

*First Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the  
Warsaw Treaty Powers, 27-28 January 1956  
Declaration by the Signatories to the Warsaw Treaty  
28 January 1956 \**

The representatives of the states that are parties to the Warsaw Treaty of May 14, 1955—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Polish People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Rumanian People's Republic, the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Albania—who have assembled in Prague for a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee set up under the Warsaw Treaty, have exchanged views on questions relating to the international situation and European security. As a result, they express complete unanimity in their appraisal of both the international situation as a whole and the situation that has emerged in Europe. They are also unanimous with regard to the measures necessary for the further easing of international tension, the solution of outstanding international problems and the consolidation of peace and security in Europe.

The people's profound striving for peace has already led to substantial changes in the international situation, to a certain easing of tension in relations between states. There have emerged new and as yet unutilised opportunities for improving relations between states and strengthening international co-operation, regardless of differences between the social systems of states. The method of settling differences

\* *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* (Bucharest), 3 February 1956.

and disputes between states, not by the use of the threat of force but by talks which take into account the mutual interests of the parties concerned, has justified itself. For just this reason, recent meetings of leading statesmen, particularly the Geneva Conference of the heads of government of the Four Powers, have been of great positive significance for improving the international situation and lessening the danger of a new war.

The development of relations between states in recent years shows that the policy of setting up aggressive military blocs directed against peace-loving countries—blocs such as the North Atlantic bloc, the Baghdad pact and the military bloc in South-East Asia (SEATO)—not only cannot help to settle differences between states but, on the contrary, increases the differences and still further aggravates relations between countries. This policy has resulted in an arms drive on a scale never before known, particularly in the sphere of weapons of mass destruction: atomic, hydrogen, rocket, etc. It has already led to huge and ever-increasing material resources of states being spent on the manufacture of hydrogen and atomic weapons, rockets, aircraft, warships, tanks, artillery and other armaments. All this unquestionably increases the danger of a new war, which would bring mankind incalculable losses and disasters.

At the same time, for many states which under pressure from without, are being drawn by hook or by crook into the above-mentioned military blocs, participation in these blocs represents a direct threat to their national independence, the threat of being involved in conflicts for interests that are alien to them, and also the threat of a re-imposition of colonial enslavement on peoples who have, in bitter struggle, cast off the colonial yoke and gained the opportunity of independent development.

It is no accident that the policy of setting up aggressive military blocs and intensifying the arms race is being condemned by an increasing number of countries. There is growing recognition of the desire of countries to make collective efforts in the struggle for peace, the desire for international co-operation on the basis of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs of other states, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. This aim is served by the efforts of a number of countries to pursue a policy of non-participation in aggressive military blocs, a policy of neutrality.

The states that are parties to the Warsaw Treaty acclaim these

efforts, convinced that support for them strengthens the forces of peace and weakens the forces of war.

They express sympathy for the peoples of Asian and African countries that are upholding their legitimate right to independent national development.

The states that are parties to the Warsaw Treaty declare that they fully support the decisions of the Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries whose participants demonstrated their determination to uphold the cause of peace and progress and condemned the colonial system which has been dealt another shattering blow by the victory of the great Chinese people and the foundation of the People's Republic of China—today a mighty bastion of world peace. They also note the outstanding part played in that conference by such states as India, Indonesia, Burma, Egypt and others. They declare their readiness to facilitate the realisation of the Bandung Conference decisions, including those on economic and cultural co-operation, on the basis of mutual advantage and without imposing any political, military or other conditions.

The states that are parties to the Warsaw Treaty naturally attach special importance to the situation in Europe and the measures needed to ensure European security. In the present situation, in which Europe is divided into two counterposed military groupings, in which the arms drive in the NATO countries is assuming ever greater proportions and Western Germany, as part of that bloc, is actively being remilitarised, the European nations are displaying understandable concern for the destinies of peace in Europe. They realise the full danger of the accumulation of armed might—armies, air forces and stock piles of atomic and hydrogen weapons. They also realise that a prolongation of this situation in Europe will further increase the burden of military expenditure which falls upon the peoples as a result of the arms drive.

