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**Report
On the 21-22 May 1973 Meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Countries' Deputy
Foreign Ministers**

I.

On the initiative of Poland's Foreign Ministry the deputy foreign ministers of the Warsaw Treaty countries held a meeting in Moscow on 21-22 May 1973 with the purpose of harmonizing the various views. The meeting was attended by deputy foreign ministers Nesterov (Bulgaria), Ruzek (Czechoslovakia), Bisztyga (Poland), Frigyes Puja (Hungary), Fischer (GDR), Ghenea (Romania) and Rodionov (Soviet Union). In addition to the meeting, I held a brief consultation with the Soviet Union's deputy foreign minister Rodionov and his colleagues.

At the meeting we brought our respective views on the preparatory talks of Helsinki and the conference on security in Europe in harmony; furthermore, we addressed the problems of the joint program/statement regarding economic and cultural cooperation (one of the draft documents of the conference).

II.

On the Polish delegation's proposal, Comrade Rodionov held the initial presentation. His speech can be summed up in the following main points:

- 1) He explained that the present meeting should aim at coordinating the fraternal countries' efforts in the interest of the speedy convocation and successful execution of the conference on security in Europe.
- 2) The question of convening the conference on security in Europe is at the moment in the forefront of European politics. The April plenary session of the Soviet Communist Party declared that the preconditions for creating a firm system of security and cooperation in Europe have emerged, offering a chance to stage an attractive demonstration of peaceful coexistence.
- 3) The preparatory conference in Helsinki showed that the convocation of the conference on security had essentially been decided. An objective approach characterized the preparatory meeting, where agreement was reached on several issues or at least the views converged considerably. Working in active cooperation, the socialist countries firmly hold the initiative in their hands.
- 4) Because of the delaying tactics of certain circles in NATO and the Common Market, progress at the preparatory talks in Helsinki is not as fast as we would like it to be. Nevertheless, we managed to make progress in the preparations of the security conference and now have reached the closing stage of the preparatory meeting.
- 5) In view of the imminence of the security conference, its draft documents should be finalized. Earlier on we already exchanged views on the security conference's political statement. Certain points of this draft should still be clarified on the basis of the

preparatory meeting in Helsinki; this could be done before the security conference.

6) The most important issue at the Helsinki preparatory talks is the inviolability of the borders. The Soviet Union, together with the other socialist countries, will make a firm stance on having this principle accepted as the fundamental principle of inter-state relations, as this would mean the recognition, by all the participants, of the current territorial and political realities in Europe, in other words, the recognition of the accomplishments of socialism. The western powers have apparently given up on subordinating the principle of the inviolability of the borders to the principle of the renouncement of the use of force, as well as on any other method of diminishing its significance. This also means that solving the other problems will be simpler. We can accept a certain enlargement of the list of basic principles, but we continue to resist the mutual inter-dependence of these principles, as the western powers would like to use that to reduce the significance of the inviolability of the borders.

On the subject of military matters, the participants welcomed the Soviet proposal on certain measures to strengthen stability and trust, while some of the western countries would like to add the measure of giving advanced notice of larger troop movements. These attempts should be rejected.

Several western countries would like to add to the agenda the interconnections of the military and political aspects of security, thus ensuring that the security conference address the issues related to disarmament and reduction of military forces in Central Europe. Under no circumstances can we agree to complicate the security conference with military problems; nevertheless, in the list of tasks we could include some general statements about the mutual interdependence of the political and military aspects of security, and also about the participating countries' general interest in the reductions of arms and disarmament in Europe.

