

January 15, 1972

**Note on Soviet proposals for European security at
the Prague Conference of the Consultative Political
Committee of the Warsaw Pact**

Citation:

"Note on Soviet proposals for European security at the Prague Conference of the Consultative Political Committee of the Warsaw Pact", January 15, 1972, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, no file, volume or registration number. DR, vol.2. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/112060>

Summary:

A note detailing the presentation of a Soviet proposal for European security at a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee. The note explains in detail the Soviet proposal.

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

Note on Soviet proposals for European Security for the Prague Conference of the Consultative Political Committee of the Warsaw Pact, 15 January 1972. N O T E regarding the presentation of the Soviet draft document relating to European security to be adopted at the Prague Conference of the Consultative Political Committee of the countries participating in the Warsaw Treaty. On 14 January 1972, at 15.00 hrs, George Macovescu, first deputy of the Foreign Affairs Minister, had his first interview with L.I. Mendeleyevich, ambassador assigned with special tasks of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the USSR, who came to Bucharest to transmit the Soviet draft of the main document to be adopted at the Prague Conference of the Consultative Political Committee and have preliminary talks with the Romanian party in regard to the text of this document. The other Soviet participants were V.I. Drozdenko, the USSR ambassador to Romania, N.V. Maslennikov, counsellor minister, and V. Pozneakov, first (I) secretary. The other Romanian participants were S. Celac and I. Colt, directors, R. Neagu, first (I) secretary, and M. Rosianu, attaché. 1. Presentation of the draft. The Soviet emissary handed over the Soviet draft of the main document regarding European security, drawn up in the Russian language. He pointed out that he was authorized to put forward the rationale behind this draft and hold discussions with a view to arriving at a common point of view on the form and content of the "initial draft of the Conference's main document". He added that, at the recent interviews at Warsaw, when the convening of the meeting of the Consultative Political Committee was decided, L.I. Brezhnev was assigned the task for the Soviet party to draw up the draft documents. In keeping with the indications given by the Soviet leadership, N.P. Firiubin, "general secretary of the Warsaw Treaty", proceeded with the distribution of the draft main document through special emissaries sent to the capitals of the states taking part in the Warsaw Treaty. L.I. Mendeleyevich is one of these emissaries. 2. Character of the document. According to the Soviet conception, the Conference's document must constitute the political program of action for the near future, thus continuing the series of documents begun by the Bucharest Declaration of 1966, after which the Budapest Appeal (1969) and the Berlin Declaration (1970) followed. The Prague Declaration of peace, security, and collaboration in Europe would have the following goals: to increase the attraction exerted by the ideas promoted by the socialist countries; to contribute to the course of action directed towards détente in Europe; to facilitate the organization and convening of the Conference with the utmost possible speed. The Soviet leadership was and is of the opinion that, at the present moment, it is premature for the socialist countries to initiate the drawing up of a draft document to be submitted for debate and adoption at the Conference for security and cooperation in Europe. 3. Content of the Soviet document. The draft of the Soviet Declaration includes an introduction, three chapters, and a conclusion. a. The Introduction is conceived as a substantiation of the idea of continuity of the détente process in Europe and makes prominent the contribution to this process of the socialist countries, as well as of other countries (for example, the contribution of France, to some extent the contribution of the FR of Germany, of the Scandinavian countries, etc.). b. Chapter I presents analytically the general situation in Europe and the tendencies in the mutual relationships between states in order to underscore "for the first time the prospect of the complete normalization of the relationships between all the socialist countries and the FR of Germany". Such an appreciation could not have been made a year before. Now we come up against a new historical phenomenon which must be noted. Concurrently, attention is being called to the negative elements and, first of all, to the orientation towards the intensification of armament provided by the last NATO session, however without any names being mentioned. It is expressly pointed out that "the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty cannot help drawing the relevant conclusions as to their security from it". It is sought, however, to preserve the optimistic note generally characterizing the development of the political situation on the continent. c. Chapter II represents the embryo of the future basic political document which should be adopted by the European Conference. The seven principles put forward in this section represent, according to the Soviet conception, the adaptation to Europe of the general principles which should govern the relationships between states. With this aim in view, the following elements have been used: "The principles of the cooperation between the USSR and France", the Treaty of USSR with FR Germany, the Treaty of Poland with FR Germany, as well as other documents signed by the socialist countries with the capitalist countries, such as - for example - the Romanian-French Common Communiqué; the documents adopted at

