

**Speech by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED and
Chairman of the State Council of the GDR Erich Honecker at the
Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the
Warsaw Treaty Member-States on 10 and 11 June 1986 in Budapest**

Dear Comrades!

Allow me to transmit to you the heartfelt and fraternally greetings of the Central Committee of the SED, the State Council and the Ministerial Council of the GDR. I would like to thank our Hungarian Comrades, particularly you, dear Comrade János Kádár, for your friendly reception and the excellent working conditions.

We are very pleased that, according to the schedule we agreed upon, the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee is taking place at the present time. It will require a responsible approach to find solutions to the questions we are tackling at this meeting. The withdrawal from the SALT II Treaty announced by President Reagan has opened the door wide to the madness of unbridled arms proliferation, as even Western politicians are remarking. Given this development, which is full of nuances, our essential task is to pursue a policy that gives peace a chance.

Our delegation followed Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's speech with great attention. We fully concur in his analysis of the international situation and the conclusions he draws. That also applies to the statements of the other previous speakers.

In our time, in the nuclear age, peace is the greatest good of mankind. For this reason, it is absolutely imperative that we block the path of the major warmongers – those, who

through their policy of arms buildup, are unremittingly bringing the world to the brink of a nuclear inferno and transforming the heavens into a gate to hell. As developments show, this is only possible by rousing the conscience of the world. In all modesty, I would like to remark that we have made some progress down this path with our previous initiatives, in particular with the proposals made at the 27th Party Congress of the CPSU, the proposals of Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev, which are held in worldwide esteem. We must proceed down this path. Our readiness to raise the defensive capacity of the states of the Warsaw Treaty must continue hand-in-hand with a policy of peace, which shows mankind the real way to a world without war and without weapons.

As you know, the 11th Party Congress of the SED recently took place. Our Party Congress gave its approval to the historic resolutions of the 27th Party Congress of the CPSU because they contribute decisively to strengthening socialism and ensuring world peace. We accord great importance to the statement in the message from Mikhail Gorbachev to me, that the accident in Chernobyl must be a lesson for the entire world. What happened at Chernobyl has made us deeply conscious of the frightening forces that are contained in the energy of the atom. If the accident in this peaceful nuclear reactor turned into a calamity, then one can only imagine the tragic consequences that would ensue for all of mankind from the use of nuclear weapons, which exist for the purpose of devastation and destruction.

Our first task is to achieve a mutual agreement to halt all nuclear tests for peaceful or non-peaceful purposes. That would be an important step towards the program presented by Mikhail Gorbachev for the complete and comprehensive elimination of weapons of mass destruction by the end of our century. We are firmly convinced, as stated in the draft appeal of the Warsaw Treaty member-states that we have before us, that nuclear

disarmament and the prohibition of an arms race in space, as well as a significant reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces from the Atlantic to the Urals in accordance with the principle of equality and equal security, as contained in Michael Gorbachev's Berlin proposal and given concrete form in this draft Appeal, would pave the way for the creation of a secure peace for all European nations, for the nations of the entire world.

With the proposals to the international community that we are making at this meeting, we are once again proclaiming our readiness to take practical steps toward the resolution of issues upon which the reduction of the danger of war and the transition to effective disarmament depend. In addition, our initiative for a significant reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces disproves all Western talk about the alleged superiority of the Warsaw Treaty in the area of conventional weapons in the case of an abolition of nuclear weapons. It serves our objective of ensuring international security by maintaining a balance of military forces at the lowest possible levels.

From this point of view, the draft agreement with the USA on the elimination of Soviet and American intermediate-range missiles in Europe presented by the Soviet Union in the nuclear and space arms negotiations is of far-reaching significance as well. Not only would such an agreement bring about a fundamentally more secure situation in Europe, it would at the same time have a positive influence on the further struggle for disarmament.

We all know that the confrontational course being steered by the most aggressive circles of the USA, their unrestrained arms buildup both on earth and, by means of the "Star Wars" program, in outer space enjoys the support of its NATO allies. The repeated declarations of consent to the destructive policies of the USA by Great Britain, the FRG

and Israel, through their willingness to participate in the SDI program, give expression to this.