7) On the basis of the joint program declaration on cooperation in trade, economic, technology and science as well as culture – the draft of this document was handed over to the friendly socialist states at the meeting of deputy foreign ministers held in Moscow in November 1972 – two separate documents should be prepared in accordance with items 2 and 3 of the security conferences agenda. Although there is no need for principal changes in matters of substance, we must clarify certain points on the basis of the Helsinki preparatory talks, taking into account the exchange of views on the committees' task lists. The Soviet side has already started to revise the document, and the two new draft proposals will be handed over to the friendly socialist states later on. The socialist proposals about general issues in the field of economic cooperation were met with approval at the Helsinki preparatory talks. A number of issues of principle emerged: the NATO countries as well as some neutral states opposed the socialist proposal to formulate the principles of most favorable status and anti-discrimination in a direct form. They objected on the grounds that such issues were usually addressed in bilateral agreements and could not form the general norms of economic relations. We should find ways of expressing our demand in a more efficient manner without substantially changing our position.

On the subject of cooperation in the field of industry, the western countries try to create the most favorable conditions for their companies in their partners' countries and to build direct contacts between western companies and the state companies of socialist countries. Since the purpose of these efforts is to penetrate into the socialist countries' economic life, we continue to oppose them. However, we should consider finding a phrasing that, while protecting the interests of the socialist countries, can offer some

accommodation to the western demands. Such a phrasing could even make references to government measures to facilitate the cooperation between western companies and state-owned companies in socialist countries. Nevertheless, the concrete forms of the cooperation should be defined in bilateral agreements. The Soviet side wishes to revise in the same spirit those parts of the draft document that are relevant to item 2 of the agenda. As to item 3 of the agenda, covering cultural cooperation, exchange of information and human relations, the Helsinki talks have shown that the western side tries to test the firmness of the socialist countries with a view to achieve ideological penetration. We should continue to start out from the point that cultural cooperation and the development of relations between organizations and people are in line with our principles, but only when it is implemented in conjunction with the protection of the socialist system's interests. The western partners object to mentioning in this section the need to observe the countries' internal laws and customs, the principles of nonintervention and sovereignty. They propose that in this section we only include a reference to the principles mentioned in the committee's task list in relation to item 1. Since reaching an agreement on the principles to be listed, with the inclusion of the inviolability of the borders as a separate principle, now seems likely, we can accept this western proposal, but only in the sense that cultural cooperation, the relations between people and organizations and the exchange of information are to be realized on the basis of these norms and, therefore, in accordance with the legal norms of the states concerned. In such interpretation, the western proposals concerning the private and official trips of citizens, the improved conditions of mixed marriages, the assistance in reuniting families, the dissemination of foreign literature and information can be considered, naturally only in such a phrasing that is in line with the socialist countries' interests. After the end of the Helsinki consultation, the Soviet side will finish the revision of this draft document and hand it over to the friendly socialist states together with the draft document related to item 2 of the agenda.

8) We must continue our efforts to ensure that the security conference considers the creation of a permanent consultative body. This question could be phrased in a more general form at the Helsinki preparatory talks.

9) On the basis of the committees' tasks lists, reaching an agreement on the security conference's agenda will probably be relatively easy.

10) We continue our efforts to achieve that the third stage of the security conference has the highest level of representation; the western powers seem more inclined to accept our proposal, in anticipation of the great political results the security conference is likely to produce.

11) It will probably be easy to come to an agreement on the structural and technical questions of the security conference, on procedural matters, on the creation of a coordination committee and on financial issues.

III.

The debate following Comrade Rodionov's presentation – with the exception of the Romanian speech that differed from the position held by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries – demonstrated that the socialist countries were united on the issues mentioned in the introduction. The same union was evident in the tributes the speakers paid on accord of the realization of the Soviet Union's peace program, and also in connection with the statements made by the Soviet Communist Party's Central

Committee at its plenary session in April and the great importance of Comrade Brezhnev's visits. In addition, several speakers contributed to the joint work of the analysis with valuable supplementary elements.

The Polish deputy foreign minister Bysztyga – whose speech accidentally contained some confusing turns of phrasing – pointed out that the Helsinki preparatory talks served their purpose, which was to create the right conditions for the convocation of the security conference; it also enabled us to get to know better the western countries' objectives and tactics, which will be helpful for us in every phase of the security conference. The Helsinki preparatory conference contributed to improving the European atmosphere and increased the West European countries' sense of responsibility towards the cause of European security.

