

Nicolae Ceaușescu:

Honored Comrades!

The goal of this consultative session of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member-states is to analyze the complex problems of the European and international situation, in order to determine further actions to be undertaken by our countries to prevent the international situation from worsening, to effectuate the transition to disarmament, in particular to nuclear disarmament, and to ensure world peace.

[. . .]

In this time period [since the last meeting of the PCC], the correlation of forces has shifted considerably, including in the international arena. The contradictions between different states and groups of states, between socialism and capitalism, have become more pronounced. The new contradiction between poor and rich countries is also growing rapidly. This contradiction is becoming the strongest contradiction in today's world.

We have witnessed a whole series of operations that applied the threat of violence or actual violence in trying to revise spheres of influence. A number of conflicts have become more acute, and new ones have surfaced.

The feverish arms race has also resumed, increasing the danger of war. At the same time, the world economic crisis has deepened; it has struck the whole world in one way or another and is affecting the socialist countries as well.

We must say that in Romania the world economic crisis can be felt very strongly, because we are forced to import, for convertible currency, approximately 15 million tons of natural gas and other raw materials annually. The world economic crisis is being made even worse by the policy of high interest rates being applied by the developed capitalist countries, especially the USA. This has led to a very severe aggravation of the developing countries' situation, whose debt has risen to more than 600 billion dollars.

The worsening of the world situation and the world economic crisis have also intensified the crisis of the capitalist world. It is well known that the number of unemployed already exceeds 30 million – about 12 million in the USA and more than 10 million in the countries of the European Community. It is becoming ever more obvious that the worsening of the international situation and the world economic crisis are caused mainly by the enormous military costs, which this year exceeded 600 billion dollars. These

enormous military costs are a huge burden, even for the rich. Our scientific analysis, based on dialectic materialism, shows a world-wide collision of two absolutely contradictory political directions: the imperialist policy of force, dictatorship, armament and intervention in the internal affairs of other states, and the policy of the progressive anti-imperialist forces and the masses, who are most resolutely speaking out against the imperialist and neocolonialist politics, in favor of a halt to the feverish arms race, for the defense of national independence and for peace.

A fundamental feature is the new popular peace movement, which has taken on unprecedented proportions and is opening up real perspectives for halting a policy bound for disaster and the endangerment of peace.

An analysis of the present condition shows us that such a buildup of arms has been reached, such an enormous amount of weapons of all types, especially nuclear weapons, has been amassed, that they are endangering the very existence of civilization, even of life on our planet.

The fundamental problem of our times is therefore to avert war and ensure peace. The unfolding of life and events shows convincingly that the danger of wars and conflicts, including the danger of a world war, a nuclear war, persists in the world. At the same time, events show us that there are forces everywhere in the world capable of changing the course of international politics, of bringing policies bound for disaster and annihilation to a halt, and of securing peace. It is more necessary than ever to work for the broad cooperation of all realistic, anti-imperialist forces among the people.

[. . .]

Experience shows that the more weapons that are stockpiled, the more nuclear weapons that exist, the greater the danger of global nuclear war.

It is true that the United States and the other NATO states are pursuing a policy of military superiority and extortion and that they intend to station intermediate-range missiles in Europe and further develop weapons of mass destruction. But the socialist states, the Warsaw Treaty member-states, must not allow themselves to be forced down this route, which leads to the annihilation of mankind, to the destruction of civilization. It is necessary that we muster all of our force and expose the policy of arms buildup being implemented by the United States and other NATO countries for what it is. We must ward off this policy and implement a policy that lies in the interest of the peoples, of disarmament and of peace.

Without a doubt, we must constantly see to it that the socialist countries' defensive capacity is maintained and that the balance of forces is also maintained. This balance must not be raised to a higher plane through an intensification of the arms race and through the stockpiling of more weapons, including nuclear weapons. Rather, the balance must be ensured by reducing the number of nuclear weapons to a minimum, and under very strict international control.

It is in the interest of our countries, in the interest of socialism and of peace, to fight for disarmament with great determination and under no pretext to permit an increase in military statements [sic].¹ We must not forget for a single moment that the strength of our countries is guaranteed first and foremost by their economic and social development, by a rise in the standard of living of our peoples, and by the successful construction of socialism and communism.

In this spirit, Romania most resolutely speaks out for bringing the feverish arms race to a halt and for making the transition to disarmament, first of all to nuclear disarmament.