All of this makes it necessary for us to intensify our fundamental fight against the arms buildup on the basis of our peace program, in particular the proposals of the Soviet Union. We are thus taking into account that more and more Western governments are feeling that the US Administration is leading them up the garden path. This became obvious just recently on the occasion of the Bern expert meeting on human contacts, where the adoption of the final document failed due to the USA after protracted efforts by the participants to find a compromise.

The USA's playing the role of world policeman, its drive to achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth, its reckless actions such as the act of piracy against Libya, its policy of threats and blackmail in Latin America and the Caribbean, have elicited growing discomfort and worry in a wide range of Western European countries. Even the official circles of these countries, not least of all due to the pressure of the peace movement, one hears ever more often reproaches against the U.S. Administration for overriding the interests of its allies.

Various recent events confirm that the chasm separating the USA and Western Europe since the end of the Second World War has never been as deep as it is today. According to a widely distributed magazine of the FRG, there is practically no issue left on which Washington and Western Europe agree. Given the virtually anti-European policy of the USA, a further estrangement can be expected. No secret is being made of this any more in the West.

As you know, even at the last NATO Council meeting in Halifax, the foreign ministers of the Western European NATO states unanimously demanded that the USA continue to respect SALT II. Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany, who usually stick close to the American party line, took the side of the other Western European states and Canada. One should also mention that even the parliament of the FRG, albeit after much argumentation, has passed a resolution in favor of respecting the SALT II Agreement. In our opinion it is also worthy of note that at the spring meeting of the NATO Foreign Ministers, Mikhail Gorbachev's Berlin declaration of 18 April was not simply shelved away. Instead, the high-level working group for conventional arms control appointed at this meeting was tasked with considering it in its work. Without overestimating all of this, and without underestimating the results of the Tokyo summit of the imperialist powers, one can say that the differences of opinion within NATO are becoming more profound and acute.

With the appeal that we have before us, we are documenting anew our resolute striving to conclude comprehensive agreements in the most diverse areas in order to avert the danger of a nuclear inferno and to give world peace a stable, lasting foundation. There can be no winners or losers in a nuclear war. In the present day, security is only possible if we work with one another, not against one another. In order to ensure peace, we are making use of every, even the smallest opportunity; we are cooperating with all those who let themselves be guided by reason and realism and are pursuing the same goal.

Relations between the USSR and the USA, especially the progress of their negotiations in Geneva, remain decisive for the further development of the international situation. We agree with Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's evaluation of these negotiations. We fully support the policy of the Soviet leadership not to release the Reagan Administration from

its obligation, despite its destructive behavior, and to continue with the political dialogue begun in Geneva. We are in favor of coming together once again and attempting to reach certain agreements on the basis of the Geneva joint declaration.

In my talks with leading representatives of the Western states, in our contacts with leading personalities of the governments and the opposition and with the business communities and organizations of all the federal states of the FRG, we are repeatedly discussing the proposals of the USSR and the Warsaw Treaty states for eliminating the danger of nuclear war. The focus of these discussions is on the abolition of all nuclear tests. The Soviet Union's unilateral renouncement of such tests for almost a year now, during which the USA has unremittingly continued its tests, provides a clear demonstration of which side is saying yes to peace not only in word but also in deed. This is having its impact upon international public opinion and is contributing significantly to increased pressure on the USA.

Political dialogue, in accordance with our agreed policy, is proving to be an essential instrument for strengthening the forces of reason and realism and opening the way to concrete agreements on the key issues. Here we are also taking account of the noticeable changes that have taken place – for instance in the positions of the SPD – on ending the arms race and ensuring peace. These offer good opportunities for joint initiatives on these matters. Like the other fraternal parties, the SED is continuing to maintain its contacts to the SPD. The talks about creating a nuclear-weapons-free corridor in Central Europe are proceeding openly and objectively. Agreement has already been reached on a number of points. Both parties agree that they are aiming for a joint political initiative and not a draft treaty as with the C-weapons-free zone. We expect that it will be possible to reach

at least an interim result by October of this year, despite the complicated nature of the issue.