the UN. The Soviet diplomat reserved a significant part of his exposé to support by arguments for the order of preference in which the seven "principles" are presented, and to explain the reasons for selecting them. Thus, he maintained that in the conditions obtaining in Europe, the "inviolability of the boundaries" is the fundamental element of stability. He also put forward a history of the concept of "peaceful coexistence", which appeared simultaneously with the Great October Socialist Revolution and was elaborated by Lenin. "I insist on this paragraph", L.I. Mendeleyevich said, "since we know that the Romanian comrades also have well established views in regard to the norms of living together between states. We would like to know your opinions as regards this principle in order to eliminate any possibility of speculation". The inclusion and editing of this paragraph was the object of ample debates at the "working level" and of special discussions at "the level of higher leadership", where it was appreciated that the form set out in the present text was "the most rational and scientific". As a new element, the inclusion of the "disarmament" and "support for UN" concepts was mentioned. As far as the insistence on convening the Conference is concerned, it is good to use a prudent formulation. That is why it is only specified that the Conference might take place in 1972. However, the new element is introduced, namely that the proposal regarding the multilateral consultations is at the present time approved by all the interested states. The Soviet side is of the opinion that there is no point in approaching the concrete aspects linked with the organization and development of the Conference at the level of the Consultative Political Committee, as the Foreign Affairs Ministers have already presented a series of common positions on these themes on the occasion of the recent conference at Warsaw. In regard to point 2 on the Conference agenda, proposed by the socialist countries, it was considered that there is no point in taking up again the stances expressed previously or in developing these stances. That is why the draft document is limited only to the enunciation of this issue in order to reaffirm the interest of the socialist countries. d. Chapter III gives for the first time in a joint document prominence - in a separate section - to the stance of the socialist countries participating in the Warsaw Treaty in regard to the reduction in armed forces and armaments. As an issue, however, the reduction in the number of troops is not new. The socialist countries have expressed themselves both separately and jointly in favor of such reduction. The exchange of views on this theme will take place outside the framework of the Conference, therefore it should not be mentioned in the document. The inclusion of this issue in the document is made without any link whatever to the exchange of views. In the Soviet side's view, such a chapter should also have been introduced in the case, where no exchanges of opinions had been envisaged since: [] some Western states link the convening of the Conference with the presentation - in a more definite form - of the position of the socialist countries vis-à-vis the issue of reducing the number of troops; [] the lowering of the level of military confrontation is conducive to the strengthening of peace. Since this is the first document in which a special reference is made to the issue of reducing the number of troops, it is good for the presentation of the stance to have a general and laconic character: [] the position of principle [] the reduction must refer both to the foreign forces and to the national ones, although it is not necessary that all [sides] take part in the negotiations; [] the reduction should be made without detriment [to any side] [] the reduction should not be from block to block; [] the framework of the negotiations should be agreed upon. On purpose, no position was set forth on: [] whether the reduction must refer to all the European countries or only to some of them; [] whether the reduction is [to be] radical or symbolic; [] what the proportions [of the reductions] are. As regards [Manlio] Brosio's mission, the Soviet side has no intention of receiving the emissary of the fourteen NATO countries, but will further refrain from making an express declaration on that score. The Soviet party insists that this formula be included in the final document of the Conference. The decision to include it in the Soviet draft document was taken at the highest level. 2. The Soviet emissary answered the questions of George Macovescu, first deputy of the Foreign Affairs Minister, giving the following additional information in regard to the Soviet position: a. Besides the basic document constituting the object of the Soviet draft, the Conference would also have to adopt a communiqué. The text of this communiqué does not raise any issue as it will be identical with the other communiqués so far adopted. b. All the countries participating in the Warsaw Treaty announced their

agreement for the meeting to open on January 25 this year.c. The Soviet Foreign Affairs Minister, A.A. Gromyko, will not be present at the Conference since – as from January 23 – he will visit Japan. An attempt was made to have him change the date of his departure for Tokyo, but to no avail.d. The proceedings will probably last three days (at least two days). It seems that the texts of the speeches will be longer than at the recent meeting of the Foreign Affairs Ministers. It is expected that, at the “working level”, L.I. Brezhnev will speak about an hour.e. The Soviet side did not take into consideration the possibility of organizing a preliminary reunion before the opening of the Conference. This does not mean that such a reunion could not take place in Prague.f. The agenda of the proceedings would have to include two points: ·[European security]report of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces of the countries participating in the Warsaw Treaty .g.[The debates in connection with point 2 will be scaled down to some extent. In all probability, the “Sofia formula” will be adopted: after the report of the Supreme Commander, the delegations will take the floor, but not necessarily all of them. The interventions are expected to be short. h.[The exchange of views in regard to the reduction in the number of troops and armaments will take place outside the agenda.The supplementary question of the first deputy of the Foreign Affairs Minister, George Macovescu, namely, whether the issue of reducing the number of troops will be discussed within the framework of the point referring to European security, was answered negatively by the Soviet emissary L.I. Mendeleyevich.i.[Details regarding the organizational issues (duration, distribution of draft documents, organization of preliminary reunions, composition of delegations and others) will have to be provided by the Czechoslovak side.j.[The composition of the delegations will have to be the usual one for such conferences. On the Soviet side L.I. Brezhnev, A. N. Kosygin, K. Katushev (probably), and the first deputy of the Foreign Affairs Minister, V.V. Kuznetsov, will participate. The final composition will be established one week before the Conference.It is not known yet whether the ambassadors at Prague will be part of the delegations.3. The emissary L.I. Mendeleyev pointed out that he had instructions to stay in Bucharest for as long as necessary for the discussions. He also said that in this period he would be at the Romanian side's disposal so as to answer possible questions, to give explanations, and to facilitate reaching an agreement on the initial text of the draft document. He would like to use his spare time to know Romania. He expressed his strong wish to visit the National Galleries. He thanked for the reception and the hospitality showed by the Romanian side.Ambassador V.I. Drozdenko asked that on Monday, 17 January, the midday hour be reserved for a luncheon he wanted to offer on the embassy premises in honor of the first deputy of the Foreign Affairs Minister, George Macovescu. To this luncheon, he would like to invite four or five officials of the Foreign Affairs Ministry as well. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.4. The first deputy of the Foreign Affairs Minister, George Macovescu, in underlining the usefulness of this system of exchanges of views on the eve of the conferences of the socialist countries participating in the Warsaw Treaty, emphasized the Romanian side's wish to reach a common point of view. The draft document proposed by the Soviet side will constitute the object of a careful study, and on Monday, 17 January, discussions about the text will be held.15 January 1972Ministry of Foreign Affairs, no file, volume or registration number.DR, vol.2.