

Summary of the Speech by the
Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces, Marshal of the Soviet Union V.G.
Kulikov, at the Consultative Session of the Political Consultative Committee of the
Warsaw Treaty Member-States

“On the State of the Unified Armed Forces and Measures for Further Increasing their
Combat Readiness”

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The first part of the speech deals with several aspects of the complicated and worsening political-military situation in Europe and in the world.

It notes that the USA is intensifying the arms race, accelerating the stationing of its first-strike nuclear missiles in Europe, striving to upset the parity in nuclear weapons at any price, and persisting in developing plans to militarize outer space with the goal of achieving decisive military superiority over the countries of the socialist commonwealth.

Precisely this is the goal of the “Strategic Defense Initiative” (SDI), which it is using to further increase its arsenal of offensive strategic weapons. This will invariably lead to a new and dangerous round of the arms race and to further aggravation of the military-political situation.

The majority of the NATO states has approved the American program to militarize outer space and confirmed the principle of the first use of nuclear weapons. NATO has officially adopted the concept of a so-called “deep strike”, which foresees waging war by

conventional means while at the same time striking at armed forces groups in the entire depth of the Warsaw Treaty countries' European territory.

The buildup of NATO troops in Europe, where a large group of armed forces has already been deployed, is continuing. These forces are for the most part stationed in the immediate vicinity of the Warsaw Treaty countries' borders and are kept in a state of constant combat readiness.

The speech notes the NATO bloc's increase in military spending and emphasizes the danger that has arisen for the defensive capabilities of the socialist commonwealth from the development of new systems of strategic weapons: the MX intercontinental ballistic missiles, the Trident-2 sea-based missiles, the B-1B bombers, and long-range cruise missiles.

The conclusion is that the countries of the socialist commonwealth are facing a strong and well-equipped adversary. Its armies are being maintained at a high level of combat readiness, have significant combat potential and a well-developed basis for mobilization. This makes it our duty to constantly observe the actions of NATO's armed forces and to take timely, appropriate measures to guarantee the security of our countries.

The second part of the speech analyzes the work completed by the defense ministries of the allied countries and the Unified Command in implementing the resolutions of the Political Consultative Committee on the development of troops and fleets during the current five-year period (1981-1985). It notes that the Unified Command and the national army commands have been working constantly to increase the forces' fighting capacity, to improve the formations' and units' command structures, to equip them with modern

weapons and military technology, to build up material reserves, and to develop the infrastructure in the theaters of war.

Given the intensification of the preparations for war by the USA and its NATO allies, the timely measures taken in response by the Soviet Union were of particular importance – measures adopted in agreement with the governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, on whose territories Soviet tactical missile facilities are located, and supported by the other socialist countries. Their aim is to prevent the USA and its allies from upsetting the established nuclear parity.

The troops of the Warsaw Treaty countries currently deployed in the west can hold their own against NATO's armed forces. Necessary measures to further increase their combat readiness are being taken in the course of implementing the resolutions of the Political Consultative Committee.

The speech emphasizes that, thanks to the party and state leadership of the allied countries and the active contribution of the Permanent Commission for the Defense Industry of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the troops and fleets have been supplied with a considerable amount of modern technology and weapons.

The firepower, thrust and mobility of the troops and fleets provided to the Unified Armed Forces in the current five-year period have increased.

The general formations and units of the national armed forces are, for the most part, organized according to a uniform structure and are equipped for the most part with

uniform, modern military technology, with sufficiently high tactical and technical capabilities.

The national air defense units are equipped for the most part with modern technology and weaponry. The formations and units are being provided with F1a medium-range and long-range anti-missile systems against low-flying targets, as well as with fighter aircraft and radar equipment with greater combat potentialities. The automation of their control is being improved.

The air forces are being equipped with planes and fighter-helicopters with highly effective means of destruction.

New battleships and other vessels, aircraft and helicopters, coastal defense missile systems and other weapons are being added to the existing allied fleets. Following the modernization of a number of ships, the fleets' combat potential for fighting the enemy's anti-ship missiles and aircraft, for locating their submarines and for clearing mines has been increased.

In addition to the technical equipment of the Unified Armed Forces, their readiness for joint actions has been enhanced.

Combat duty in the system of the air force, the air defense units and the fleets is being carried out in areas close to borders and in coastal waters to prevent violations of the air and sea borders of the fraternal countries by the potential enemy.

Persistent efforts have been made to shorten the time for transitioning troops and fleets from a peacetime to a wartime footing; to enhance the systems of mobilization, command, control, and signal communications for coalition forces; to raise the level of combat training for the ground, air and naval forces, and to increase the fraternal armies' camaraderie-in-arms.

The conclusion is drawn that the Unified Armed Forces as a whole are ready for action and are capable of carrying out complex combat tasks in joint operations using diverse means of armed combat.

At the same time, a number of developmental problems are noted. In particular, in the allied troops and fleets, a significant portion of the tanks, artillery systems, airplanes, helicopters and ships, the technology of the engineering troops, chemical troops, and communication units, as well as the radio-electronic equipment date from the 1950s and 1960s and in some cases even from the Second World War.