The joint initiative of the SED, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the SPD for the creation of a C-weapons-free zone in Europe is proving useful in the current discussions about freedom and security in Europe. Together with the CP of Czechoslovakia, we have now developed this initiative further. The official presentation of principles of negotiation by the GDR and the ČSSR to the FRG and the joint call to other neighboring states to associate themselves with the initiative have given new impetus to the fight against the stationing of binary weapons in Western Europe.

Dear Comrades!

The effectiveness of our peace policy is based not only on the fact that it takes account of the realities of the present-day world and serves the interests of all of mankind. It is also a result of the strengthened position of socialism. As was concluded at the 11th party congress of the SED, the GDR, too, has made good progress in recent years in building the developed socialist society, thanks to the creative work of our people and despite the many disruptive maneuvers of the imperialists.

The principled position of our party, that the unbreakable alliance of our states in the Warsaw Treaty and in Comecon was, is and remains a sure guarantee for the successful solution of all the internal and external problems of our states, no matter how complicated they may be, has been confirmed once again. The GDR will continue to do its utmost to strengthen our fraternal bonds in every way possible and to increase the influence and the attractiveness of socialism in the international arena.

The DDR values the steps that have been taken since our last meeting to increase the strategic effectiveness and efficiency of the coordination of our foreign policy actions. Close and confidential communication between our countries regarding important aspects of their domestic and foreign policy has been strengthened. We consider this practice to be extraordinarily useful for learning even more about the manifold experiences of our countries and applying the lessons learned to our own actions. We have good reason to assert that a new spirit of cooperation has been developing within our alliance. The GDR will continue to actively promote this process.

In the struggle surrounding the vital issues of our times, the socialist European policy jointly elaborated by our allied states is proving its worth. New opportunities are arising for the resolute continuation and development of this policy in the near future. The Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE process that it set in motion remain essential fields of action in this respect. Our timely initiative to have the Vienna meeting open at the foreign-minister level demonstrates how much importance that we accord this CSCE meeting and how seriously we are striving for a constructive discussion and substantial results. This did not go unnoticed in the Western states.

We agree with Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's idea of extending the field of action of our disarmament policy to the CSCE framework – i.e. giving our program for the reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces a central place in the discussions of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting, and afterwards making it an object of concrete negotiations in a second phase of the Stockholm Conference. In this way, we will be putting on the agenda of the Vienna meeting those issues that are crucial for the survival of mankind. At the same time, we will be illustrating the indissoluble connection between cooperation

and security anchored in the Helsinki Final Act. We are actively working against the imperialists' efforts to limit the discussions in Vienna to questions of human rights and human contacts.

To all appearances, the USA will be following the line of preventing constructive agreements in Vienna and of misusing the CSCE process for anti-socialist propaganda. It will not be easy to achieve substantial results that serve the interests of socialism and peace at the Vienna meeting. Still, eleven years after Helsinki, we have come a considerable way. Not only have we gathered common experiences, but also a network of agreements between states of different social orders has arisen on the basis of the Final Act.

Precisely due to these considerations and after a careful weighing of our interests, we consider it proper to prepare a catalogue of proposals for the Vienna meeting that address all sections of the Helsinki Document. Undoubtedly, particular importance should be accorded to initiatives that serve the practical application of the Declaration on Principles and the expansion of cooperation in the fields of economics, science and technology, and the environment, on the basis of equal rights and mutual benefit.

In the interest of developing friendly, cooperative relations between the socialist and capitalist states of Europe, it would be important to normalize relations between Comecon and the EEC and to then establish bilateral relations between individual countries and the EEC. Depending upon the EEC's response to the letter requesting the establishment of relations between the GDR and the EEC, as well as on the course of the negotiations that are expected to take place between Comecon and the EEC, the GDR

will determine its further actions on this matter. In our opinion, it is necessary to constantly coordinate our actions within the framework of Comecon.

Dear Comrades!

The further strengthening of socialism and the concomitant securing of peace depend, more than ever before, on the ability of socialism to put all of its advantages to use for a broad development of its forces of production. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the imperialists, led by the USA with its “crusader politics,” have been pursuing a strategy of economically encircling our countries and cutting them off from world development. This strategy is based upon the illusion that they have a monopoly on the qualitatively key new directions in science and technology and that they can build upon this to attain economic and military superiority.

