
FOREIGN MINISTRY
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Report
To the Political Committee of the HSWP CC and the Government
On the 26-27 January Meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Countries' Deputy Foreign ministers in
Sofia

Following the resolution passed at the Prague meeting of the Warsaw Treaty countries' foreign ministers and on the initiative of the Foreign Ministry of the Soviet Union, the deputy foreign ministers of the socialist countries signatory to the Budapest Call met in Sophia on 26-27 January 1970.

The following persons took part in the meeting: Radenko Grigorov , Bulgarian People's Republic – Milan Klusak, the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia – Josef Winiewicz, Polish People's Republic – Frigyes Puja, Hungarian People's Republic – Oscar Fischer, German Democratic Republic – Nicolae Ecobescu, the Socialist Republic of Romania – and Leonid Ilyichov, the deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union.

The exchange of information and opinion related to the preparations of the European security conference was the only item on the meeting's agenda. On the appeal of the Soviet comrades, the Hungarian delegation withdrew from adding to the agenda our party's proposal regarding the establishment of the Warsaw Treaty's foreign affairs council or committee.

The deputy foreign ministers held three meetings. At the first two sessions the delegations expounded their respective governments' views on the general aspects of the preparations for the security conference; they gave information about the consultations with representatives of the western powers; and made proposals for improving the efficiency of the work of preparation. At the third session the various proposals were discussed.

I.

Comrade Ilyich made the first speech. His report can be summed up as follows:

With the exception of Portugal, the Soviet Union consulted with every European country on the preparations of the European security conference. On the basis of these consultations the Soviet government concluded that the grounds had been well-prepared for the socialist countries' proposal and the conditions to convene the security conference were ripe, offering a good chance of success regardless of the obvious difficulties.

After handing out the documents produced at the Prague meeting of the deputy foreign ministers, and following the extensive consultations, the socialist countries have come to the concrete tasks regarding both the preparations of the conference and the discussions of practical issues. They have shown that their idea to call together this conference did not result from propagandistic motifs.

In relation to the non-socialist states of Europe, two clear political directions have emerged:

1) Several countries have shown an enduring and positive interest in the conference of European security. Some of them have actively campaigned for the conference, submitting constructive proposals in the aid of preparations. These countries include the neutral states of Europe and the majority of the smaller NATO members, as well as Spain and France.

The Soviet Union pays close attention to France's attitude. Its conduct so far has been judged positive for the following reasons:

- it has essentially accepted the Prague agenda;
- one part of its proposed additions to the agenda is acceptable;

- it has rejected the Federal Republic of Germany's demand to set the summoning of the European security conference condition to the progress made in the negotiations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the various socialist countries: in other words, it denounces the West-German government's pretensions to acting as a ruling judge in European matters.
- on the other hand, it is true that France wants to make certain progress at the meeting of the Four Powers in connection with Berlin before convening the European security conference.
2) On the other side, the opponents of the conference have come to form a powerful alliance. The governments of the United States, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy have made steps, official and unofficial alike, to postpone or possibly stop the security conference.

Special attention must be given to the activities of the United States, whose government is bent on preventing the capitalist and the socialist countries from reaching a compromise in the conference's contested issues. To attain this goal, the government of the United States has not hesitated to resort to fraud and disinformation.

In the Soviets' view, France's fear that the security conference might turn into a pact between the two military blocs over the heads of the European states can also be traced back to the Americans' sabotage. The analysis of the NATO's ministerial council in December indicates that the United States seems to have managed to get its own way and it has succeeded in putting the problems of the security conference "military bloc" footing. The various proposals incorporated in the statement made by the NATO's ministerial council also aim to block the security conference. These proposals include the problems of balanced regional disarmament; the favorable reception of the Federal Republic of Germany's "eastern politics, and the assertion of the results; and the addition of the question of Berlin to the agenda.

With proposals such as these, the leading NATO powers intend to keep the idea of the security conference confined to the preparatory phase indefinitely. The problems mentioned in the proposals are not yet ripe for a resolution; in the topic of balanced regional disarmament, for example, there are fundamental differences even among the NATO powers. France, for example, has no wish to discuss the topic at the European security conference, while the debate of the topic would keep the neutral countries away from the European security conference.

In fact, the proposals mentioned above do not really belong to the competence of the European security conference. By proposing them, and by demanding that they be added to the agenda, they in fact set preconditions in the way of convening the conference. For these reasons, the proposals are unacceptable and we must oppose the setting of preconditions.

The analysis of the NATO session has also revealed that the efforts by the United States, Great Britain and other forces opposing the European security conference were unable to put a hold on the preparations of the conference.

The obscure nature of the NATO documents itself suggests that the voices of the NATO members agreeing to the idea of the conference could not be stifled. In the NATO statement, they had to acknowledge the usefulness of the idea of European security conference; the secretariat was given further tasks connected to the European security conference: among the un-official proposed items of the agenda were a number of issues (for example, the development of cultural and scientific cooperation, the problems related to the improvement of human environment), which could be incorporated in the agenda of the conference; the fact that the documents of the NATO session did not contain angry attacks on the German Democratic Republic seems to suggest that in principle they agreed to the participation of the latter.

