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November 25th–26th, 1976  
Annex IV/b

Speech by the Czechoslovak Head of Delegation,  
General Secretary of the CC of the CPČ and President of the ČSSR, Comrade Gustáv  
Husák,  
At the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty

Bucharest, November 25, 1976

Dear Comrades,

Please allow me to greet all the meeting's participants on behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation and to express my sincere thanks to the Romanian comrades for their hospitality and for providing good conditions for our work. The CC of the CPČ and the government of the ČSSR welcome the present meeting of the Political Consultative Committee as a good opportunity to review current international issues, to share information and experiences regarding our respective parties and states, and to assess some proposals to further deepen our cooperation.

We regard every meeting of the Political Consultative Committee as an important stage in the common struggle of the socialist countries to strengthen our unity and to promote the cause of peace and progress. These meetings have repeatedly shown how important our coordination of foreign policy is for increasing the efficiency of our common approach and thus multiplying the strength of each socialist country and the socialist commonwealth as a whole.

The aforementioned facts have become all the more apparent in European and world developments over the past decade, when we held important meetings of the Political Consultative Committee in Bucharest, Berlin, Prague and Warsaw. Much that was in the documents from these meetings – a bold, demanding program that our countries jointly strived to implement – has already been accomplished and achieved. The correctness and realism of our common proposals, along with the strength of the socialist states' common approach, have been confirmed. The support for the proposals among progressive, democratic and peace-loving forces has confirmed that the class-based, principled foreign policy of the socialist countries best serves the interests of our people, the interests of the peoples of Europe and, indeed, the entire world.

The Czechoslovak communists view the achievements of the past decade with due optimism. We have succeeded in reducing the risk of global nuclear war; peace has become more lasting and durable. Political confrontation has been replaced by a process of international détente. The Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems has increasingly asserted itself as the basis for a reform of the entire system of international relations. An important stage in the normalization of relations between the countries of our continent has been concluded. After the successful conference at Helsinki, a victory for common sense and political realism, Europe has entered a fourth decade of peace.

Our socialist countries strove for this goal with all their might, assisted by the revolutionary, democratic and peace-loving forces and, in their own way, by realistically thinking political circles in other countries. We highly value in this regard the key role and contribution of the Soviet Union, the CPSU, its Central Committee and its General Secretary, Comrade Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev personally, in the struggle for détente, global peace and international security.

It was with a great attention and interest that the Czechoslovak delegation heard the speech of the General Secretary of the CC of the CPSU, Comrade Brezhnev, in which he presented a principled, Marxist-Leninist appraisal of the main tendencies in current global developments. We fully agree with his evaluation and the conclusions that he presented on behalf of the Politburo of the CC of the CPSU and the Soviet government.

In evaluating our achievements, we too are convinced that they broadly reflect the changing correlation of forces globally in favor of socialism and peace. As we stated during the 15th Congress of our party, this is the necessary prerequisite for the advancement of our common policy of peace, for the ongoing struggle of the socialist countries and all progressive forces to consolidate peace and to expand cooperation, and for the successful development of anti-imperialist liberation movements. All the international activities of the CPČ and the Czechoslovak state are based consistently upon the principles of proletarian and socialist internationalism and the strengthening of friendship, alliance and cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist commonwealth.

As we could see for ourselves during the recent congresses of the fraternal parties, the further advancement of our peace policy represents a key issue for discussion in terms of our future international tasks. We particularly appreciate the discussions and conclusions of the 25th Congress of the CPSU, which – drawing upon a deep, Marxist-Leninist analysis – outlined a program for the future magnificent development of

communism in the Soviet Union. It correctly characterized the objective trend of deepening cooperation and convergence among the socialist countries and presented a clear perspective for ongoing détente and the advancement of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. We believe that the results of the congress of Soviet communists, which we also perceive as a rich source of inspiration for our own work, represent an important contribution to the advancement of the world socialist system and the international workers' and communist movement.

We are convinced that the present meeting of the Political Consultative Committee and its outcome will also make an important contribution to the advancement of our common international goals. We are still aware, though, that for the sake of the victory of our noble and humane ideals of peace, security, cooperation, and social progress, we will need to wage a resolute struggle against reactionary forces throughout the world, just as we have done in the past.

