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### M e m o r a n d u m

**Subject: Friendly reconciliation discussion in  
Moscow before the disarmament negotiations  
commencing in Vienna on 30 October**

On Soviet initiative, the delegates of the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense of the countries belonging to the Warsaw Treaty held a friendly reconciliation meeting in Moscow on 24 October 1973, preceding the Central European negotiations about downsizing the armed forces starting on 30 October in Vienna.

János Petrán from the Foreign Ministry, Tibor Vadászi from the Ministry of Defense, and Comrade István Monori on behalf of the Moscow Embassy participated in the friendly reconciliation meeting.

The Soviet side released the confidential information that, in view of the Romanians, the reconciliation meeting was to take place in two steps. On 23 October delegates of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Poland, GDR, and the People's Republic of Czechoslovakia, in other words, those countries, which were directly involved in the activities, held a meeting. They justified this by wishing to discuss explicitly military issues only with the delegates of those countries, which were directly involved.

The topics of the friendly reconciliation meeting on 24 October included the discussion on the position and the related tactics of the Warsaw Treaty countries participating at the negotiations to be started on 30 October in Vienna, as well as the organizational and technical aspects of beginning the negotiations.

Comrade Hlestov, who was to head the Soviet delegation during the negotiations in Vienna and in the meantime had become the member of MID Collegium, pointed out that we were facing very difficult negotiations and the western powers would try to undermine the unified and harmonized position of the socialist countries. They themselves thought this consultation necessary in order to present a united position at the negotiations.

During the friendly reconciliation meeting the following concrete questions were discussed:

1) What measures should first be devised in order to start the downsizing? Should it really be downsizing, or should it be various forms of what is known as trust-building measures?

The socialist countries will strive for a real downsizing of the armed forces. In their opinion this is the main purpose of the negotiations. The attempts and experiments devised to divert the participants from this aim during these negotiations must be fended

off. It is on the agenda of the conference on security in Europe to examine issues related to the auxiliary, so-called trust-building measures.

2) Which states should be involved in the military downsizing measures?

This issue has been decided. During the consultation that took place in the Spring in Vienna the circle of the states which would potentially participate in the military downsizing was defined; this, at the same time, also implies the scope of these measures.

3) Which units of the armed forces will be affected by the measures?

These will be the foreign troops, as well as the national armed forces, which are stationed on territories affected by the downsizing. In other words, not only the Soviet and the American army. The Soviet party considers this unacceptable, even as a first step. The military downsizing measures should affect the ground, air and nuclear forces. The western countries will try to exclude the latter; nevertheless, the Soviet side considers the inclusion of that category very important.

The Soviets accept the downsizing of armed forces of the same category and type, whether in terms of percentage or in terms of volume. Naturally, they take into consideration the fact that the NATO members will try to achieve parity in armed forces by the downsizing measures; by contrast, we must preserve the existing balance of power and maintain it regardless of the downsizing.

The NATO members will probably conceal their aims behind their definition of the purposes of the military downsizing negotiations; we must firmly oppose these attempts.

4) How should the execution of the downsizing measures be monitored?

In this respect the Soviets have the traditional standpoint, in other words, the monitoring of the military downsizing measures should involve the national institutions only. Later the method of national monitoring can be more concretely defined, for example by making the execution of the measures public and by informing the involved states, etc.

5) What should our relationship with the other states be during the negotiations?

The NATO members strictly oppose the participation of European states who are not in the blocs in any form. The Soviet viewpoint is that in this respect we should continue campaigning for making some form of participation possible for any European country, which shows interest in the negotiations.

6) What should be our tactic during the negotiations?

Since the NATO members will probably attempt to engage us into abstract arguments about the principles of negotiations, the criteria of downsizing the armed forces, symmetries, balance, etc., we must try to steer the negotiations into a more concrete direction already at an early stage. There is no need for a detailed list of topics to be discussed, as those are essentially given, in the form, for example, that was outlined in the closing communiqué of 28 June.

In the question of the auxiliary organizations, as well as the establishment of working groups, we must be cautious. Although this was proposed by the socialist countries, we must be careful that they would be brought into existence by necessity.

With the exception of the Romanian delegate, Romania's Moscow Ambassador, all participants agreed in the above. The Romanian Ambassador essentially repeated the previously expounded Romanian views whereby the Vienna negotiations were limited, the downsizing must also involve the whole of Europe and other regions of the continent (sic!).

He criticized that the negotiations were between blocs, which in his opinion

contradicted the previously accepted principles. He criticized the practice of one or the other delegation taking part in the negotiations on behalf of the other states. He gave voice to the need of preserving the openness of the auxiliary organizations and working groups. Finally, he demanded that the security of each European state must be taken into consideration when decisions were made about downsizing the armed forces. After this, the Romanian delegate formally announced that they were ready to consult and cooperate.

In private conversations, Comrade Hlestov informed those present that the Soviet side would develop a set of concrete plans regarding the downsizing of the armed forces and it would submit this for approval; however, the latter had not yet taken place. Therefore, further details will be discussed in Vienna during the negotiations, together with the further steps to be taken.

In relation to the organizational and technical preparations of the negotiations to be started in Vienna on 30 October, Comrade Strulak, the Polish Ambassador's councilor who will head the Polish delegation at the Viennese negotiations, and who had been a Warsaw Treaty liaison during the negotiations about technical and protocol issues during the negotiations in the Spring, informed those present about the discussions which he had with the NATO members' liaison in the Austrian Foreign Ministry.

1. He described the venue the Austrian provide for the negotiations.
2. The financial arrangements of the negotiations will follow the Helsinki model.
3. The members of the delegations, depending on rank, will enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunity.
4. The auxiliary personnel of the negotiations will be recruited by the Austrians, the persons applying from the attending countries will be given preference (e.g. interpreters).

The first opening session of the negotiations will be held on Tuesday, October 30 at 10:30 a.m. The Austrian Foreign Minister will give a short welcoming speech, which will be public. Later the heads of each delegation will make a short, general, political statement. The participants accepted the information given by Comrade Strulak, only the Romanian delegate commented that they, on their part, had never given anyone mandate for carrying out negotiations on their behalf. Although they agreed with the proposals of Comrade Strulak, they will announce their agreement themselves to the Austrian party and the NATO partners.

In a private conversation, one member of the Romanian delegation said that this comment was made due to principles.

The participants of the friendly reconciliation meeting agreed to hold another friendly reconciliation meeting on the day immediately before the start of the negotiation, on 29 October, in the building of the Soviet Embassy.

Mutual understanding and constructive concreteness characterized the friendly reconciliation meeting, with the exception of the Romanian comments.

Budapest, 27 October 1973

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

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