

**Top Secret!**  
**Prepared in 2 copies**

**Minutes of the Berlin Conference (26-27 February 1968) of the Deputy Foreign  
Ministers, Convened to Prepare the Session of the Warsaw Treaty's  
Political Consultative Committee**

**1st  
Plenary Session  
(26 February, 4:00 pm)**

Comrade Kohrt, the first deputy foreign minister of the GDR, greets the delegates and presents his proposals:

- language of conference: Russian
- each delegation prepares its own minutes
- task: the preparation of the Political Consultative Committee's Sophia meeting
- agenda: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty;  
Assessment of the Vietnamese situation;  
Military issues to be discussed by the deputy defense ministers in  
Prague

- Before starting on the agenda, the representative of the Soviet Union will take the floor, reporting on the work of the Eighteen-nation Committee of Disarmament.

- Each session will be chaired by the head of a different delegation on rotational basis, according to the Russian alphabet; he proposes Comrade Popov to take the chair first.

Comrade Popov, deputy foreign minister of Bulgaria:

- He is honored; he expresses joy over the fact that the next meeting of the Political Consultative Committee will be held in Sophia.
- He asks Comrade Kusnetzov to start his presentation.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- He underlines the importance of having this consultation, and also of holding consultations in general.
- We have been concerned with the question of the Non-Proliferation Treaty for a long time; in future, this problem should be approached so as to guarantee that every socialist country get some benefit.
- The FRG, Japan, Italy and the Union of South Africa are among the countries, which are resolved on acquiring nuclear weapons. Under these circumstances, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is in the socialist countries' interest.
- The text of the Treaty signed on 18 January 1968 was primarily accomplished as a result of the socialist countries' struggle (the 1965 Warsaw session and the 1966 Bucharest session of the Political Consultative Committee, the Karlovy Vary conference).
- Articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty required lengthy negotiations and elicited heated debates. These articles exclude the possibility of the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. They are in line with resolution of the 20th General Assembly of the UN, which was designed to eliminate the possibility of passing on nuclear weapons in any form, even in the form of military

alliances.

- At Romanian request, a passage was added to the text to allow research and development for peaceful purposes.
- Another paragraph was added to enable all the non-nuclear countries to share in the scientific dividends of the nuclear experiments at a low cost and without any discrimination. However, the concession of peaceful application should not be used as a cover for proliferation.
- Instead of being a single leap, the nuclear nonproliferation treaty is one of a series of steps or stages towards nuclear disarmament. The text is suitable to make that first step.
- The text makes it possible to set up nuclear-free zones and to sign further treaties in this topic.
- In five years' time there will be a conference to monitor compliance with the treaty.
- The guarantees given to non-nuclear states: in 1966 the Soviet Union announced that it was willing to provide guarantees for those the non-nuclear states. At that time, the USA and the other western powers were unwilling to do the same. The socialist countries and the Soviet Union are now working on the question of guarantees, but this should be achieved without jeopardizing the implementation of the treaty. The Eighteen-nation Conference, along with the permanent members of the Security Council, should adopt a position, which provides this guarantee and also warrants the implementation of the treaty.
- The work of preparation in connection with the treaty has entered into its final stage: the FRG (Kiesinger, Strauss) works against it. Time is of the essence: if we play for time, the FRG may be able to undermine the treaty. [Comrade Kusnetzov] is hopeful that the socialist countries will stand united in order to push through the treaty.

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Comrade Macovescu, deputy foreign minister of Romania:

- In his opinion, the conference of deputy foreign ministers has a specific goal: to exchange views on the Political Consultative Committee's session and a few details in connection with.
- It was Romania who proposed to review the text of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and to discuss ways of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in general.
- The prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons is an important question with serious implication both for the present and for the future.
- For this reason, the discussion of this topic requires a good atmosphere and the highest level of representation, i.e. the Political Consultative Committee.
- As is well known, they already suggested the convocation of the Political Consultative Committee back in February 1967, and again in May 1967.
- We are happy to see that, as a result of our proposal, this important issue, along other questions, will be discussed in Sophia on 6 May 1968.
- The Romanian delegation put forward its position on numerous occasions in Geneva.
- He would like to draw attention to the work of the socialist countries, who were able to improve on the text of the Treaty. One notable achievement was that the US agreed to make concessions in a number of issues and accept our

proposals.