Comrades,

Despite its best efforts, imperialism cannot conceal the fact that the capitalist world has fallen into a deep political, economic, ideological and moral crisis, which has recently deepened and worsened. Imperialism may be able to slow it down and mitigate its consequences and effects. However, it cannot eliminate its causes, which stem from the very nature of the class conflicts inherent in the capitalist system. The crisis has brought about an intensification of political, economic, and social conflicts both within individual capitalist countries and in their mutual relations.

Lessons derived from the history of class conflict show that the bourgeoisie has always sought a way out of crisis at the workers' expense; it has tried to shift the burden onto the workers' shoulders. In recent history, there have been many examples of the bourgeoisie trying to resolve a crisis through the violent suppression of popular movements at home or through adventures abroad. We cannot underestimate these tendencies even now. This is even more the case because a growing anti-Communist and anti-Soviet hysteria has come to assume an important role in today's more active and aggressive policy of the reactionary forces, including the revival of various fascist, neo-fascist, and revanchist movements and ideas.

Particularly dangerous are the concerted efforts of the reactionary forces in the imperialist states to reverse the recent positive developments in international affairs. In many Western countries, foreign policy issues have also become major issues in domestic political clashes and conflicts, as witnessed especially by the recent election campaigns in

the USA and the FRG, where the reactionary forces have been particularly aggressive in attacking the policy of détente. The reactionary and militarist circles are stepping up pressure in order to unleash another round of the arms race and to target everything that détente has achieved so far, and at the same time, they are doing everything within their power to prevent any further steps down the path of détente.

These forces are using various means to advance their goals – e.g., unilateral interpretations and questions regarding the results of the Helsinki Conference or the Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin, and imperialist interference in the affairs of the Middle East, Lebanon, Southeast Asia, South Africa, Cyprus, etc. At the same time, we have witnessed incessant attempts to meddle – in an unacceptable way – in the internal affairs of the socialist states, along with attempts by imperialism to undermine the unity of the socialist commonwealth through a so-called “differentiated approach,” to revive nationalism, and to conduct ideological subversion. Czechoslovakia, too, has recently been targeted by increasingly hostile actions on the part of these forces, including propaganda and blatant attempts to interfere in our internal affairs.

This campaign bears witness to the ongoing efforts of the bourgeoisie to divert the attention of the masses away from the profound social conflicts in capitalist society and also away from the reactionary forces’ increased aggressiveness in foreign policy. These forces probably realize that the positive steps toward détente have made it increasingly difficult for them to resume a policy of confrontation and conflict and to worsen the situation anew.

We cannot close our eyes to the fact that the onslaught of the reactionary and militaristic forces has led some of the realistic forces and their representatives in the capitalist states to retreat. In the face of attacks, they have vacillated and become inconsistent in implementing the necessary measures to further improve the situation.

We have been monitoring all these negative features in the world political situation very closely, and we realize that we will need to keep them in mind for years to come. We want to have good relations with all countries, including the capitalist ones. We favor the expansion of economic, cultural, and other relations with them. However, our number-one priority is to expand political, economic, ideological, and military cooperation with the socialist countries; we are placing our common interests, the interests of the socialist commonwealth, ahead of all else and want to strengthen our comradely cooperation both within the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance and on a bilateral basis. We favor a common, coordinated course of action in the ideological struggle against all the reactionary forces and their initiatives. In this respect, we are

convinced that the stronger the socialist commonwealth and every socialist country is, the more successful our forward progress will be and the greater the influence that socialism will have on world events.

Dear Comrades!

Our delegation considers it highly topical and significant that the principal objective of the Political Consultative Committee's meeting should be policies to further mobilize our countries and all progressive, anti-imperialist, democratic and peace-loving forces in a struggle to continue the détente process. The draft declaration correctly emphasizes that our countries should address all states and all political and social forces that are sufficiently aware of their responsibility to present and future generations and should ask them to contribute through actual deeds to the struggle for the further advancement of détente and the consolidation of security in Europe.

Therefore, the Czechoslovak delegation fully supports the Political Consultative Committee's draft appeal to all signatories of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, urging them to commit themselves to the non-first-use of nuclear weapons in the event of a conflict. Such an appeal is fully in keeping not only with the spirit and the conclusions of the Helsinki conference but also with our ongoing commitment to strengthen security and to reduce the threat of a nuclear war in Europe and around the world. The Czechoslovak delegation supports Cde. Gierek's previous proposal – namely, to designate the USSR to present the aforementioned appeal on behalf of all the Warsaw Treaty's members to all the states that participated in the Helsinki conference.