He urged to deepen the conflicts emerging amongst the western countries, especially those that exist between the United States and the countries of the Common Market; furthermore, we should make efforts to smash the united and highly disciplined tactics of the Common Market. He pointed out that we ought distinguish between the various western viewpoints, and in this we should try to win over certain NATO and neutral countries to add their names to the socialist proposals.

On the subject of the committee's task list related to item no.1 of the agenda, he explained that the Polish side is thought they should not agree to a phrasing that would exclude the bilateral agreements signed with the Federal Republic of Germany from the sources of the basic principles.

In relation to the introduction of military aspects, he drew attention to Austria's draft proposal, which had a more general phrasing. He pointed out that we must anticipate, in a cautious and general phrasing, the addition of topics with military relevance to the closing document of the security conference. He concurred with Comrade Rodionov in the question of revising the draft document on cultural and economic cooperation.

Underlining the need for driving towards the establishment of a permanent body of consultation, he recommended that we broaden the scope of our reasoning in this area. Perhaps it would be better to return to our idea expounded in the Budapest Memorandum of 1970, suggesting that such a body could also address the issues of disarmament. In his opinion, this could arouse the neutral countries' interest in the establishment of the permanent organization.

(Note: the Budapest Memorandum suggested that, instead of adding this issue to the agenda of the security conference, the question “could be discussed either by a body established by the security conference or in some other way acceptable to the countries concerned.”)

Furthermore, he proposed to continue the work in Helsinki immediately after the first phase of the security conference, the meeting of foreign ministers, at the level of deputy foreign ministers, in order to prepare the second phase of the security conference, i.e. to organize the work of the committees. For this purpose, we could use the French proposal to set up a coordinating body.

Comrade Bysztyga suggested that the deputy foreign ministers head the socialist delegations at the second phase of the security conference.

In addition, Comrade Bysztyga pointed out that we had to make efforts to ensure that the third phase of the security conference take place at the highest level of representation still before the end of 1973.

Finally, he expressed his satisfaction over the excellent cooperation of our

delegations at Helsinki, underlining the need for further improvements in the harmonization of the socialist delegations' work.

Responding to the points raised in Comrade Rodionov's introduction, Comrade Nesterov, the deputy foreign minister of Bulgaria, voiced his agreement. He called attention to the point that the work in front of us were going to be more difficult and we would have to improve the harmonization of our future tasks. We find excellent guidelines in the draft document regarding economic and cultural cooperation.

In his speech, Comrade Fischer, the deputy foreign minister of the GDR, assessed the general conditions in Europe, pointing to a shift in the balance of power in our favor and the legal process towards the international recognition of the German Democratic Republic. In connection with the latter, he expressed his gratitude for the support lent by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

Coming to the Helsinki preparatory talks, he stressed the need to declare the inviolability of the borders as a separate basic principle, thus implying the importance of the multifarious recognition of territorial and political realities in Europe.

In connection with the draft document on economic and cultural cooperation as proposed by the Soviet side, he suggested that we form a joint position; regarding the timing of its submission, he asked the participants to consider whether it was better to submit it in the first phase of the conference or perhaps even before it, at the bilateral consultations?

Sharing the view expressed in the Hungarian speech, he proposed that the Warsaw Treaty countries' deputy foreign ministers hold another round of talks; nevertheless, he thought that holding it between the first two stages of the security conference would be too late. In his view, the meeting should be held before the security conference's first stage, so that we have a joint position regarding both the composition of the delegations taking part and the content of the ministers' statements.

As to the location of the security conference, he suggested that we insist on holding all three phases in Helsinki.

Regarding the range of participants, he urged to hold to our earlier view (all the European countries plus the USA and Canada), pointing out the China might also apply for a place, the same as the Arab countries. He thought it necessary to continue to take into account the Arab countries' views, while also pointing to the need to formulate a socialist argument that would not harm relations with the countries in question.

