

Agreement Concerning the Cessation of the Validity of the Military Understandings Concluded within the Framework of the Warsaw Treaty and the Dissolution of Its Military Organs and Structures, 25 February 1991

In providing for the dissolution of the military structures of the Warsaw Pact, the ministers of foreign affairs and of defense of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania (in the absence of a representative of the defunct German Democratic Republic) stipulate, in article 3: "Further handling of documents received by the ministries of defense of the member states from the Unified Command of the Unified Armed Forces, as well as of those received by the Unified Command from the ministries of defense, will be determined by agreement between the Unified Command and the ministries of defense of the member states. These documents will not be given to third parties and will not be disseminated."

Commentary:

The 1991 agreement sets no procedures for the future declassification of Warsaw Pact documents. It leaves such procedures to be determined in cooperation with the Unified Command, which it simultaneously dissolves. Besides the Unified Command, two of the signatory countries—the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia—have since ceased to exist. The German Democratic Republic, a founding member of the Warsaw Pact, had already ceased to exist before the signing of the agreement. Its legal successor, the Federal Republic of Germany, has not considered itself bound by the provisions of the agreement. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Romania have ignored it in practice. Only in Russia and Poland, the agreement is still officially considered as valid.

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(Source: Anatolii I. Gribkov, The Fate of the Warsaw Treaty: Recollections, Documents, and Facts (Moscow: Russkaia Kniga, 1998), pp. 198-200.)