Czechoslovakia, in keeping with the conclusions of the Helsinki conference, has been expanding its political, cultural, economic, and other relations with countries possessing a different social system. We are trying to develop them at every level. We are striving to apply the conference's ideals to other parts of the world as well. We are pushing to eliminate all artificial trade restrictions and trade barriers internationally and to liquidate all forms of discrimination, inequality, coercion, and exploitation in world trade relations. However, we cannot say that the West's attitude in implementing the conclusions of the Helsinki conference has been governed by the same spirit as ours; we cannot say that our initiatives have met with a positive response there. We still face efforts to treat us in an unfair and inequitable fashion and to promote various discriminatory measures, such as those that the USA had been broadly applying against Czechoslovakia.

We believe that, sooner or later, equal relations will be established between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community, along with their respective member-states, although the EEC has been engaging in various speculations and procrastinations up to now.

The ČSSR is deeply interested in the European congresses proposed by the Soviet Union on energy, transportation and the environment, which are also mentioned in the draft declaration. We support the broadest possible exchange of cultural assets and the greatest possible international availability of and access to cultural heritage.

The Central Committee of our party and the Czechoslovak government fully concur in the opinion that halting the arms race and implementing effective disarmament measures still rank among today's most urgent tasks. This is why we fully support the disarmament proposals presented by the Soviet Union.

For understandable reasons, the ČSSR also assigns great importance to the Vienna talks for the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. We are greatly interested in tangible and constructive results from these talks.

The elimination of the world's present division into two military blocs would improve the situation in Europe and elsewhere in the world. Our countries are amenable to it. We are willing, as the draft declaration confirms once again, to simultaneously dissolve the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic pact, or – as a first step – to abolish the military components of both organizations. We also fully support the new proposal that their member countries agree to refrain from any actions that would expand the existing military-political organizations or create new ones.

Unfortunately, the imperialist states have rejected the socialist countries' initiatives and continue to step up their own preparations for war. This is why our countries, despite our efforts to replace the existing military-political organizations in Europe with a collective security system, must continue to further strengthen the Warsaw Treaty and take all necessary steps to reinforce our defensive capabilities and to ensure the security of our countries.

It is quite correct, we believe, to stress even more the Warsaw Treaty's role in the development of our political cooperation. This is why we regard the establishment of the Committee of Foreign Ministers and the Joint Secretariat, whose functions and tasks are outlined in the draft resolution, as an important step.



Comrades!

All the successes we have achieved thus far in implementing our common policy for peace would have been unthinkable without our successes in constructing socialism and communism; they have bolstered the strength and authority of all our countries and the socialist commonwealth as a whole. This is the most reliable basis, we believe, for success in our future struggle for peace, security, and social progress. We are therefore determined to further develop and deepen the cooperation among our countries in every respect. Economic cooperation is of particular importance here. This is why we intend to be even more actively involved in the implementation of the program for socialist economic integration and the formulation of the long-term target programs outlined in the resolution adopted at the 30th meeting of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance. The Czechoslovak delegation believes that a higher level of coordination is needed in our countries' foreign economic policies, and this will better serve our common interests in promoting economic cooperation with non-socialist states.

Czechoslovakia's communists highly value the significant role of the international communist and workers' movement in the struggle for peace, security, cooperation, and social progress. Thus, we also positively assess the recent conference of communist and workers' parties in Berlin, whose conclusions will deepen cooperation among the fraternal parties of our continent. It also reflects their efforts to enhance mutual cooperation and solidarity within Europe's revolutionary movement and to increase its influence on democratic and progressive developments in Europe.

Dear Comrades!

This policy is fully supported not only by the communists but also by millions of workers, farmers, the intelligentsia, and others in our country. The Czechoslovak people have expressed their full confidence in it during the recent elections. They showed once again their firm resolution to move forward under the Communist Party's leadership along the path of constructing a developed socialist society in Czechoslovakia, in an unbreakable alliance with the Soviet Union and the other fraternal socialist countries.

On behalf of the CC of our party and the government of the ČSSR, I hereby express complete support for the draft declaration and other documents. We are fully prepared and committed to implementing the conclusions of this meeting of the Political Consultative Committee and to strengthening the unity of the Warsaw Treaty and the socialist commonwealth, and we will do our best to implement successfully the objectives of the common peace policy of the socialist countries.

Thank you for your attention.

*[Translation by Jiří Mareš]*