- Their party and government are convinced that further improvements could be achieved in accordance with the socialist countries' interests.
- As far as the Romania side is concerned, they considered further improvements and submitted their proposed modifications for debate. They intend to present these modifications to the Eighteen-nation Committee of Disarmament in the next few days.
- The Eighteen-nation Committee of Disarmament has it until 15 March to conclude its work.
- If the Committee works normally, it will have enough time to consider their modifications.
- If the Committee does not work normally until 15 March they will be forced to come forward with their modifications again later.
- They recommend that the Political Consultative Committee hold a broad and thorough debate so that they can improve on the text.
- Our task is to make sure that the Political Consultative Committee debates the issue properly.
- As to the rest of the proposed issues, the Romanian delegation supports them in principle. If he understood it correctly, the second item on the agenda was the assessment of the Vietnamese situation. If so, then the Vietnamese comrades should be notified. The Bulgarian comrades should undertake this task.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- Question: He would like to know the essence of the Romanian comrades' proposal, and also to learn about their motives and justification, so as to be able to report it clearly to our parties and governments.

Comrade Macovescu, Romania's deputy foreign minister:

- They have handed over their proposed modifications; they hope that we have received them.
- They hope that their proposals will be examined thoroughly and concretely, under better conditions.
- He asks whether he should give a summary of the text.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- He would like to see the text.

Comrade Macovescu, Romania's deputy foreign minister:

- He describes the modifications proposed by Romania. He accentuates that the question of control is not covered here; they would come back to that later.

Comrade Naszkowski, the deputy foreign minister of Poland:

- He would like to say something regarding the work method. Comrade Macovescu has said that the substantial debate should be held in the Political Consultative Committee. This does not mean that we cannot have a work discussion at our level.
- The questions of the agenda and the convocation of the conference have been decided; the task of this meeting is to exchange view on the first item of the agenda, all the more so since we have the Romanian proposals in front of us.
- He seconds Comrade Kusnetzov's proposal, which urges Comrade Macovescu to have a debate on the proposed modifications.
- If I understood correctly, Comrade Macovescu has said that the Romanian side is about to submit its proposed modifications to the Eighteen-nation

Committee. He would like to know whether they want to submit the proposal before the Political Consultative Committee's session, or perhaps pending on it, or independent of it.

Comrade Pudlak, first deputy foreign minister of Czechoslovakia:

- He hopes that a discussion on substantial matters will start, instead of spending the entire time on procedural matters.
- He is in favor of a statement on Vietnam.
- The military issues should be debated by the deputy defense ministers in Prague this week.
- He wants to make it clear that he regards general and complete disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, as a strategic objective. Until this will be within reach, they ascribe utmost significance to partial measures, e.g. the Nonproliferation Treaty. If this initiative falls through, a large number of countries may be able to obtain nuclear weapons within a short period, including the FRG. To prevent the FRG from obtaining nuclear weapons is in the interest of all of us, and it is also in the interest of European security.
- In its present form, the text meets the original requirements. The Nonproliferation Treaty should not be expected to provide all the answers to the entire problem of disarmament. It makes no sense to link it to other issues, because in that way we shall be unable to make progress and shall not be able to accomplish our goals. We are convinced that the Treaty serves the interests of all of us.
- On the question of guarantees: they press this issue mainly in the "Third World" countries.
- For them, and for the socialist countries, the decisive guarantee lies in the nuclear power of the Soviet Union!
- The Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia approves the text and also approves the proposed system of monitoring.
- Naturally, they assume that the non-nuclear states will be monitored.
- He stresses what importance the Treaty would mean, if it came into effect. Since it has a chance to go through now, it would be a shame to miss this chance. The delaying tactics would work for the aggressive powers.
- Since the Bucharest declaration [of July 1966], there have been favorable developments on the international scene from the viewpoint of the socialist countries. There is, however, one unfavorable development: the growing danger of neo-Nazism. They propose that the Political Consultative Committee have a debate on this either at this session, or in the near future.

## **2nd Plenary Session (27 February, 11:45 am)**

Chair: Comrade Erdélyi, [Hungarian] deputy foreign minister

Comrade Naszkowski, deputy foreign minister of Poland:

- The Polish side supports the convening of the Political Consultative Committee.
- He agrees with the Romanian comrade's proposal, despite the fact that the Polish side has already approved the draft proposal submitted to the Eightennation Committee.