That is why it is a top political and strategic priority for us to aim for world-class achievements, as we have jointly resolved to do with our Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress of the Comecon Member-States. Indeed, the rate and the breadth of developments in the key technologies are decisive now. It is a matter of the economics of time, in the truest sense of the term, in the quantitative and qualitative development of performance. With this in mind, we have reviewed the tasks originally set for the period up to 1990 in light of the new objective standards that now apply, precisely in the areas that are decisive for the rate of labor productivity. For the production and application of computer technology in the area of computer-controlled construction and production, we are raising the targets from the original 26,000 to 90,000 work stations. In the field of microelectronics, the task has been set of developing the 1 megabyte memory circuit practically parallel to the 256 kilobyte memory circuit.

Regarding the more efficient use and refinement of raw materials, the 1990 targets for the proportion of light oil products were set at 75%, for the proportion of refined rolled steel at 90%.

We are approaching cooperation among fraternal countries in a similar fashion. We consider the development of direct relations between scientific facilities, enterprises and associations on an economic basis to be an important way forward. This applies to the fulfillment of tasks such as:

- not only attaining top levels internationally in selected areas more quickly than foreseen up until now, but also getting a step ahead of them;
- achieving a higher annual performance growth rate;
- rapid renovation of production;
- mastering a growing range of products; and
- reacting flexibly to technical innovations.

Economically, this must translate into substantial savings in work hours, decisively shorter production times with greatly reduced stocks, and the use of highly productive means at full capacity – around the clock, as they say –, and into shorter transport routes.

Such a level of collaboration as this in products and technology between enterprises and associations, which aims at top economic results, can be achieved in fact only if outdated patterns of thinking are overcome. In our opinion, the time is ripe for organizing more effective collaboration in those areas where real achievements can be made. This means:

- moving away from the development of a multitude of assessments and programs, which use up a lot of time and do not move things forward;
- shrinking the plethora of meetings, whose results fall short in terms of tempo and quality and which tie up many responsible forces;
- moving away from the elaboration of general schemes for specialization that have already proved ineffective in the past and are even more removed from present-day requirements in terms of speed and flexibility of production.

For this reason, it is important to resolutely follow the path of cooperation between those units in which the process of reproduction is taking place, on the basis of highly effective and mutually beneficial economic contracts. In all of this, we are guided by the understanding that socialist economic integration can only be carried out under the conditions of a socialist planned economy, unified leadership and full economic accounting.

The GDR's combines have been prepared for this new approach to the development of direct relations. Their process of reproduction encompasses science and production, including quality-determining supply, and they have full powers for the contractual arrangement of sales. In some areas, we have already had good experiences; in others, we are developing promising approaches. This is taking place in accordance with the principles of economic accounting, mutual buying and selling of the achieved scientific results and contractual agreements regarding mutual use of the same in production. We consider this to be a good approach, precisely for moving forward in the area of direct relations on the basis of science and technology. The successful development of direct relations based on ongoing performance, in the sense of truly performance-oriented cooperation based on the highest standards, could also lay the foundation for the

establishment of joint companies and associations in selected areas. The opportunities for this are as manifold as economic activity itself. They could serve the targeted utilization of important scientific discoveries as well as the joint production of certain products in our countries.

In order to concretize direct relations between combines and associations in the GDR and in the USSR, we have already prepared a draft “Principles for the Organization of Direct Relations between Combines of the GDR and Associations of the USSR” and a draft “Agreement on Conducting Cooperative Research Projects,” which can be used as templates. In our opinion, they provide a good foundation for organizing concrete work in this area.

Dear Comrades!

The delegation of the GDR is firmly convinced that our meeting will provide an essential, new impetus to the recovery of the international situation and the rebuffing of the imperialist politics of threats and confrontation. The documents to be adopted at our meeting show all the forces interested in peace and security a realistic and constructive way forward. The implementation of our proposals and initiatives will contribute to the further mobilization and consolidation of all forces working for peace. In the name of the GDR, I would like to voice our approval of the drafts that we have before us, and assure you that the GDR will work with all its strength to realize our resolutions.

Thank you.

[Translation from the German by Ursula Froese]