Attention was drawn to the need to persist in equipping the allied armies with new armaments and combat technology, to improve the existing procedures for transitioning troops and fleets from peacetime to wartime standing, to increase the level of readiness of the command, control, and information systems as well as the troops' and fleets' rate of construction of shielded and movable command posts, as well as modernized signal communications and centers.

The third part of the speech outlines further measures to ensure a high level of combat readiness, as provided for in the resolutions of the Prague consultative session of the

Political Consultative Committee (1983) on the development of the Unified Armed Forces to 1990.

In implementing these resolutions, the Unified Command, along with the defense ministries of the allied countries, has developed draft protocols for the development of the allied armies' troops and fleets that constitute the Unified Armed Forces for the new five-year period (1986-1990). These envisage the further improvement of the combat equipment of the troops and fleets; [the further improvement] of the organizational structure for the formations and units at their assigned level of strength for the end of 1985; the creation of groups and units of troops equipped with state-of-the-art weapons of the next generation; and enhanced durability and mobility of the command, control, and information systems through comprehensive automation.

For the years 1986-1990, plans are being made to provide the allied armies with the newest and most modern means of combat, as well as with combat systems of the next generation.

In accordance with the directives of the Unified Command, the mobilization readiness of troops and fleets should allow for the successful resolution of problems, including those that may arise suddenly.

In the national armed forces, the plans envisage a significant increase in the firepower, thrust, and mobility of the operational and tactical formations and units. To this end, the organizational structure of the guard motorized rifle and tank divisions will be further improved.

Their equipment with operational/tactical and high-precision tactical missiles, modern tanks, BMP¹ armored personnel carriers, self-propelled guns, grenade launchers and F1a anti-missile systems is ongoing. The number of reserve formations and units is being increased, and the creation of air assault units is foreseen.

In the countries' air defense units, the main efforts will be directed at further improving the unified system of air defense of the participating states of the Warsaw Treaty, as well as increasing its combat potential against current and future means of air attack.

The air defense formations and units will be equipped with new and modernized medium- and long-range F1a anti-missile systems as well as automated command systems, which will thus increase the firepower of the F1a missile units and improve the overall protection of facilities and troops.

The air force and air defense of the countries will be equipped with fighter aircraft with the latest modifications and most modern means of automated control.

In the air forces, plans are being made to raise the combat potential of the aircraft by means of continued conversion to the newest systems. The proportion of attack aircraft in the air forces will be increased. It is intended to develop the army air forces as well, in particular fighter-helicopter groups and units.

The development of the naval war fleets will be carried out with the primary goal of increasing the potential of the torpedo and anti-submarine ships by restoring and restocking the existing fleet of naval aircraft and the coastal defense forces. The

¹ Transl. Note: Russian "Боевая Машина Пехоты (БМП)," literally "Combat Vehicle of the Infantry."

formations and units will be provided with new missile boats, landing and anti-submarine ships, minesweepers with hulls of low magnetic steel and effective mine-defense weapons, as well as modern coastal defensive missile systems.

The technical and rear supply services will be improved. Work is continuing on stocking up materiel to meet the established norms, on improving means of transport, loading and unloading as well as other technology of the rear services, and on constructing multi-purpose storage sites.

The operational preparation of the territories of the allied countries as well as the national and coalition command and information systems will be further developed. Particular attention is to be paid to the creation of shielded and mobile command posts as well as to their equipment with modern means of communication and automation.

In the area of operational and combat training, the quality of the exercises will be improved and the practice of conducting operational and strategic, front, army, and tactical exercises will be continued.

In accordance with the resolutions of the communist and workers' parties, it will be important to apply effective means in order to improve the morale and psychological preparation and military education of the staff; to strengthen the solidarity of the allied armies; to educate them in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, socialist patriotism and internationalism; [to instill in them] a high degree of political vigilance and an unlimited devotion to the cause of socialism and communism.

The report emphasizes that the Warsaw Treaty member-states possess a mighty defense industry and a scientific and technological base that allows them to develop and produce modern types of weapons and technology, and to modernize, unify and standardize them.

The technological equipment of the troops and fleets will continue will also require in the future closer cooperation and the coordinated use of the defense industry and the scientific and technological potential of our countries; a shortening of the time needed to begin producing new types of weapons and technology; and more rapid adoption of the achievements of scientific and technological progress by the troops and fleets.

The drafting of protocols for the provision of troops and fleets of the allied armies assigned to the Unified Armed Forces and their development in the years 1986-1990 is presently being finalized in an agreement with the general staffs of the allied armies. They will be presented to the defense ministers for signature and to the governments for confirmation in December of this year. It is proposed that in addition to the five-year planning, a ten-year planning period should be introduced for the development of the Unified Armed Forces.

The speech concludes by assuring the Political Consultative Committee and the leaders of the fraternally allied communist and workers' parties that the Unified Command, together with the national army commands, will take the necessary measures to maintain the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty member-states at a level that guarantees our fraternal alliance's ability to defend itself.

[Translation from the German by Ursula Froese]