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In view of the serious international situation, we consider it necessary that this meeting of the Political Consultative Committee decides upon concrete guidelines and adopts measures for strengthening the fight for disarmament, the defense of freedom. We consider it particularly important in this regard to develop practical and decisive activities oriented toward the dissolution of both military blocs, the Warsaw Treaty and NATO. In order to realize this goal, concrete measures must be determined that will consistently reduce the military nature of these two blocs and limit their spheres of activity.

The reduction of military expenditures by NATO and the Warsaw Treaty and the approval of the decision to freeze military expenditures at the 1983 level, as well as the transition to the reduction of military expenditures by at least 20% by 1985, are of great importance.

We are making these proposals with the knowledge that the military expenditures of the countries of these two military blocs accounts for more than 80% of all military expenditures in the world. The reduction of the military expenditures of these states would be crucial for the transition to disarmament and halting the feverish arms race.

¹ Transl. Note: The original text includes the word "Aussagen," which translates as "statements." What was likely meant was "Ausgaben" – in English, "expenditures."

At the same time, we consider the initiation of direct negotiations begin between the states of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO regarding disarmament and avoidance of the danger of war. With this in mind, we would like to propose that a letter be addressed to the NATO countries with the proposal to open these negotiations in 1983.

We are in favor of concluding a treaty between the member-states of the two military blocs.

With a view toward restoring the policy of détente and eliminating the danger of war, we attach great importance to the withdrawal of troops of both military blocs from the territories of other states, to the removal of military bases on the territory of other states, to the adoption of a solemn commitment not to station nuclear weapons on the territory of other states that have renounced nuclear weapons, and to guarantees that similar weapons shall never be used against them.

It is also necessary to abstain from large-scale military maneuvers carried out demonstratively along the borders of other states.

Simultaneous with the reduction in military expenditures, it is necessary to begin to reduce arms and the number of troops in both military blocs.

Within this framework, Romania is of the opinion that it is necessary to set a maximum deadline of two years for the conclusion of the Vienna negotiations on the reduction of armaments and forces in Central Europe. In our opinion, one should count on reducing the number of NATO troops by 30,000 to 40,000 and equipment by 20,000 to 30,000.

It would also be of great significance if the Warsaw Treaty member-states would decide unilaterally not to raise their military expenditures beyond 1983 levels until 1985.

[. . .]

Considering the serious situation in Europe, we consider it necessary to make every effort to bring the Madrid meeting to a successful conclusion as quickly as possible and also to reach decisions regarding the convocation of a conference on disarmament. At the same time, the ongoing nature of the future meetings should be stipulated, as it was begun in Helsinki.

Since the question of intermediate-range missiles concerns all the countries of Europe, we consider it necessary to set up a commission, consisting of representatives from all the member-states of the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO pact as well as representatives from the neutral and non-aligned countries of Europe.

This commission should work together with the Soviet Union and the United States for the conclusion of a treaty this year with the goal of undertaking not to station intermediate-range missiles and to transition to the withdrawal and destruction of the missiles that have already been deployed. Such a commission could be of great significance for accelerating the achievement of this treaty's goals.

At the same time, we suggest that the socialist states actively support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Europe. These would then be areas without foreign military bases.

[. . .]

The establishment of a special commission of the socialist states of the Warsaw Treaty that would strive to reduce and curb the arms race and would also elaborate measures for disarmament – above all, nuclear disarmament – would be of great political significance and would correspond to the interests of the peoples of the states of Europe and the whole world.

[. . .]

Now a word regarding the declaration: I believe that certain things could still be improved upon here. I have the impression that this declaration does not really correspond to the situation in the socialist countries. The situation is presented here in such a way as if everything that happens in the world is contingent upon imperialism and the United States. But this is not the case. The socialist countries have an important say in the international situation, and they also bear responsibility for the tension that has arisen. They also have a say in doing away with the policies that are contributing to the rise in tensions. For this reason, I believe that these issues, too, should be addressed in an appropriate fashion in the declaration.

Furthermore, I have the impression that it is an all-too-lengthy declaration, such that the essence is actually lost in the many words. I mean the fundamental problems to which we should draw attention. For this reason, in the declaration we should cite disarmament, a reduction in military expenditures, the cessation of the feverish arms race, and the

consolidation of the struggle on a world scale as elements of the struggle that is being fought in this direction. I am convinced that success will then be ours, and it will then lead to a transition toward disarmament.

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[Translation from the German by Ursula Froese]