

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
No. 324

TO THE POLITBURO
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

COMRADES,

The Sofia meeting of the [Warsaw Treaty's] Political Consultative Committee took place after Comrade [Mikhail] Gorbachev's visit to France, on the eve of his meeting with U.S. President [Ronald Reagan], and after new Soviet proposals were put forward during the Geneva talks. This fact attached considerable importance to the meeting and provoked great interest all over the world.

The current problems with the situation in Europe and the world were discussed during the meeting, as well as some issues related to the enhancement of the mechanism for cooperation among the Warsaw Treaty nations. The Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Pact's Unified Armed Forces delivered a speech. The meeting adopted a Declaration – "On the Elimination of the Nuclear Threat and a Positive Turn in the Situation in Europe and the World." A communiqué, a protocol and a decision regarding the Supreme Commander's report were also approved.

The Declaration is notable for its deep realism and constructiveness. The main point in the declaration is an alternative to the arms race and nuclear war. Along with some previous suggestions, new proposals have been made to resolve urgent and long-term problems, and to make a positive turn in international life. Special attention is being paid to the situation in Europe. In its content, tone and style, the declaration meets the requirements for a new approach to politics that is adequate to the realities of the nuclear-missile age. The declaration is a political initiative. It puts Bulgaria in a favorable position to proceed against the most aggressive imperialist forces and to expand public support for the peace-loving policy of the Warsaw Treaty nations.

Important milestones and proposals in the Declaration are:

- Comrade Gorbachev's meeting with U.S. President Reagan – our expectations and the tasks that it has to perform.
- Unconditional support for the Soviets' constructive position and the new Soviet proposals raised during the Geneva talks and support for the other Soviet proposals that have been made lately. This will give Comrade Gorbachev the opportunity to talk with the U.S. President on behalf of the Warsaw Treaty States.

- The proposal that the USSR and the USA should take responsibility for not designing and manufacturing new types of conventional weapons comparable in their destructive force to weapons of mass destruction.
- The proposal to preserve the level of Soviet and U.S. armed forces as of January 1, 1986, including the troops outside their national borders, and the proposal not to increase Soviet and U.S. [military] budgets as of next fiscal year.
- The proposal for international scientific and technical cooperation and the readiness of our countries to contribute to the development and implementation of international research and experimental programs. This issue has been put forward in order to break into the closed circle of Western groupings -- the International Standards Organization (ISO) of the USA and "Eureka" of the European Economic Community (EEC); to emphasize that this is a global problem; and to stress that the socialist countries are defending the interests of those small, neutral and developing countries without access to the Western groupings in this area.
- Deliberateness in accelerating scientific and technological cooperation and enhancing socialist economic integration.
- The readiness of the Warsaw Treaty states to put constructive efforts into the balanced development of the common European process.
- The importance of establishing direct business relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) and the EEC was emphasized, as well as the significance of discussions on specific international and political issues. This would be the first time for the prospect of a dialogue with the leading group consisting of western countries without the participation of the USA.
- Support for the initiative of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (ČSSR) to create a zone in Central Europe free of chemical weapons; and the readiness to assist in reaching an international agreement on the nonproliferation of chemical weapons.
- Explicit readiness to cooperate with the People's Republic of China in the struggle for peace and socialism against imperialism.
- Support for the positions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The reflection of this issue in a document of the Political Consultative Committee is of great political significance for the stabilization of the DPRK and for the further development of relations between our countries and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It was the first time that a document was adopted in Sofia with a long-lasting positive effect on the future of international affairs, issued by the Political Consultative Committee.

Comrade Gorbachev's statement was comprehensive, very constructive and principled. All the other leaders expressed their full agreement with his analysis, assessments, approaches and proposals.

The present situation in Europe was seen as 'tense' and 'dangerous'. The recent liveliness of the political dialogue between East and West, which resulted from the efforts made by the socialist countries, could not compensate for the lack of serious positive changes in the main area – disarmament.

Danger arises not only from the stockpiling of new weapons and the adoption of new armament programs (including the militarization of space), but also from the imperialists' plans to take social revenge and destroy socialism through military superiority, war, or military blackmail; to defer the process of economic and political destabilization of the capitalist system; and to stop progressive and democratic changes in Third World states. In this respect, the USA and the other developed capitalist states are relying especially on their progress in equipment and technology.

The main conclusion of his analysis was: the only force possessing the material capabilities to prevent nuclear war is the socialist community.