The Romanian deputy foreign minister Ghenea's speech, while it was relatively moderate in comparison to earlier Romanian speeches at this level and through its phrasing it intended to demonstrate sharing a common platform with the other socialist countries, revealed a dissenting view, or at least a different approach, in a number of topics.

The Romanian deputy foreign minister claimed that since 1966 substantial progress had been made in the area of European security, creating realistic preconditions for holding a security conference. Through bilateral high-level talks, visits and joint declarations, Romania also contributed to this. The principles of international relations were expressed in these joint declarations, for example, in the statements made during President Ceausescu's visit to the Benelux countries; he mentioned that the head of the Romania state was presently in Italy.

He declared that every country, large or small, must be allowed to express its views.

In assessing the Helsinki preparatory talks, he stressed that the Romanian side

greatly appreciated the observation of democratic principles at this conference. This was manifested in the broad range of participants; in the absence of the block approach, which was against the NATO's efforts to divide the participants along blocks; and in the method of rotations in chairing the work group.

In relation to item no. 1 of the security conference's agenda, he noted that the renouncement of the use of force should be added to the task list according to the statements made in the Prague declaration of the Warsaw Treaty's Political Consultative Committee. The Romanian delegation had already conducted bilateral consultations on this with the western delegations in Helsinki, and on the basis of this they believed that the western powers would accept such a solution.

The Romanian speaker pointed out that they welcomed the text formulated at the Helsinki talks about respecting the principles governing the international relations, perceiving the aim of making these principles more effective as a step in the right direction. They also attached great importance to the topic of the peaceful settlement of the conflicts.

Touching on the military issues, he emphasized that, in addition to the concrete measures aimed at building trust, the possibility of further similar measures should also be mentioned in the context of European disarmament and the release from military obligations, etc.

In connection with item no. 2 of the security conference's agenda, he underlined the need for an anti-discriminatory phrasing, maintaining that in this area Romania would join the concerted efforts of the socialist countries. He suggested that the framework of the economic cooperation should allow the possibility of sharing the technological/scientific results.

With regard to item no. 3 of the agenda, he joined with the other socialist countries.

On the subject of revising the Soviets' draft document on economic and cultural cooperation, he supported the view held by the other socialist countries, adding a hope that the Romanian view would also be taken into account in the revision, as indeed in all the Soviet and socialist proposals. He emphasized that Romania reserved the right to read the revised document and, if necessary, submit its own proposal to the security conference.

Still on the same subject, he pointed out that in general it would be best if every country submitted proposals on its own behalf, i.e. the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries separately. He explained that the draft document on economic and cultural cooperation should be submitted during the second phase of the security conference, while every opportunity should be used at the bilateral consultations to discuss the topic.

On the point of establishing a permanent body for consultation, he agreed with the ideas put forward by the other socialist countries in connection with the theme's phrasing in the task list.

He emphasized the importance of having the highest level of representation at the third phase of the security conference, adding that we should not demand a decision at the Helsinki preparatory talks, since realistically one cannot expect a decision in this question before the first phase of the conference.

On the point of the countries to be invited, he demanded that the principles of sovereignty and equal rights be observed; also, the principles of rotation in chairing and decision by consensus must be upheld. He suggested Geneva for the location of the

conference's second phase, as this choice had enjoyed majority support among the participants. He was of the opinion that the third stage should be held in yet another town, according to the principle of rotation. The coordinating committee should ultimately decide on this.

Talking about the closing phase of the Helsinki preparatory meeting, he pointed out that work should be speeded up. He underlined that the Romanian delegation had been instructed to cooperate with the other socialist countries in the remaining issues, but also to take into account other views.

Comrade Ruzek, Czechoslovakia's deputy foreign minister, argued for holding conciliation meetings between the socialist states more frequently, especially before the hardest phase, the second stage of the security conference, which required further improvements in our joint tactics.

