

ON THE MILITARY DOCTRINE OF THE WARSAW-TREATY MEMBER STATES¹

In today's situation, there has been an increase in the importance of correctly understanding the goals and intentions of governments and military-political alliances in the military arena, as embodied in their military doctrines. Taking this into consideration and beginning with the necessity of ultimately banning war from human society; stopping the arms race; excluding the use of military force; strengthening peace and security; and realizing complete and general disarmament, the member-states of the Warsaw Treaty have decided to set forth the central positions of their military doctrine, which forms the basis for actions by the Warsaw Treaty and reflects the commonality of the defensive military-political goals of its member-states and their national military doctrines.

I.

The military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty – as well as that of each of its members – serves the goal of banning war, both nuclear and conventional. Owing to the very nature of the structure of socialist society, these governments have not attached and do not attach their futures to a military solution to international problems. They support the solution of all difficult international issues only by peaceful and political means.

In this nuclear-space age, the world has become too fragile for war and power politics. With the situation such that a huge number of the most lethal weapons has been amassed, humanity has come to confront the problem of survival. A world war – moreover, a nuclear war – would have catastrophic consequences not only for countries directly drawn into the conflict, but also for all life on Earth.

The military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty member-states is strictly defensive, and Starts from the point of view that, under current conditions, the use of military force to solve any controversial issue is unacceptable. The essence of this approach is as follows:

The Warsaw Treaty member-states will never, under any circumstances, initiate military action against any government or alliance of governments whatsoever, unless they themselves become the targets of an armed attack.

They will never strike first with nuclear weapons.

They do not have any territorial ambitions toward any other government, either within Europe or outside Europe.

They do not regard any individual government or group of people as their enemy; on the contrary, they are prepared, without exception, to build relations with all countries around the world based on a mutual assessment of their interests in peace and mutual coexistence. The Warsaw Treaty member-states declare that their international relations are strongly based on a respect for the principles of independence and national sovereignty; rejection of the use of force or the threat of force; the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity; the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means; non-interference in internal affairs; equality; and the other principles and goals as covered in the United

¹ From Vojtech Mastny and Malcolm Byrne, eds., *A Cardboard Castle? An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact, 1955-1991* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2005), pp. 563-66.

Nations Charter and the Helsinki Accords, as well as generally-accepted norms in international relations.

While supporting the implementation of measures for disarmament, the Warsaw Treaty member-states are forced to maintain their armed forces in such form and at such a level that would allow them to repel any attack from outside on any member-state of the Treaty.

The armed forces of the Treaty governments are maintained at a sufficient level of battle-readiness so as not to allow themselves to be taken by surprise. If they come under attack nonetheless, they will deal a crushing blow to the aggressor.

The Warsaw Treaty member-states have never attempted to possess armed forces or weapons above the level necessary for these purposes. Thus, they hold strongly to levels necessary for defense and for repelling possible aggression.

II.

The Warsaw Treaty member-states consider providing their peoples with reliable security as their primary task. The union of socialist governments has no ambitions to enjoy more security than other countries, but less security will not do. The current military-strategic parity remains the decisive factor in banning war. However, as experience shows, further increases in the level of parity will not bring greater security. For this reason they will continue to apply their efforts to maintaining a balance of military forces at an even lower level. Under these conditions, stopping the arms race and carrying out measures for real disarmament take on genuine historical significance. Governments in our time have no other way than to achieve agreement on a radical decrease in the level of military opposition.

The Warsaw Treaty member-states decisively support these positions. In complete accordance with the defensive approach of their military doctrine, they thus are attempting to achieve the following basic goals:

First. The most rapid, complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests as the most important step in halting the development, production, and improvement of nuclear armaments; their gradual reduction and complete liquidation; and a ban on the spread of the arms race into space.

Second. The prohibition and liquidation of chemical and other forms of weapons of mass destruction.

Third. In Europe, the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons to such a level that neither one side nor the other, while providing for its own defense, has the means for a sudden attack on the other side nor for deploying offensive operations in general.

Fourth. Strict control over all measures of disarmament based on a combination of national technical means and international procedures, including creating appropriate international organs, exchanging military information, and carrying out onsite inspections.

Fifth. The creation of zones in Europe and other regions of the world which would be free of nuclear and chemical weapons, as well as zones of reduced concentrations of weapons and increased confidence. The implementation of military confidence-building measures by both sides in Europe and agreement on such measures

in other regions of the world, as well as on the seas and oceans. The mutual rejection Treaty of the use of military force by both Warsaw Treaty member-states and NATO alliance members, and the acceptance of responsibility for supporting peaceful relations; the elimination of military bases on the territory of other countries; the relocation of troops to the limits of national borders; the mutual relocation of the most dangerous forms of offensive weapons from areas where both military alliances border each other, as well as a decrease in armed forces and weapons to a mutually-agreed upon minimal level in this zone.

Sixth. Considering the continuing split of Europe into opposing military blocs as abnormal, the Warsaw Treaty member-states support the simultaneous dissolution of the NATO alliance and the Warsaw Treaty and, as a first step, the elimination of their military organizations, and, ultimately, the creation of a comprehensive system of international security.

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The Warsaw Treaty governments suggest to the NATO member-states holding consultations with the goal of comparing the military doctrines of both alliances, analyzing their content, and jointly reviewing the direction of their future evolution, with the aim of removing mutual distrust and suspicions accumulated over the years, achieving a better understanding of each other's intentions, and arranging it so that the military concepts and doctrines of these military blocs and their participants would be based on defense as the point of departure.

One topic in these consultations might also be the imbalances and asymmetries that have developed in individual types of weapons and armed forces and the search for ways to eliminate them based on a reduction by the party, which happens to possess more of them, with the understanding that such reductions will lead to the establishment of even lower levels.

The socialist governments in the Treaty also suggest holding consultations on authoritative, expert levels with military specialists from both sides participating. They are already prepared to hold such consultations in 1987. The consultations could be held in Warsaw or in Brussels, or alternate between each of these cities.

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[Translated by Paul Spitzer]

² Ed. note: In original text.

³ Ed. note: Omitted here are the signatures of the leaders of the Warsaw Pact member-states.