

Information from the Bulgarian Foreign Minister (Mladenov) to the Politburo of the CC of the BCP regarding the Political Consultative Committee Meeting in Bucharest, 12 July 1989

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

No. 01-05-20/ 12 July 1989

TO THE POLITBURO OF THE CC OF THE BCP

INFORMATION

by Petar Mladenov, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Comrades,

The regular sitting of the Political Consultative Committee of the member countries of the Warsaw Treaty was held on 7th and 8th July in Bucharest [...]

The most pressing problems of socialism and the present day situation were analyzed in a business like, constructive, and on some issues, critical and self-critical spirit; the paths were mapped out for accelerating the positive processes leading to a more stable and democratic world. Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's speech set the tune for this atmosphere.

It was emphasized during the exchange of experience and information about the course of the renewal processes in the allied countries that, despite the diversity in national conditions, practically all socialist countries were struggling to resolve a complex of similar problems. [These problems] had sprung from the necessity to overcome the negative tendencies in [these countries'] internal development and to stimulate and fully utilize the potential of socialism.

The allied countries have indebtedness, especially in the field of new technology [and] in growth rates; the hard currency debts are perceived by the West as the "sunset of socialism." With regards to [these facts], the necessity of proving the advantages of the new order through both strong arguments and real actions was emphasized. The further influence of the socialist countries on positive changes in the world will depend to a crucial degree on the ability of socialism to renew itself [...]

In the future, the socialist states' political philosophy of international relations should be a combination of active struggle for transition toward a new international order and a reliable defense of our countries.

In the process of exchanging opinions on the cardinal problems of disarmament, the leaders of the allied countries stressed the importance of signing a Soviet-American agreement on a 50% reduction in both countries' strategic offensive weapons, providing a strict adherence to the 1972 agreement on anti-missile defense. The universal and complete ban on chemical arms and the liquidation of [chemical arms] stockpiles continue to be issues on the agenda of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact.

The meeting paid special attention to the process of building a "common European home." It analyzed the results of the recently held forums within the framework of the Helsinki process. The emphasis was placed on the interests and values common for the European peoples, on the need for equal dialogue and an enhancement of the contacts in various areas. The unity of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals is possible and necessary in the conditions of preserving each country's identity and its social, economic and cultural diversity, which should be viewed as a treasure of European civilization. The meeting confirmed that every attempt to destabilize the situation in any socialist country would have an impact on the balance in Europe, and on the confidence building process between the two halves of the continent. Such an attempt would destroy what has been already achieved.

The Soviet leader informed the meeting about new developments in the relations and policies of the USSR towards the Federal Republic of Germany and France. [...]

Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed the readiness of the USSR to coordinate the size of the Soviet military contingents and the order of their withdrawal from Eastern Europe with the leadership of the allied countries. The combination of political, military and geographical factors should be taken into consideration during the discussion of [the above-mentioned] possibility because it will influence the European situation after the withdrawal has been implemented. It was emphasized that the U.S. proposal for equal ceilings on Soviet and American military contingents in Eastern Europe and Western Europe, respectively, should be considered in a broader context. An optimal position should be prepared for counting the military contingents of the other NATO countries in the Federal Republic of Germany as well.

The process of conventional military disarmament should be started in the shortest possible time. The Soviet leadership considers that real steps in this respect should be made around 1992-1993. At that time the question about NATO modernization is going to be worked out, a United Europe will be created, and new elections for the American presidency are going to be held.

The importance of the allied [Warsaw Treaty] countries' efforts and pragmatic steps in realizing regional initiatives was stressed unanimously [at the meeting]. At the same time, comrade Gorbachev criticized the passivity of the Warsaw Treaty countries in realizing a number of collective and individual proposals. There is a compelling necessity to unite our initiatives in order to strengthen the purposefulness and efficiency of the coordinated activities in the area of disarmament.

The need for paying more attention to the questions in the "second basket" of the pan-European process was stressed [at the meeting]. The time has come for developing joint programs with Western Europe in areas such as transport, environment, technology, nuclear power safety, and so on. This cooperation should be pursued based on the mutual respect of interests, the strict observation of the principles of international behavior. There was a common view that the process of integration in the West and in the East should not lead to a perpetuation of the division on the continent. During an analysis of West European integration, it

was determined that the allied countries should: first, deride all the benefits from their cooperation with the European Economic Community including also [cooperation between the EEC and] the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and secondly, they should prepare themselves for the emergence of the united West European market.

This means that there is a need for stimulating the processes of integration between the brotherly countries in the economic area, and the development of elements of a united socialist market. Simultaneously, the allied countries should strengthen their relations in the areas of culture and science, between the highest representatives of the organs of power, between public organizations, youth unions, and so on.