- He also supports the other two items of the agenda.
- The Polish side takes a positive view of the draft treaty, seeing it as a step towards disarmament.
- The treaty is important, because it would thwart the FRG's efforts.
- The draft submitted in January is better than the previous ones: it incorporates a number of proposed modifications, and it has provisions for monitoring compliance. Therefore, they are completely satisfied with the text.
- International affairs abound in incidents and aggressive actions, which tend to escalate the arms race.
- In this situation, the FRG resorts to delaying tactics. The observer of the FRG circulates various materials containing numerous modifications in Geneva.
- Under these circumstances, a number of non-aligned countries, including India, declare for the Treaty. Brazil is the only country, which stands by its earlier modifications.
- They have studied the Romanian proposals carefully. They fear that the Romanian proposals slow down the process, postponing the signing of the Treaty.
- Specifically: The Romanian proposals are unreasonable. The demands, which can be described as extreme, may put off the signing of the Treaty.
- The Romanian proposal in connection with the guarantees cannot be accommodated in the text. In the matter of the guarantees, the two deputy chairs negotiate a separate treaty. The issue of the guarantees concerns the non-aligned countries, and they have nothing against dealing with the problem of guarantees in a separate treaty. According to the Romanian proposal, the guarantees would also apply to those non-nuclear countries, which have nuclear weapons deployed on their territory, e.g. the FRG. (This is clearly not in our interest: the Soviet Union cannot give guarantees to the FRG.)
- The Romanian modification about holding conferences in every five years concurs with the Italian, Swedish, etc., demands. This would weaken the power of the Treaty.
- As to the last proposal about withdrawing from the Treaty, this would weaken the scope and effect of the Treaty, making a concession to resignation. Our view is that withdrawal should not be made easy.
- In our opinion, the draft treaty is satisfactory. Time is a serious consideration, and it is far from certain that the resolute efforts to improve on the text, and the determination to push through certain modifications, are worthwhile, as the entire treaty may fall through in consequence. The current affairs in international politics, along with the struggle for disarmament, weigh in favor of approving the Treaty.

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Comrade Popov, deputy foreign minister of Bulgaria:

- The Bulgarian delegation agrees with the Soviet assessment.
- They are satisfied with the draft Treaty, too, and when it comes to that, they will sign it.
- The text corresponds with the interests of peace, and is suitable to pave the way towards disarmament.
- It is imperative that we support the Soviet plan. There are countries, which want to delay the signing of the Treaty (Japan, FRG, Brazil).

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- Those who give voice to various reservations and float modifications are in fact the enemies of the Treaty.
  - Any proposed modification to the Soviet draft may postpone or undermine the Treaty.
  - The concrete analysis of the concrete situation demands that we stop wasting time: we must approve and support the Treaty.
  - The present time is not favorable for further progress in disarmament; we should do what we can; we must not disarm unilaterally.
  - The proposals about the periodical revision of the Treaty would weaken and undermine the Treaty.
  - Withdrawal, monitoring: good as it is, there is no need for modifications.
  - The Soviet draft meets the expectations of the UN, the nuclear powers and the non-nuclear states alike. Bulgaria declares for the Treaty.
- Comrade Kohrt, first deputy foreign minister of the GDR:
- Fully supports the Soviet draft. Their position is that the sooner they approve and sign the Treaty, the better.
  - The “great coalition” [in the FRG] threatens peace and security, as seen from the following:
    - = the attempts to change the status quo;
    - = the refusal to recognize the borders;
    - = the rejection of direct talks with the GDR;
    - = they are unwilling to sign an agreement with the GDR about the renouncement of the use of force;
    - = from the start, they have refused to recognize the validity of the Munich Treaty.
  - They try to prop up their expansive foreign policies with legal justifications. Their aggressive foreign policy is manifested even in their internal affairs: they are determined to push their “emergency laws” through Parliament even before the summer. The determination to obtain nuclear weapons is part and parcel of their politics.
  - The current situation in international affairs, and the efforts of the FRG, urges us to approve the text of the Treaty. It would be inappropriate, if the socialist countries delayed the signing of the Treaty with their modifications and proposals.
  - The FRG want to leave the door open for obtaining nuclear weapons in the future. Bonn takes advantage of the delaying tactics, as openly admitted by Kiesinger and other leaders of the FRG. A few days ago the Federal Government announced that they would not approve and would not sign the Treaty in its present form. Its position put the Bonn Government at loggerheads with its own allies.
  - Ultimately, however, the FRG will have no alternative but to sign the Treaty, especially if we, the socialist countries, stand united and refrain from delaying.
  - The presidential election in the US may worsen the chances of signing the Treaty, unless we wrap it up before.
  - We have a satisfactory text that contains provisions for monitoring; we must approve it.
  - It would be wrong to link the Treaty to the complex problem of disarmament,

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because that would probably postpone progress in areas where partial results could be achieved.