He emphasized that, in addition to employing the government organs of foreign politics in the interest of European security, the social organizations and movements, such as the Brussels-based movements for European security as well as our connections with the trade unions and the social democratic parties, should also be mobilized. He brought up Wilson's visit to Czechoslovakia, which gave them the impression that progress had been made in the views of the Labour Party.

On the document drafted by the Soviets, he suggested that it would be useful to enlarge its general passages with a broader interpretation of culture, as the West would support this.

On issues of military aspects he agreed with Comrade Rodionov's views, questioning the expediency of the Polish proposal, whereby the permanent consultative body should also discuss problems related to disarmament.

Regarding the location of the security conference, he supported the view of holding all three stages in Helsinki. He suggested that we support the Scandinavian proposals to this effect.

In my speech I explained that the Hungarian side attached great importance to the advance harmonization of the views between the socialist countries on issues related to the conference on security in Europe.

In agreement with Comrade Rodionov, I assessed the work accomplished so far at Helsinki preparatory meeting as well as the current situation regarding its agenda, the security task lists and the other problems in connection with the security conference, also referring to the experiences of the bilateral talks.

I called attention to the hardest tasks still ahead of us and, in agreement with Comrade Rodionov, outlined the further tasks in relation to the closing stage of the Helsinki preparatory talks. I suggested that in the closing stage we should continue abiding by the principles and political guidelines that we had followed until now, pointing out that there was no need to push for an early conclusion of the conference, as we would gain nothing by it.

I also called attention to the point that the second phase will be crucial from the viewpoint of the security conference's successful conclusion, when we can anticipate very hard debates with the western countries in the course of the final wording of the documents, especially on the subjects of human relations and exchange of information.

The majority of the NATO countries will probably maintain the junction between the Viennese disarmament talks and the second phase of the security conference.

Furthermore, the Hungarian speaker analyzed the attitudes of the Common Market, the NATO and the neutral countries at the Helsinki preparatory talks, proposing

that in order to steer them in a more positive direction the socialist countries should try to conduct bilateral consultations with them in the period between the first and the second phase for the security conference.

Coming to the further tasks of preparing for the security conference, I suggested that, in order to harmonize the views, the deputy foreign ministers of the socialist countries should hold a meeting in August, before the start of the second phase of the security conference, when we could discuss our joint proposals to be submitted in the second phase of the security conference.

As far as the location of the security conference, the level of representation in its third phase and the creation of a coordinating committee were concerned, I fell into line with Comrade Rodionov's analysis. On the subject of the socialist delegations' level of representation at the second phase of the security conference, I explained that the Hungarian side did not regard it as a matter of principle and was willing to accept the view of the majority of the socialist countries.

Comrade Rodionov summed up the views voiced at the meeting, making the following comments:

- 1) He concluded that the exchange of views was useful and was likely to help us in our future work. He acknowledged the praises with which the participants had credited the Soviet Union's foreign political activities.
- 2) In preparing the grounds for the security conference, the socialist delegations did a good job at the Helsinki preparatory talks. We have now reached the final, crucial phase of the preparations. He agreed with the Hungarian speaker's comment, whereby we should adhere to our principles in the concluding phase of the preparations, without being uncompromising.
- 3) For those issues that could not be settled during the preparatory talks, the wording should leave the way open for the security conference to settle them at the appropriate stage.
- 4) After the necessary revisions, the Soviet side will deliver its draft document on economic and cultural cooperation to the socialist delegations in Helsinki, which will then be able to hold consultations with their respective centers in the usual form.
- 5) In response to the Romanian argument, Comrade Rodionov declared that the socialist countries should stand united, submitting joint proposals, because the western powers would take advantage of the proposals submitted by individual countries. Nor is there a need for such individual proposals, as the socialist delegations could always find time for conciliation. The best way to act was to submit joint proposals incorporating every socialist country's ideas, although at times the delegation of the tasks to any one of the socialist countries could have its uses, for example, when it was based on the various items of the agenda.
- 6) Comrade Rodionov himself was of the opinion that another round of talks between the deputy foreign ministers would be appropriate, pointing out that the present meeting was of an intermediary character; the issues could still not be settled, as the Helsinki preparatory talks were still under way. He added that our leaders would probably support the idea of having another meeting. The timing of that meeting should be decided later.
- 7) In Comrade Rodionov's opinion it was not necessary to inform the press of the present meeting, as the publication of the news could suggest to the western powers that we were working on further proposals and they could expect such proposals at Helsinki. That could unnecessarily complicate our delegations' work in Helsinki.