The leaders of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact analyzed the achievements and the problems in the area of human rights and humanitarian cooperation. It was stressed that the most recent pan-European forums have put forward the idea of "pan-European legal space" based on a commonwealth of law-abiding states. As a whole, however, the differences in the positions of the allied countries became most obvious on this question, in particular those of the People's Republic of Hungary, the Socialist Republic of Romania and the German Democratic Republic.

During the discussion of the Soviet proposal for convening a second Helsinki (1975) type meeting it was stressed that its realization could culminate in the first stage of the Vienna negotiations. In case the negotiations are prolonged, the convening of such a meeting at the beginning of 1992 will provide [us] with the opportunity to make the relevant conclusions on all "baskets" of the Helsinki process and to speed up the process [of building] a more secure Europe.

In his statement, the leader of the Bulgarian delegation Todor Zhivkov laid out the arguments for the strategic need to realize the new historic content of world development and to realize the opportunities, which appear as a result of the unavoidable effect of qualitatively new positive tendencies that reflect objective developments.

The theoretical conclusion was drawn that the new line of "opening" the U.S. and the West toward the socialist countries is an expression of the objective need of new global economic redistribution, which will allow the developed capitalist countries to solve their own socioeconomic problems. Therefore, it is possible to develop sufficiently wide cooperation between the East and the West without concessions on our part, which could lead to a "step-by-step transformation" of socialism.

The questions regarding the necessity of strengthening the positions of socialism occupied an important place in [Todor Zhivkov's] speech. He stressed the international responsibility of our parties and states to combine the renewal of socialism with the upholding of its fundamental principles and ideals. He warned about the danger of destabilization and disintegration of some of our countries as units of the Warsaw Treaty and the socialist community; this requires joint political decisions. Comrade Todor Zhivkov convincingly spoke in support of the necessity to renew the [allied countries'] economic and political cooperation within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Treaty.

[Todor Zhivkov] set forth the position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on the question of Turkey's destructive actions on the Balkans and [its] unprecedented anti-Bulgarian campaign, which is a part of

broader plans aimed against socialism as a governing system. Simultaneously, [he] affirmed our readiness for a dialogue with Turkey and for developing positive tendencies on the Balkans.

In the coordination of the final documents, difficulties were caused by: the exaggerated pretensions of the Hungarian People's Republic with regard to human rights and the minorities question; the peculiar positions of the representative of the Socialist Republic of Romania on a number of important issues concerning international relations and reconstruction in the socialist countries; and the intensifying contradictions between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Socialist Republic of Romania which already encompass opinions on a broad set of questions and assume differences in principles. Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu emphasized in his speech the negative factors in international life, expressed doubt in the concept of "pan-European home" and ridiculed the significance of the renewal processes.

Some changes in the Socialist Republic of Romania's position provoked definite interest regarding the question of the Warsaw Treaty's role in the present situation, and the unity and cooperation of the allied socialist countries. Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu opposed in his speech the one-side disbanding of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and pointed out that our countries would have to continue to cooperate [in various areas], including the military field, even after the removal of all European military alliances. [He] underlined the need to mutually analyze the problems of socialist construction and to [undertake] joint measures for overcoming the crisis.

In connection with this, comrade Ceaușescu suggested that a meeting be held between the Secretaries General and the First Secretaries of the parties, or between the party and state heads of the allied countries, no later than October this year. [The goals of this meeting should be] to make a mutual analysis of the problems of socioeconomic development and socialism construction and to work out a realistic program for joint measures. [Ceaușescu] demonstrated his efforts to achieve a greater flexibility on the questions of perfecting the mechanisms of cooperation in the framework of the Warsaw Pact. [He] invited [us] to participate in the 14th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party in October this year, at the highest level.

In this context should also be viewed the expressed opinion of Nicolae Ceaușescu about the necessity of discussing the question of how to overcome the present problems outlined in comrade Todor Zhivkov's speech as well as for ensuring further cooperation on the Balkans. These questions should be considered at least among the Balkan socialist countries and possibly with the participation of other socialist countries. [...]

In general, the meeting proceeded in an open, friendly and constructive spirit.

During the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, a separate meeting between the delegation leaders took place (an additional report was prepared) as well as two meetings of the ministers of foreign affairs.

The first joint meeting of the Committee of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Committee of the Ministers of Defense took place. It discussed the question of perfecting the mechanisms of cooperation between the allied countries.

[Source: Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, Opus 46-10, a.e. 29. Translation by Simona Assenova]