It is the awareness of the danger inherent in the policy of setting up aggressive military blocs and in the arms drive that explains the fact that during the recent parliamentary elections the French people went on record in support of those forces that stand for international co-operation, for the settlement of outstanding problems by peaceful means and for safeguarding peace and security in Europe and throughout the world.

The Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania declare their readiness to co-operate with all other countries in taking measures for consolidating European security and eliminating the danger of a

new war in Europe. They are fully resolved to continue the policy of peace and peaceful all-round co-operation between all states, large and small. This desire of theirs is based on the clear realisation that another war would bring to the peoples nothing but enormous sacrifices and devastation, particularly to those states whose territories would be turned into a battlefield. It arises also from the needs of the internal development and from the very nature of the above-named states, whose peoples are engaged in carrying out great plans for economic and cultural development, improvement in the people's welfare and for the all-round advance of economy and culture, which makes it possible to place the latest achievements of science and engineering at the service of humanity.

Contrary to the efforts of the peace-loving states to strengthen European security, certain circles in the West fear a relaxation of international tension and the extension of co-operation between states. They are clearly striving to maintain a war psychosis and continue the cold war, calculating that only in this way will they be able to preserve intact the military groupings they have set up in Europe—and not only in Europe—and to continue the arms drive, thereby ensuring the growth of the already high profit of the capitalist monopolies.

By their much boosted military programmes and warmongering statements the aggressive circles of those countries are at the same time trying to intimidate the peace-loving states, to compel them to expend exorbitant sums for military purposes and curtail civilian economic and cultural construction. They fear the strengthening of the forces of peace and the improvement of the well-being of the peoples of the peace-loving states.

All this explains why the Western powers constantly put obstacles in the way of agreement on general European security, reject a solution to the problem of reducing armaments and banning atomic weapons and refuse to halt the arms drive.

Confident in their strength and inspired by the great successes achieved in the building of socialism, the peoples of our countries will not allow themselves to be intimidated or fooled. Relying on the irresistible desire for peace cherished by all the peoples of the world, on their united and growing might, they will continue with their peaceful constructive policy and will actively promote the consolidation of peace and the security of the peoples.

Peaceful conditions for the development of the European peoples can best be guaranteed by the establishment of a European collective security system which would supersede the military groupings in

Europe. Desirous of facilitating the possibility of establishing an effective European security system, the states that are parties to the Warsaw Treaty at the same time declare their readiness to consider, jointly with the other countries concerned, proposals designed to serve this end.

Such an end could be served by the conclusion of an appropriate agreement, first of all between certain of the European states, including the USSR, Great Britain, France and the United States, and the establishment of a zone in Europe in which the strength and location of the armed forces would be defined by a special agreement between the countries concerned. In this connection, the proposals put forward at the Geneva Four-Power Conference on this point by the British Government could also be considered.

The question of establishing in Europe the aforesaid special zone of limitation and control over armaments, which would include both parts of Germany, and the achievement of an appropriate agreement between the states on this score merits particular attention. Such an agreement could provide for the withdrawal of or the limitation of the strength of foreign troops in both parts of Germany, as well as the limitation of armed contingents in the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic, with the establishment of the necessary supervision over the observance of the agreement. Such an agreement would be an important step towards further easing tension in Europe. It would also create more favourable conditions for the solution of the German problem in conformity with the requirements of ensuring European security.

While continuing the arms drive, the member-countries of the North Atlantic bloc went on record last December for equipping their armed forces with atomic weapons and for increasing by one-third the air forces of this grouping in Europe. It is obvious that such a step is aimed at aggravating the situation in Europe, at continuing the arms drive and inflating military budgets still further. All this is being done regardless of the fact that the peace-loving countries of Europe have already taken a number of measures to reduce their armed forces and military budgets.

Inasmuch as the aforesaid decision of the North Atlantic bloc runs counter to the demands of the peoples to end the arms drive and to remove the threat of atomic war, the states that are parties to the Warsaw Treaty resolutely condemn this measure as incompatible with the interests of European security. They propose that, pending agreement on the prohibition of atomic weapons, the states concerned should reach an understanding that the armed forces located on the