These positive factors should urge the socialist countries to make an ardent effort in the interest of convening the European security conference, lending support and encouragement to the advocates of the idea. We must put the United States on the spot so as to feel obliged to agree

to the convoking of the conference. The United States itself took this possibility into account. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that it first secured for itself the right to take part, and began to sabotage the work afterwards.

II.

All the deputy foreign ministers basically accepted the Soviet delegation's analysis, with their respective speeches revealing no substantial difference. The head of the Romanian delegation, however, offered no concrete analysis or information, and his speech contained only vague generalizations.

Some of the speakers placed emphasis on other issues, too. Comrade Fischer, the deputy foreign minister of the German Democratic Republic, gave a detailed analysis of the current policies of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany. He pointed out that Bonn's claim to being the exclusive representative of the entire German nation questioned the equal status of the German Democratic Republic at the conference, thus putting the meeting's fate in jeopardy. Comrade Winiewicz mentioned the upcoming exchange of views between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Polish People's Republic on the question of the Oder-Neisse line. He pointed out that although this topic formed no subject of the present conference, it had great significance insofar as it could demonstrate what stage the all-important factor of European security, the recognizability of the post-war borders, stood at the moment. Although they assigned great importance to these negotiations, the Polish comrades were aware that Poland's security began at the Elbe.

III.

On the subject of the tasks related to the security conference, several observations and proposals were voiced.

A) There was unanimous agreement on the following:

- 1) By calling for a conference on European security and submitting a proposal for its agenda, the socialist countries seized the political initiative in this important field. The initiative must be kept in our hands by giving newer and newer impetus to the preparation of the conference.
- 2) The Prague documents and the items suggested by the socialist countries for the agenda continue to be suitable and useful in the preparation of the European security conference; however, greater emphasis must be laid on the point that we are willing to examine the question of adding further constructive proposals for the agenda.

In connection with this, several people supported the Hungarian delegation's proposal to complement the second item (increased economic cooperation) with the topic of cultural cooperation. Comrade Ilyichev pointed out that the Soviet Union was not against the proposal, but he suggested that we do not make it public until we are assured of some compensation in return.

- 3) The fact that possibilities of bilateral consultation with representatives of the western powers are far from being exhausted can be turned to advantage in making progress in the preparations of the conference. Nevertheless, we must improve the efficiency of these consultations and urge our negotiating partners to discuss the concrete terms of the Prague document.

There was no objection to the Hungarian proposal that, with the possibilities in bilateral consultation exhausted, it would be advisable to turn to multi-lateral consultations. These could offer some opportunities to the socialist countries to exploit the existing differences between the capitalist countries in connection with the security conference.

- 4) Regarding the date set for convening the security conference, we should keep to our original view, i.e. the first half of this year is acceptable to us while any reasonable suggestion

regarding the date can be discussed.

5) In view of the proposals made by several western countries, it would be expedient to discuss the problem of how to institutionalize the system of European security. In a separate discussion Comrade Ilyichev suggested that at a later stage, when the Finns too have already agreed to it, it would be a good idea to set up a few-member-strong steering committee.

6) The deputy foreign ministers of the Warsaw Treaty countries should meet in early May, before the Spring session of the NATO ministerial council, to analyze both the work done so far and the position taken by the western powers. The meeting should issue a statement mentioning the most important issues of substance, as well as our analysis of some of the questions and possible new proposals.

It was also suggested that those documents that had been accepted in Prague and were related to the agenda could be made public after the meeting. Hitherto these had been treated confidentially and only the European governments had received via the Czechoslovakian diplomatic service. Furthermore, it was mentioned that the Hungarian proposals about economic cooperation – provided they won the approval of the planned conference of experts – should be submitted to the meeting of the foreign ministers and, if approved, should be made public.

The ministerial meeting must be prepared in bilateral consultations and in a work session of the deputy foreign ministers.

B) The following proposals failed to get unanimous approval, partly because they were opposed by some of the participants and partly because they were not discussed in the debate.

1) The Romanian deputy foreign minister's proposal to convoke the preparatory meeting of the European security conference in Bucharest within the next two or three months was met with clear opposition. According to the proposal, this meeting could be dedicated to a discussion of both the practical methods of preparing the conference and the questions related to the agenda and the technical aspects of preparation. Either the deputy foreign ministers or the foreign ministry heads of departments would represent the individual countries.

In general, the deputy foreign ministers were not opposed to the idea of a preparatory meeting, but considered that the timeframe suggested by the Romanian comrades was too early. They explained that several bilateral and multilateral consultations were needed to clarify the range of topics, matters of substance as well as organizational issues, to be discussed at a prospective preparatory meeting. If we were to call a meeting prematurely, we could do more harm than good.