Comrade Gorbachev provided information on the USSR's preparation for the meeting with U.S. President Reagan, which made clear that the USA, pressed by the peaceful advance of the Soviet Union, was compelled to maneuver and cheat. The USA was defending itself because it has understood that the meeting could not be conducted as a mere "protocol event." Currently, the USSR and the USA are discussing a broad spectrum of essential problems, including the possibility of adopting a joint document after the meeting. This would be a return to the normal practice of the 1970s, something that the Western countries have avoided lately.

The Soviets pointed out that it would not be a surprise if the meeting had no significant results, given the USA's willingness to block disarmament talks. In this case, the political and diplomatic activities of the socialist states shall not decrease; defense programs will need to be reviewed; and the attitude toward negotiations will have to be reconsidered.

All the leaders pointed out that given the ongoing militarist course of the USA, the significance of an active, well-coordinated policy on the part of the socialist community towards the West European states was growing. It was stated that our relations with these countries should depend on their contribution to improving the international situation through their positive influence on the USA.

The development of the common European process launched in Helsinki was presented as a prospective way toward cooperation with the West European governments. The Warsaw Treaty

states need to work out a joint program for preparation of the meeting in Vienna in November 1986.

Cooperation with West European Social Democracy (particularly with West Germany) and with the Socialist International as a whole was recognized as a contribution to the struggle to halt the arms race.

Comrade Gorbachev and all other leaders paid special attention to the issue of removing the setbacks to economic development and especially the scientific and technological progress of the socialist states. It was necessary to prevent the West's military and technological superiority over socialism – a goal pursued both by the U.S. ISO and the EEC's "Eureka." A unanimous position was voiced that the Warsaw Treaty states' response would be the rapid development of scientific and technological integration; timely completion of the program of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance; and a special session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in December to adopt the program.

With regard to international scientific and technological cooperation outside the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, it was pointed out that a new platform for cooperation with the 'Eureka' project could be established. It was reasonable for the socialist states to exploit the opportunities presented by the Helsinki Final Act and to come up with initiatives for common European cooperation in science and technology.

All the participants paid special attention to the issue of "human rights." A unanimous opinion was voiced that this issue should become a tool for the consolidation of the accomplishments of socialism. It was proposed that the problem of human rights become a subject for discussion at the meeting of the Secretaries for Ideological and International Affairs of the Central Committees of the fraternal parties, as well as in the foreign ministries of the Warsaw Treaty states.

Comrade Todor Zhivkov's statement was characterized once again by deep analysis, precise assessments, clear formulations and openness in bringing up some problems. He put forward new issues that had not been mentioned in previous speeches and reviewed previously-mentioned problems from a different perspective.

Proceeding from the assumption that "the clash between the two powerful social waves in the world arena was taking place at a crucial moment in the development of international relations," Comrade Todor Zhivkov highlighted the need for radical changes in the foundation and the structure of our society. He openly stated that our countries were lagging behind the capitalist states in their economic and technological development. Comrade Zhivkov prioritized the task of promoting our scientific and technical progress and transforming it into the foundation of our social and economic development. His concern that the current phase of contradictions is setting new challenges to our political and ideological potential is important. "It is a fact," Comrade Zhivkov said, "that the

political circles in our countries have made serious mistakes. In some aspects, they have proved to be weaker than the political power of our adversaries. Our ideology is the most progressive one; however, its influence is insufficient.”

Comrade Zhivkov also spoke about the international communist movement with the same straightforwardness. He specified the hardships and the weaknesses in the work of the communist and workers' parties. He underlined the fact that the parties in the socialist community are incapable of making a timely and comprehensive analysis of the conditions under which the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries are functioning.

Elaborating on our relations with the developing countries, Comrade Zhivkov stressed the need to consider the changing social and economic environment in these countries, to be more realistic and to use thoroughly our capabilities to affect them. Comrade Zhivkov assessed the new international economic order as being democratic and anti-imperialist in essence, and he declared that it was time we adopted it as our concept.

While assessing the situation on the Balkans, Comrade Zhivkov proposed that the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Socialist Republic of Romania launch an initiative to turn this region into a zone free of chemical weapons.

The Romanian leadership expressed their view on a number of international issues. The Romanian delegation defiantly insisted on the adoption of two particularly unacceptable proposals:

- To organize a meeting of representatives from the Warsaw Treaty states and the NATO member-nations to discuss and make suggestions with regard to the issues that are a topic of the Soviet-American talks in Geneva; and
- To maintain the level of military expenditures and army strength in the Warsaw Treaty states as of 1986, and later reduce them by 10-15 %.

