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POLAND'S POLICY ON DÉTENTE AND DISARMAMENT

Extracts from the report of Edward Gierok, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, delivered at the Eighth Congress of the PUPP on 11 February 1980

(The chief goal of Poland's foreign policy) is to provide the Polish nation with security and conditions for peaceful and creative work.

Bearing in mind the sacrifice of life of over 6 million citizens of our country who perished in the wake of military operations or died at the hands of the Nazi invaders, bearing in mind the fate of the disabled, the widows and orphaned Polish children, bearing in mind the ruins and ashes in our land, we will always defend the right to life in peace as hard as we can. Strengthening the might of our country, the indissoluble and reliable alliances, all our activities in the international arena will serve this purpose.

From the very birth of our people's statehood, our efforts to make possibly greatest contribution to the cause of building peace structures in Europe and the world have been among Poland's chief and immutable lines of activity in the international arena. We have consistently fought for détente understood as a process of an active and creative political dialogue and of development of an equitable co-operation between States with different political systems in the name of the supreme reasons of peace and security.

Our country was among the initiators of the détente process. It was and is profoundly committed to the deepening and consolidation of détente.

Being a joint achievement of the participating socialist and capitalist States and a victory of common sense and realism, the Helsinki Conference was an event of utmost significance in the post-war history of Europe.

Signed by 35 heads of States, the Helsinki Final Act is a grand peace charter which has ultimately sanctioned the political and territorial realities of post-war Europe in the sphere of international relationships. . .

Ours is one of the countries which realize the Final Act's stipulations with utmost solemnity and goodwill and come up for strict observance of its clearly stated principles and recommendations.

We have developed a mutually beneficial economic co-operation with all States-signatories of the Final Act, thus contributing to the construction of the material foundations for détente. We have never been selective about the Final Act's particular chapters. We have been developing cultural exchange with our partners, we have remained open to genuine cultural values of other nations and presented abroad the ample heritage of our national culture.

In the years-long Europe-wide dialogue Poland has always held a constructive standpoint while undertaking urgent and important, ripe-for-solution matters and meeting half-way our partners' matter-of-fact suggestions and arguments.

Thus -- as far as our possibilities allowed -- we have been making a creative contribution to the building of the European confidence, security and peaceful co-operation -- esteemed by our socialist allies and appreciated by numerous western partners.

Buttressing the process of political détente with military détente would be of key importance for strengthening the former. We welcomed with hope the signing of the Second Soviet-American Treaty on the Limitation of Offensive Strategic Armaments. And that is why we are disturbed by the decision to delay the process of ratification of the treaty in the United States Congress, the treaty which is awaited by the nations of the world.

We are concerned over the NATO decision, imperilling security on our Continent, to launch the production of and deploy new nuclear missile weapons in Western Europe, which aims in fact at opening a new and particularly dangerous stage of the arms race.

This decision has become the groundwork for stimulating the activities of the advocates of cold war and of policies from the position of strength, for a campaign aimed at the Soviet Union and the Socialist States, and has aggravated the political climate in Europe and world over. This is flagrantly at variance with the peace efforts and goals of the majority of nations in the world. The Federal Republic of Germany's activity in pursuing the deployment of new weapons on its territory is bound to evoke particular concern.

The Polish nation has the moral right and duty to warn the world against the dangerous consequences of this unfavourable evolution in the international situation.

We have never taken it for granted that with the existing rivalry between the two political systems the process of détente in Europe will be easy, and never on an upward swing.

States-parties to the Warsaw Treaty have many a time come up with proposals of sensible and realistic solutions concerning military détente, including those relating to negotiations on medium range nuclear warheads. Those proposals are well known to the Western countries.

We are fervent spokesmen and advocates of continuing the talks undertaken in the recent years whose aim is to firmly base the relations in Europe on the principle of equal security and mutual confidence.

Many politicians the world over share our opinion, understanding what the threat of a conflict in our times is and what tensions and hostility in relations among States may bring forth. The significance should be also recognized of the fact that, in this universal cause, the voice of Pope Paul II is so resounding.

It is unthinkable that the great cause of peace could be wrecked.

Humanity must not let a return to the cold war happen. Too many things have changed for the better in the lives of nations and individuals thanks to détente. The beneficial economic co-operation, science, culture and tourist contacts have been broadly expanded. Numerous humanitarian problems have been successfully solved. The awareness of the right to self-determination of one's own destinies has increased among the nations around the world. There is less fear and more hope everywhere.

We must act in good time so as not to allow destruction of important elements of the peaceful order in Europe, which has been shaped with such great efforts for many years. If we fail in averting the present negative tendencies, then instead of moving gradually, step by step, on the road of building mutual confidence, security and co-operation, we shall have to devote more time in the future to rebuilding what has been lost because of the cold war forces.

A deep analysis of the current international situation was presented recently by Leonid Brezhnev in an interview for the daily Pravda. We fully share his optimism, his conviction that many constructive peace moves could be taken in Europe in the near future.

We have serious expectations in connexion with the forthcoming Madrid meeting of representatives of countries which participated in the CSCE. We take part in bilateral talks and consultations with all countries which are interested in careful preparation and constructive work of that meeting. On our part we shall do everything to make sure that it contributes to the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, to strengthening peace and developing co-operation.

Active bilateral and multilateral talks concerning nuclear and conventional armaments should continue in Vienna and Geneva. Poland has been making her constructive contribution to these talks and will always be ready to do so.

Last year we put forward, together with our Warsaw Treaty allies, a proposal for convening a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe. The political atmosphere should not form an obstacle to holding that conference. We are counting on the political realism of the governments of European countries. An agreement on convening the conference, reached during the Madrid meeting, for example, could mark a breakthrough towards improving the general international situation. It would lend a strong impulse to a progress in the negotiations now underway and would create favourable premises for the solving of disarmament problems.

Poland would willingly host the conference in its capital city as this fact would be to this country both an honour and a symbol. Warsaw, which the Nazi invaders doomed to such an atrocious end, today throbs with creative peaceful work. It would then serve as an adequate and noble venue for such an important international meeting.

People's Poland will spare no effort to prevent Europe and the world from being diverted from the road of peace and co-operation. We believe that common sense will prevail, that understanding will win of the necessity of saving the détente process, of halting the arms race and opening roads to disarmament. This is being demanded by all the nations.