

Conversation between a Bulgarian (Nastev) and Hungarian diplomat (Szábó) on the Possibility of the Creation of a New East European Alliance, 12 April 1991

MEMORANDUM

By Atanas Nastev, Head of "General International Affairs" Department

Re: Meeting with István Szábó, Minister Plenipotentiary at Hungarian Embassy in Sofia

On 12 April this year, I received Mr. Szábó at his request. He informed me that, during his visit to Warsaw, the Romanian Prime Minister, Petre Roman, had stated that Romania supported the Soviet and Bulgarian idea for the creation of a new East European military-political union in place of the Warsaw Treaty, in order to guarantee their collective national security.

Szábó asked me whether this information was true and whether we supported the idea. I categorically answered that I had not heard of it at all and had never heard any Bulgarian politician of any level hinting at the idea of creating a new military-political East European union. I added as well that I had no information that such an idea had come out of the USSR.

I underlined that in Europe the issue of primary importance for Bulgarian foreign policy remains the development of Bulgaria's relations with the East European countries.

This development should be based on new international legal and political foundations, of which the main element should be a new bilateral treaty. As a transitional arrangement here, we started signing bilateral political declarations, similar to those with ČSFR and Hungary.

This is our point of view as well with respect to the development of our bilateral relations with other neighboring countries, and we are actively working in this direction.

I told Szábó what has been done and what is going to be done about Bulgaria joining NATO and the WEU.

In my turn I asked what the Hungarian attitude was toward the Romanian project—as stated in the Romanian Government Memorandum of 19 February 1991 and known as the "Romanian Danubian Initiative"—for comprehensive cooperation among Danube countries.

Szábó answered that this was not an appropriate and useful initiative because there was no chance that Germany, Austria and even Yugoslavia would be engaged with it. Moreover, too many sub-regional initiatives would not be in unison with the different countries' aspirations to create common European security and cooperation structures.

12 April 1991, Sofia

[Source: Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, Opus 48-10, a.e. 38, p. 33-34. Translation by Vania Petkova]