The proposals were firmly rejected by the other delegations and were not included in the [final] document. The Romanian side insisted that unless the second proposal was accepted, Comrade [Nicolae] Ceausescu would not sign the declaration. As a result, a text was included in the protocol that the proposal be sent to the Committee of Foreign Ministers, which will form a group of experts, whose task will be to study the chances for its implementation.

The Romanian delegation also raised the issue of adopting a separate document on problems in the developing countries and the establishment of a new international economic order, which again was unacceptable to the other nations. The rejection of this proposal resulted in the Romanian delegation's blocking the adoption of the German Democratic Republic's congratulatory message to the United Nations on the occasion of its 40th anniversary.

The protocol issued by the Committee of Foreign Ministers had a text referring to the elaboration of a political document on the establishment of a new international economic order.

The Romanian delegation disapproved of a certain passage in the political declaration, denouncing large-scale provocations against socialism, like “the Rome Process.” This text was proposed and defended by the Bulgarian delegation with the support of all the other Warsaw Treaty states.

The Romanian delegation had a strange position on some proposals made by the socialist countries of Asia. These proposals were focused on the consolidation of peace and security on the continent, including ways to normalize the situation in Southern Asia. These positions solidified after Ceaușescu’s return from a visit to the People’s Republic of China.

Striving to impose some of their ideas in the political document, the Romanian delegation tried to blackmail the meeting by rejecting its support for the constructive Soviet position at the Geneva talks.

The Romanian delegation was not successful in including their radical ideas in the declaration, which was of considerable importance for the forthcoming meeting between Comrade Gorbachev and the U.S. President.

All leaders voiced their support for further enhancing cooperation within the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in Sofia will be remembered for some important decisions in the history of the organization.

It was decided that the meetings of the Political Consultative Committee will take place not less than once per year, preferably during the spring months. The first working meeting of the General Secretaries and First Secretaries of the fraternal parties (outside the Political Consultative Committee) was held. This was the beginning of standard practice, recommended by Comrade Gorbachev during his speech in Warsaw.

The meeting approved the recommendations made by the Committee of Foreign Ministers in October 1983 regarding the work of the Unified Secretariat and the improvement of the mechanism for cooperation at the working level. Elaborating on these recommendations, another very important decision was made: the Committee of Foreign Ministers was tasked with studying the procedure for the assigning and functioning of the multilateral group for ongoing mutual information. The group was to consist of representatives from the Warsaw Pact states and to meet periodically in Moscow. The Soviet Union was to be represented by a deputy foreign minister. This decision was proposed by Comrade Gorbachev. It marked the implementation of an initiative made by the Bulgarian delegation during the formulation of recommendations in 1983. At that time, however, this initiative was not supported due to the objections of the Romanian participants. The creation of such a group must be viewed not only as a response to the need for the regular and operational exchange of information on current international events and problems, but also as an expression of an ongoing trend of establishing permanent bodies within the Warsaw Treaty framework.

The formation of a press group with Warsaw Pact representatives was initiated by Comrade Todor Zhivkov for the first time in Sofia. This was evidence of the new approach aimed at modernizing the mechanisms and procedures of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The task of the press group was to coordinate work with the mass media, which is to become a common practice at the Political Consultative Committee meetings. For the first time a press conference was held after the meeting to inform the journalists about the decisions made by the Political Consultative Committee. Thus, a Bulgarian idea that had not been approved in 1983 was implemented in the Warsaw Treaty's work.

The meeting of the Political Consultative Committee implemented yet another proposal dated from 1983. It stated that the host nation had to translate the basic document into different languages in order to ensure identical translations. The Bulgarian side translated the declaration of the Political Consultative Committee into French, English and Spanish, and handed a copy to each of the delegations prior to their departure (the original was in Russian).

There is a general belief that the Political Consultative Committee and the Committee of Foreign Ministers should draft short documents in order to facilitate their preparation and coordination.

The Political Consultative Committee meeting was held in a friendly atmosphere. A common willingness was demonstrated to enhance coordination among the Warsaw Treaty states in dealing with issues within the community or on a global scale.

The Sofia meeting of the Political Consultative meeting launched a new stage of cooperation within the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

Bulgaria provided excellent organization for the meeting's successful outcome.

As a result of what has been said so far, I propose that the Politburo approve the following resolution:

The Politburo approves the work of the Bulgarian delegation, led by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Comrade Todor Zhivkov, during the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member states.

With comradely regards,

Petar Mladenovⁱ

Sofia,
27 October 1985

(Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Record 68, File 85-1025)

[Translation by Jordan Baev]

ⁱ Transl. note: Petar Mladenov – Bulgarian Politburo member and Minister of Foreign Affairs.