All the participants concurred in this view.

IV.

Conclusions

1) In summary, we can conclude that the substance of the conciliatory meeting suffered a little in consequence of the suddenness with which it was convoked on a Polish initiative. The objective originally set for the meeting – to speed up the Helsinki preparatory talks and to delegate the various tasks to the appropriate countries – would have required an earlier date for its convocation, as the Helsinki conference had already gotten over the deadlock by the time the meeting was called. In this way, the meeting came to serve the purpose of a more general and broader conciliation of the topics.

Despite this, the meeting was useful, because

- we brought into line our respective views on the remaining issues left for the final stage of the Helsinki preparatory talks, as well as on many other problems related to the security meeting;

- we had an opportunity to discuss in details the draft document on economic and cultural cooperation.

2) On the basis of the exchange of views at the meeting we anticipate the first phase of the security meeting to begin around June 3, lasting for about 12 or 13 days, with the second stage of the security conference starting in September.

It is more than likely that the foreign ministers will issue general political statements in the first phase.

It is possible that the socialist delegations will start submitting draft documents already in the first stage of the security conference, although the decision on this will be made only later, after careful consideration of the emerging circumstances and the atmosphere.

3) At the conciliatory meeting the participants all agreed that the second phase of the security conference would be crucial from the viewpoint of the successful conclusion of the conference, as the debated points of the preparatory talks could be re-opened in the course of editing the conference's closing document. Furthermore, the NATO will probably want to link the second stage of the security conference to success at Viennese talks on the reduction of armed forces.

For this reason, the socialist countries must lay the greatest emphasis on the preparation of the second stage of the security conference.

4) The conciliatory meeting was united in the view that we should accept the French proposal about the creation of a coordinating committee; also, it was agreed that the socialist countries should delegate their respective deputy foreign ministers to this body, even if the western side decided otherwise. The fact that the socialist countries and the western states alike wanted to leave their Helsinki ambassadors out of the subsequent process also contributed to the formation of that view.

5) The conciliatory meeting was unanimous in the opinion that before the second phase of the security meeting another round of talks between the deputy foreign ministers should be held to bring our tactics into line, to discuss the joint proposals to be submitted during the second phase of the security meeting, and to devise possible new proposals.

6) It seems certain that Helsinki will host the first stage of the security conference, while the location of the second stage is still doubtful, as several western countries have favored Geneva. Romania also supports the latter location. On the basis of the

conciliatory meeting, it appears that the Soviet Union is not at all resolved on Helsinki as the scene of the second stage, finding Geneva equally acceptable. The other socialist countries do not attach principal importance to the question, either.

The western powers suggested Paris as the location of the third phase of the security conference. In Comrade Rodionov's view, this should be avoided.

7) On the list of countries invited to the security conference, the conciliatory meeting agreed to stand by our earlier position (every European country plus the United States and Canada); we oppose the attendance of observers, accepting only guests of honor.

8) On the present state of the Helsinki preparatory talks, the participants all shared the view that it had gotten over the earlier deadlock. Since an agreement on the remaining, most important questions seems likely, the meeting has entered its final phase. By early June, the final agreement will probably have been reached, and the Helsinki preparatory talks will end in the first days of June. This view is also supported by reports sent in the course of the last couples of days by our delegates taking part in the Helsinki preparatory meeting, who talked of further agreements.

Budapest, 28 May 1973 Frigyes Puja

[Translated by Ervin Dunay, Central European University]

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