In the Polish deputy foreign minister's view, some of the European countries would be vexed, if the preparatory meeting took place in the capital of a socialist country.

After the debate the Romanian deputy foreign minister asked to speak again, suggesting that the preparatory meeting be scheduled to take place not in two or three month but within the next three or four months; he also recommended that the deputy foreign ministers of the socialist countries concerned come together in the near future to discuss the Romanian ideas and proposals that would be developed by that time. He tentatively offered that the Romanian government would consult in this matter with the governments of the friendly countries. There was no reaction to the Romanian deputy foreign minister's latter proposals.

2) The Romanian deputy foreign minister proposed that in the interest of European security and cooperation, as well as the conference, we must exploit the various platforms of the UN, most notably the jubilee session and the European Economics Committee of the United Nations.

In opposition to the Romanian proposal, Comrade Ilyichev made a remark: he called our attention to the negative record of the European Economics Committee, and also pointed out that this body could not be regarded as an all-European organization, since the German Democratic Republic

was not among its members.

3) The deputy foreign ministers of Poland and Czechoslovakia made the point that in preparing the European security conference we should turn two anniversaries to account: the 25th anniversary of the victory over Nazism and the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Warsaw Treaty.

4) The deputy foreign minister of Poland pointed out that even if we rejected the western proposals regarding the idea of balanced regional disarmament as the basis of negotiations, we would still have to address the issue of regional nuclear disarmament. That could generate a great deal of interest among the small states. He informed us that they would try to develop a few formulae for this topic.

5) Several participants suggested that we should make our views on the participation of the United States and Canada public, and that the next meeting of the foreign ministers could make a statement to this effect, also.

6) The Hungarian delegation's proposal to exploit the power of the media in order to win the international public opinion had several supporters. For this purpose the foreign ministers should hold a press conference after their May meeting, and possibly also arrange some roundtable debates, etc.

7) The Hungarian delegation's proposal to hold the foreign ministers' May meeting in Budapest had no objection from any side.

IV.

Referring to Comrade Kádár's letter addressed to the first secretaries of the parties of the Warsaw Treaty members, the head of the Hungarian delegation called attention to the need to set up a foreign policy council or committee subordinated to the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty. This was especially justified by the point that the Warsaw Treaty countries' main task in the forthcoming years would be to take an active part in the preparations of the European security conference and that, in turn, necessities close cooperation in foreign policy between the Warsaw Treaty members.

Ever delegate, save the Romanian deputy foreign minister, supported the proposal.

Several participants indicated that the first secretaries of their respective party had lent support to the proposal in their reply to Comrade Kádár.

The Romanian deputy foreign minister claimed that, as they had pointed out earlier, it was unnecessary to set up the proposed organization. In their view the coordination of foreign politics could be achieved without establishing such a committee, just as it had been done previously. A meeting of the foreign ministers or the deputy foreign ministers could be called without any difficulty, and this could be done more frequently.

The head of the Hungarian delegation made a reply to the Romanian deputy foreign minister's speech, describing it as unfounded and unconvincing. He asked the head of the Romanian delegation to convince his government to revise its position in the matter. The head of the Hungarian delegation reiterated that the discussion of this question at various levels seemed warranted.

The Romanian deputy foreign minister promised to notify his government both of the proposals put forward and of the majority view taken by the conference.

V.

The preliminary talks of the deputy foreign ministers has produced the following inferences and tasks:

1) The meeting of the deputy foreign ministers was useful, because it offered an opportunity to become acquainted with the analysis, work and proposals of the other socialist countries in the matter of the preparations of the European security conference. At the same time,

however, it must be concluded that the deputy foreign ministers had failed to summarize the concrete tasks ahead of them, most notably the preparations for the meeting of foreign ministers.

- 2) The factual communiqué issued on the meeting of the deputy foreign ministers has proved useful in that it signaled that the socialist countries would continue taking an active interest in the issue of European security and cooperation and the preparations for the European conference.
- 3) Our recommendation is that we send a memorandum to the government of the other socialist countries, officially offering to host the May conference of the foreign ministers in Budapest.
- 4) The Foreign Ministry should start working on the preparations for the conference of the foreign ministers, laying down the guidelines of the Hungarian position and the Hungarian proposals submitted to the ministerial meeting.
- 5) On receipt of the Soviet comrades' comments, the Hungarian material for the debate on the various forms of economic cooperation must be finalized and sent to the socialist countries signatory to the Budapest Call. In order to be able to submit the material to the ministerial conference, we must make every effort to arrange the meeting of the socialist countries' experts before the beginning of March.
- 6) On receipt of the official replies to Comrade Kádár's letter we should offer a bilateral consultation on our proposal to the leaders of the Romanian party and government. We recommend Comrade Zoltán Komócsin for head of the Hungarian delegation.

Budapest, 2 February 1970 Frigyes Puja

[Translated by Ervin Dunay, Central European University]

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