria and its leadership will unconditionally support every step to raise more quickly the economic potential of our commonwealth to a qualitatively new level and to renew the model of socialist economic integration under the leadership of the Soviet Union.

In this regard, we must join forces to develop and enrich our collective plan within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance; we must accelerate its restructuring, develop elements of a unified socialist market, integrate our intellectual, technological, investment and production potential and regulate and steer our economic and technological exchange with the Western countries.

We must be clear about the fact that it is the low level and ineffectiveness of the process of integration between our economies that first even makes it possible for plans to be developed for economically detaching certain countries from the socialist camp.

Without the required collaboration between us, our relations and contacts to the Western countries and their economic institutions will essentially bring us into a situation where the principle “divide and conquer” can be applied to relations with us.

Our main task within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is now to jointly prepare and implement the strategic structural, technological and social changes in our economies on the basis of our common interests.

In conclusion, allow me to inform you about several current aspects of the situation in the Balkans.

In recent years and particularly after the Belgrade meeting of the foreign ministers of all six Balkan countries (this meeting took place in February 1988), political relations have taken on a new form more in keeping with the times.

Bulgaria is contributing as well as it can to the qualitative changes in the overall picture in the Balkans, and will continue to do so.

I want to state our position on a matter that is connected not only with the situation in the Balkans but also with the overall development of East-West relations. The matter concerns Turkey. The occasion for my statement is the course of events following the Peoples’ Republic of Bulgaria’s adoption of certain laws on the passport system and Bulgarian citizenship. These are documents that conform to the spirit and the letter of the Helsinki and Vienna accords. In a certain sense, they became a trigger for an unprecedented anti-Bulgarian campaign abroad. Once again, the true political, military-strategic and ideological face of Turkey revealed itself in this campaign.

As you know, the “trump card” of this campaign was the issue of Bulgarian Moslems.

I would just like to underscore the following.

For decades, all Turkish governments have based their reasoning on the absurd premise that every Moslem in Bulgaria is a Turk.

On this basis, our state sovereignty is violated in a gross manner and a “fifth column” is being created within our state. And for this reason, Turkey exploited our resolutions, the fact that we gave everyone the right to travel where they wanted, as an opportunity to turn the situation against Bulgaria.

Through the efforts of pan-Turkic chauvinists who shamelessly speculate with the religious consciousness of this population, unrest was sowed and several Moslems came into conflict with the authorities.

This resulted in a real emigration psychosis, which has caused serious internal and external difficulties for Bulgaria.

It is not a question of the fight for religious freedom or the autonomy of any imaginable ethnic minority in Bulgaria.

This is one of the methods of the global offensive against socialism, which we must not only notice but also analyze very carefully.

You are of course aware of what Turkey, as a state structure, represents. But Turkey also has another face. I will just recall a few points, with which all of you are familiar.

First, Turkey has the largest army in NATO after the USA. A large part of this army is concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the Bulgarian border.

Second, Turkey is constantly making revanchist claims against a number of Balkan and Asian states.

Third, it is no coincidence that Turkey does not support the initiative to proclaim the Balkans a nuclear and chemical-weapons-free zone.

In a word, we have every reason to assume that it is not only Bulgaria that is affected by Turkey's destructive actions. They have a broader target and are a part of plans with a broader objective. And this objective – I stress this again – is directed against socialism as a social system.

On a global scale, it would be wrong to think that this problem affects only Bulgaria and Turkey. Certain powers stand behind Turkey, first and foremost the USA.

That is why I believe that our countries must take account of the situation in the socialist south, and of the complicated connection between this situation and the realization of the overall goals in Europe that we are setting for ourselves.

Of course, we have understanding for the efforts of certain socialist countries to broaden their dialogue and cooperation with Turkey. We support these efforts and are also seeking dialogue and an open discussion with Turkey.

As for the current situation concerning the Bulgarian Moslems, I would like to add the following: everything that our country does fully and completely corresponds to the spirit of détente and security.

[. . .]

[Translation from the German by Ursula Froese]