- If he understood it correctly, the Romanian delegate yesterday announced that Romania would submit its modifications in Geneva shortly. We must clear up the issue of timing here: would that be before the Political Consultative Committee's session? We received the Romanian comrade's proposal in writing only in February this year; we must know it for sure whether they would make that decision pending on the Political Consultative Committee's session, or they would go ahead independently and submit the proposal to Geneva no matter what.

- The West German nuclear power plants produce substantial quantities of weapons-grade plutonium. They have a large number of scientists and engineers working in the fields of nuclear science and technology. The FRG's nuclear research and development budget forecasted for the next ten years is somewhere around \$1,700 million. The FRG possesses the industrial potential necessary to manufacture nuclear weapons independently.

- The relevant paragraph of the Bucharest declaration is more applicable today than it was at the time of issuing it. Signing the Treaty is not only a necessity: now it has also become a possibility.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- They agree with those who support the approval and the signing of the Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity, because that would mean a step towards peace and disarmament. The FRG is acutely aware of this and, therefore, firmly opposes it. The various modifications and proposals serve the purpose of delaying.

- Such is the present climate that the US is now willing to sign the Treaty for its own motives. The Treaty is in fact a compromise, but it is a compromise that serves our interests. Every bilateral and multilateral agreement is by necessity a compromise. This also applies to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. In that case, too, there were suggestions that it should be linked to the issue of disarmament, etc, but then it would not be a treaty, which in final analysis serves our interests. We should conclude this treaty without improvements, modifications, brakes, and most importantly, a green light should be given to the treaty.

- About the Romanian proposal: At the present time it is unrealistic to expect complete nuclear disarmament to be achieved by this Treaty, or complete and general disarmament for that matter. This is merely a step, which may lead to further steps.

- "The nuclear powers pledge not to employ nuclear weapons..." The Soviet Union accepts the Romanian modifications with the additional words that "against countries that have no nuclear weapons deployed on their territory." However, the West is unwilling to accept that. According to the Romanian formula, the Soviet Union should give guarantees to countries, which have American nuclear weapons deployed on their territories, i.e. the FRG. The Romanian formula would allow the deployment of nuclear weapons in countries, where there are still no such weapons.

- The question of guarantees is important: there are ongoing negotiations at the moment about the possibility of providing guarantees outside the treaty, in a

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separate statement or in some other form.

- About the withdrawal: throwing off the shackles of the treaty should not be made easy. The current phrasing has the power to restrain, and that is why it must be kept.
  - About holding conferences every five years: this weakens the treaty, whether we like it or not! They are for the present text.
  - The present wording of the treaty is the result of hard work; now the most important task is to approve it without delay. Naturally, we shall be facing a tough debate at the 22nd General Assembly; we shall have to take on the opponents of the Treaty there, too.
- Comrade Erdélyi, [Hungarian] deputy foreign minister:
- The Hungarian side fully agrees with the Soviet draft.
  - We agree with the views put forward by the Soviet, Czechoslovak, Bulgarian, Polish and East-German delegations.
  - Several of the Romanian comrade's earlier proposals have already been accepted. When they submitted their current proposals, they failed to take the realities sufficiently into account. It would be welcome, if they changed their earlier position and withdrew their proposed modifications as a result of the present debate.
  - The next ten years may bring further advances for socialism worldwide; the US would like to halt this process. Under these circumstances, it is unrealistic to have the kind of expectations that the Romanian comrade's proposals contain. It would be unwise for us to miss this chance and to put off everything that we could achieve by signing the Treaty.
  - Whether one decides for or against signing the Treaty, the fact remains that there are nuclear powers and there are non-nuclear powers. By the same token, the proliferation of nuclear powers by no means would improve the chances of peace and security. – Therefore, signing the Treaty is in our interest, no matter what. In any case, we [Hungarians] are bound by the peace treaty [of 1947] not to acquire nuclear weapons.
  - Would the US provide us with the guarantee? Obviously not!
  - We completely agree that this is not the ideal draft. But a live dog is better than a dead lion!
  - Holding a conference every five years would weaken the Treaty.
  - The Romanian proposal about withdrawal from the Treaty would greatly reduce its powers to exert moral pressure.

Comrade Macovescu, deputy foreign minister of Romania:

- He listened attentively to what the other deputy foreign ministers had to say. He listened to the arguments, but they, too, were able to find counter-arguments both for and against the things that have been said here. He would not like to continue the debate here. The full debate of the issue should take place at the Sophia session of the Political Consultative Committee. There the problem will be discussed in its full complexity, rather than by merely focusing on the Romanian proposals.
- A couple of brief comments: They completely agree about the importance of the Treaty, and they fully understand that by signing it, the danger of nuclear war would be lessened by a certain amount. Being aware of the importance to the Treaty, their Party and Government want an agreement that is acceptable in

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the broadest possible circle, one that offers guarantees and serves the interests of security.

- Although they agree that the time factor is important, they do not accept that this is the last moment to sign the Treaty, and that the opportunity would be lost forever in the future.

- They are convinced that much improvement could be achieved within the timeframe still available.

- From the very beginning, there were many voices saying that we would not be able to improve much on the Treaty. And then it turned out that we could produce a text that was much better than the earlier one. It has also been claimed here that we have reached the time limit. Our view is that there is still time to act in the area of improvements. The suggestion that the US would not be willing to agree to further modifications is not correct, and we had had that suggestion earlier. There has been much talk here about the opponents, the FRG, and the dangers of revanchism and neo-Nazism. We must point out that we are signing this treaty primarily with the imperialist nuclear powers. For this reason, the question of guarantees is a very important one! We must have guarantees that serve the security and sovereignty of the socialist countries.

- This treaty will be the first major treaty since the end of the Second World War; we must make sure that this will be a treaty we have no misgivings about, because it will be in line with our principles.

- To answer the question concerning the date when Romania wants to submit its proposed modifications in Geneva, I must point out that it is the sovereign right of every country to choose the appropriate time for submitting its proposals. The Romanian side asks Comrade Kusnetzov to ensure that work progresses normally in the Disarmament Committee, and then Romania won't submit its proposals before March 10, otherwise it will!

- They would like to know in advance how the Vietnamese question will be approached at the Political Consultative Committee's session.

- About publication: The Bulgarian comrades should specify when and where the Political Consultative Committee will hold its next session.

Comrade Erdélyi, [Hungarian] deputy foreign minister:

- He reads out the statement about the Berlin conference.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- He proposes an embargo until 8:00 pm.

Comrade Macovescu, deputy foreign minister of Romania:

- In his recollection, there has never been a time that a communiqué was published about a conference of deputy ministers. He must consult with his superiors.

Comrade Popov, deputy foreign minister of Bulgaria:

- Is there going to be a debate on the Vietnamese situation now?

Comrade Erdélyi, [Hungarian] deputy foreign minister:

- Our leaders will have a short consultation in Sophia and there would be a statement about the Vietnamese situation.

- The Bulgarian comrades could undertake the task of drafting the statement, assisted by the Polish and the Soviet comrades.

Comrade Popov, deputy foreign minister of Bulgaria:

- He agrees with Comrade Erdélyi.

- There should be a team for wording the draft.
- They will send the draft statement by the 3rd.
- The experts could meet in the morning on the 5th.
- There will be three items on the agenda:
  - 1/ Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty;
  - 2/ the Vietnamese situation;
  - 3/ Questions relating to military organization;
  - 4/ /Neo-Nazism?/

Comrade Erdélyi, [Hungarian] deputy foreign minister:

- Comrade Macovescu suggested that there be a statement about the Political Consultative Committee's session. There could be a statement on the 3rd, on Sunday, about the Political Consultative Committee's holding a conference on the 6th.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- We should not make this decision. Let the Bulgarian comrades consult in this matter. He would not like to commit himself to an answer.

Comrade Macovescu, deputy foreign minister of Romania:

- The Bulgarian comrades should mediate; then, they could draft the text and specify the timing of the publication.

Comrade Kusnetzov, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union:

- He agrees that no date should be specified just as yet.

Comrade Pudlák, first deputy foreign minister of Czechoslovakia:

- They propose to add the current issues of European security, with a special emphasis on the dangers of neo-Nazism, to the agenda.

Comrade Erdélyi, [Hungarian] deputy foreign minister:

- The other delegations will lay the Czechoslovak comrades' proposal before the leaders of their parties and governments.

Comrade Erdélyi closes the meeting.

The minutes were compiled by László Váczi.

*[Translated by Ervin Dunay, Central European University]*

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